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Title of the post: I am regretting coming to the US

Body of the post: [EDIT2: I GOT A JOB! All the hard work, the sleepless nights and the early mornings, finally paid off. I'm going to say that atleast 50% of this offer was luck. I didn't apply, nor did I get a referral. I started out sending cold emails. And one of them hit the mark. Met in person. Proved that I am capable. Sent me a take home open ended question which I answered better than he expected. Didn't bother whining over the take home. Just get shit done. Then had a live coding round too, which actually turned out easier than expected. I did it. Got the offer even before ending the call. I was quite literally having anxiety jitters by the end of it. But I did it. I'm proud of myself. Over the last 2 days, I feel less burdened than ever. I feel like I'm back to being that amazing person I was a year ago.

But my advice still stands. Especially for Indians. There are so many opportunities in India now. Coming to the US is a mentally draining experience. As soon as you land, you are stressed about internships. Then you are stressed about OPT and 90 days. Next comes the literal luck factor of getting an H1B. Not on merit. You get 3 tries to get it in a lottery. Once you get a H1B then you're stressed about being laid off because your employer can literally kick you from the country. And if you're one of those people who wants a green card, good luck waiting for 50 years I guess. Idk the exact stats because I'm not even going to bother. I'm not getting an H1B. I'm doing my OPT, breaking even with my education cost and going home. I did what I set out to do, but I don't want to be living like a 2nd class citizen all my life just because I came from somewhere else.

Go home, or better yet, don't come. There are a million ways to make money in India. You don't need a foreign degree.

One thing that makes sense here is doing a FULLY or ATLEAST PARTIALLY FUNDED program like an MS or PHD. Please don't spend 60lakhs of loan to do this. If you have that much money invest it somewhere in India.

If you are crazy about getting a world class education just keep in mind that you are going to face the toughest time in your life. Again, scholarships will decide your mental burden. Please get as many of them as possible.

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If you have a lot of money to spare, go for it. The experience is like no other.

Also, if you want to become an entrepreneur US is the best place to be. High risk = high reward.

That's all folks! Good luck]

[EDIT1: I did not expect this to blow up to this scale. Thank you for all the inputs. I'm truly grateful and will read through all the comments. It looks like we are in this together and there is no other way apart from going through and going forward. We got this ?]

This is a rant from a throwaway. I am super stressed out and panicking even though I'm graduating in May 2024.

I'll be completing my m.eng in computer engineering from a highly reputed ivy league school. This has been one of the hardest or lowest points in my life. I have faced a lot of trouble growing up, but this is a different kind of beast that is taking a toll on my mental health.

I'm applying to analytics/data related roles since my program started in August. And I've landed a grand total of 1 interviews, and that company also ghosted me after 4 rounds. I think what's holding me back is the "do you need sponsorship" question. I never wanted to live there on H1B. I only want to work on OPT and go back home. And I STILL CANNOT FIND EMPLOYMENT.

I've applied to 250 roles, and networked with more than 100 people so far. I don't know if this number is too small, but at

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this point I'm going to intentionally slow down. Trying to put quality over quantity.

I am not the smartest person out there, but neither am I so bad that I cannot be employed. It feels like the entire F1 system is just out to own you. You are so dependent on your job, just to be allowed to exist in the damn country. And the country is not even that good. It took my dumbass a long time to figure out that my happiness comes from the people around me, and when I'm in the US I'm permanently feeling homesick.

My parents are ok with me coming back and are also scared seeing me this stressed. They often call me to make sure I'm mentally okay, which I am not but have to lie about. I luckily had scholarships and no need for a loan. But if I don't accomplish this, I will feel like I let myself down. I have failed a lot but this feels like a HUGE let down, on another level. And I don't even understand why it feels so, when I know that I will be much happier back home.

Shame & societal pressure are playing on my mind. Have I gone nuts?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If the question on the application is ?do you need sponsorship? the legal answer is no. You will be on OPT and therefore do not need sponsorship. Sometimes the question is ?at any point will you need sponsorship?, which is a bit trickier to answer. Technically the answer would be yes. I supposed you could say no, if you truly intend to quit your job at the end of the OPT period, but I wouldn't necessarily advise a student to do this.

I'm sorry you're having a hard time. I hope your school has counseling and mental health services you can take advantage of. There's absolutely nothing wrong with getting help.

- New Comment: You are in a much better situation than most others. There are people 8 months into their opt period and still have found a job. They are volunteering with their professor. You have supportive parents and no loan right? So why take so much stress? You'll get something soon, don't worry.

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- New Comment: Just keep going . I am a May 2023 grad , got into a social startup in June which was a dumpster fire(they made me relocate from East to West Coast, shit pay) got laid off from there in Oct end . Got a better job in December mid 2023(better pay and more stable) . Its all about the grind and the competition is cut throat but stay at it. There's light at the end of the tunnel , yes you feeling this is normal but don't let that demotivate you . Good Luck!

- New Comment: The international student advisor told me to basically lie when they ask you status questions, if you tell them the truth, it'll make it very hard to even get to interviews since their algorithm filters out resumes. One thing you can do is also try applying for start-ups as well.

- New Comment: Man I wish the US had a robust pathway for graduates to get a work visa instead of our inane F1 OPT/CPT and H-1B lottery system

- New Comment: It has been tough for CS major recently but it always has been like that for international students with most majors. Don't check the box that you need a sponsorship if you only plan to complete OPT. I also didn't need any sponsorship and that's how I got my job starting today. They didn't ask anything and neither did I. Sponsorship is only for those who need H1B visa from the company. I am in healthcare major so it was very easy for me to get a job but I understand struggles cause my husband could not get a job even with doctor's degree. He eventually went back to country and got a job there. Hang in there.

- New Comment: I think the last few years for US immigration have been difficult that luck plays a major role now. I would focus on the wins (you have a US degree) and focus on other efforts (Canada/Australia/UK/etc)

- New Comment: Think about it from an employer's perspective. Why in their right mind would they hire you if they knew that you are planning to leave in 3 years. They waste resources on you, only for you to leave them later?

And honestly, if you find India better or think that is better for you, isn't the right choice to go back? You would want to prove yourself for sure, and that societal pressure will exist for sure but do what is best for you.

And if it makes you feel any better, it is too early for you to look for jobs. Your hit rate picks up significantly once you

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graduate.

Keep the good work up and keep networking. Good luck!

- New Comment: if you're planning to only work the OPT duration, why the sponsorship question stump you? just say no?

- New Comment: Take a Deep Breath. Take 1 week break from everything if possible.

1. Get your resume reviewed by 2/3 people who are early in their career.

2. Don't apply to every job you see. Lots of old and inactive job posts. Verify if the job is active on company portal.

3. Keep preparing yourself for the interview regardless.

4. It doesn't help that you only want to work opt period and don't need sponsorship. Companies want to hire someone who would stay at least 3/4 years. New grads are net negative investment at least for the first year.

5. Target big companies as they don't usually care about sponsorship. But the market is very bad now so?.

6. Being stressed won't do any good for anyone. Stay relaxed and do due your due diligence. If things don't work out at least you would be able to tell yourself that you tried your best. This is what matters. Not getting a job right away isn't the end of the world. Plenty of people come to USA with huge loan and they don't have the luxury of going back empty handed like you. Be grateful for what you have already and keep working hard. Things will go your way soon.

Best of luck.

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- New Comment: Hey dude ! Firstly congrats on the amazing achievement of getting the top class masters degree!

About the job- jobs always depend on the economy . It is tight now . Don?t take it personally - it?s nothing to do with you. Since you have no loans , your damn Lucky man.

Yes you could tell them you don?t need sponsorship as well . It?s the truth as you don?t need it on OPT.

Nothing to stress about man, I think you?re just feeling lonely and it?s getting to you. I?ve been in your place before. It?ll get better, maybe if you could do 1 India trip - it puts things in perspective when you realize there?s nothing to stress abt if you have no loans and your family is ok.

- New Comment: DO NOT beat yourself. It's a tough market. I was in a similar situation last summer. I left my flourishing career back home and came to the US for better opportunities. I had started working on plans to go back home if I couldn't get a job by the end of summer. *Luckily*, I got a job. The reason I am stressing it is because there is a fair amount of luck involved to get a job these days. There is absolutely nothing wrong with going back home and restarting if it helps your ****mental health****, something which is heavily underestimated in today's competitive environment. You still have a degree from a reputed school that will always be valued and you could definitely apply to foreign jobs in the future.

- New Comment: Please take it from me, graduated from a low-ranked school and applied my eyes out. After 6 months of no-luck, I landed my dream job. I took a break from applying then focused on quality over quantity, only 2 applications a week. I know it?s gonna happen for you. Don?t lose hope!

- New Comment: Life is ten percent what happens to you, and ninety percent how you react to it.

Over a decade ago, as a F1 student, I couldn?t get a decent job after graduating. Went back to home country with my tail between my legs feeling like a failure. I humbled myself quickly, and landed a job in an area of my interest, found out

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I was pretty good at it, and years later ended up transferring back to the US at a salary higher than what I would have made if I had stayed in the the US.

Don?t be afraid to fail because your response to the failures define you.

- New Comment: This system confuses me a lot, too.

People across the boarder illegally get work permits and asylum quite easily, while the hard-working and talented international graduates work their fingers to the bone, live in stress everyday, still had to pin hopes on the lottery - that means no matter how good you are, you still face the chance of being kicked out.

- New Comment: data analytics prospects are on the fall

- New Comment: The job market for computer science related jobs have been bad especially with the recent layoffs.

- New Comment: Legally you dont have to disclose whether you want sponsorship or not. If your plan is to work your OPT just say you don?t need sponsorship and work your eligible time(1+two 1 year extension since you are STEM) work your year and go back home.

- New Comment: Nothing was promised to you when you came here. Your feelings are valid and I respect your ability to express it. The international student scene is a money making thing for the USA unfortunately. Try not to care too much as this is inconsequential to your life. Meaning you?ll still be alive if you get a job and stay here or go back to your country. Focus on improving your mental health. It?ll take you further rather than stressing and altering your neurochemistry.

Hope you get all that you want in life. Much love.

- New Comment: And the country is not even that good.

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I would have agreed with you if you havent gone through all that pain to find a job. to stay in the country. You are now biased because you cant seem to land a job

- New Comment: I can completely relate to you just not in the aspect of having no loan on your head. I left my high paying job back in India to do masters here in US and that too from not so good of a university. I am in last semester and will be graduating in May, job search is exhausting and can take a toll on you.

I tend to not think about it too much and just continue with the grind. Many times imposter syndrome kicks in but it is what it is now. So you gotta keep moving.

Hope for the best and leave the rest.

All the best.

- New Comment: Isn't computer engineering mostly hardware and low-level system software related? Why not apply to those jobs instead of data analytics?

- New Comment: What helped me land an interview was being one of the early applicants to a role. Make sure you keep LinkedIn notifs on, and when you see a job you like, apply asap. idk if this works for everyone, but my guess is the earlier you are the higher chance of the recruiter viewing your profile and you getting a callback.

Also, like others said: hang in there. it gets better :)

- New Comment: I was in the same situation. It's hard. It doesn't necessarily depend on your skills. It took me so much time to get an interview. And the market is bad right now. Keep applying on different sites and you'll eventually get something. As others mentioned you can also volunteer to extend the OPT once graduated. I found a job a month and a half after graduation

- New Comment: Is there anyone in this thread who would be interested in being interviewed for a story about this totally

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understandable frustration expressed by the OP? Please contact me here or at dfriedell@voanews.com. Thanks!

- New Comment: The tech job market has been pretty fucked since fall 2021. I've had 3.5 yrs of experience with some experience from a top company and I still am having a very hard time finding a job. Seniors and tech leads have also struggled for months on end finding a role. You are not alone

- New Comment: I have a similar situation as yours.

I am studying in a less reputed school than you. I have applied for ~150 positions as a Ph.D. candidate in Computer Engineering.

I cannot get a job either. But I will never give up, I will try any position possible: Postdoc, Assistant Professor, and so on. Even though my goal is to work in the industry. Most jobs in my domain require not only U.S. citizenship but also clearance. Which makes me less likely to be hired.

I sold my apartment and car to study here, and I will not give up until I die.

- New Comment: I'm in the same situation. Don't know why I came to the US

- New Comment: TLDR: When the going gets tough, the tough get going!

Dear OP,

The current job market is going through a transitory phase and is yet to find a new equilibrium. I'm sure it will only get worse before it improves. My hunch is these conditions will continue for much of this year.

The lack of job opportunities and inability to find a job are due to external forces beyond your control. While that's not encouraging, know that it's not your fault, and focus on things in your control.

Polish your resume, network, cold message people on LinkedIn, customize your resume to each job. Figure out the

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most effective way of presenting yourself to a potential employer as opposed to using a common resume across jobs.

The current environment is also particularly discriminatory towards recent college graduates. While it's hard to, leverage what you have to gain experience in your domain.

Try to take a longer term view (1 ? 2 year scale).

I'm not sure of your particular circumstances, but, on an OPT you can work for free. Try to find a lab/professor/startup where you can be hired for minimum or no pay. This will save your unemployment days and hopefully add relevant work experience. You also have STEM extension available after that, plan to get a job that allows you to apply for the extension

I was in a similar situation and know plenty of people who graduated in May 2020, 2022, 2023 struggled to find a job and managed to land on their feet sooner than later. Focus on what you can market and hone in on that. I'm sure there'll be a break through!

If you can't fly, then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl. But whatever you do, keep moving forward. ? MLK

- New Comment: It's totally okay to feel this stressed, because it is a stressful situation and not normal (like last 10 years at least). **I personally do not like statements like "you are far better than people who are having worse time than you", because it's bullshit to me.** I know many people can't walk and I can, so I should feel awesome, right? That's not how any of this works, its a pile of shit people tell others where they do not have anything nice or consoling to say to you.

I would suggest you to **look at it objectively and work on the process, not the outcomes**. This is how I managed my sanity for now:

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1. Put in a fixed number of hours of efforts into job search (networking, applying) regularly. Do not go beyond that, the rest of the time is for your mental health.
2. Find an activity outside that time that reduces your screen time (you don't want to be close to your email/job search portal), and do something that makes you forget about your stress. Workout, swimming, running, hiking, gaming, hobby projects, diy crafting. Board games are helping me a ton in this case (can't workout due to long-covid).
3. Make the process efficient and sustainable, do not think like I need to get a job by Feb/March, rather, put in consistent effort and think that all your effort is going to improve yourself only. If you are learning new things (codes/voluntary works/social works), it's only for your self improvement.
4. You can't control what the companies are doing. Meta has laid off thousands of people and their stock is roaring right now, none of it makes any sense. Your actions of self-improvement will make you a better person, and when companies decide again to hire new candidates, make sure you are a top one there.
5. Do not mark that you need sponsorship because you do not. Others have already explained it.
6. Do not go for continuous evaluation of your resume. Do a few iterations with ChatGPT, your friends and seniors working at companies and stick to it. If you ask 10 different people, they will give you 10 different directions to change, because if you ask them, they feel like they have to give you some feedback and it start a loop of pointless A/B changes.
7. Spend time with your friends, families (online) and hobby buddies. Keep yourself distracted and fresh for couple hours daily.

Please remember always, this is a stressful time and it's okay to be stressed. But this too shall pass, keep your chin and morale up.

- New Comment: Hello, any update on your situation? Has it worked out for you yet??

- New Comment: Have you considered consultancy? They will lie in your resume so you can get a job and you paid some money to get the job done by someone while learning things as much as possible

- New Comment: M.Eng in Computer Engineering from an Ivy League but applying for analyst/data related jobs. Don't

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you think that's another reason why you might not be getting the number of interviews you're expecting to get?

- New Comment: This is due to the over flooded factory produced like H1B people from India. US educated people would have no problem finding a job had they capped H1B visas. US policy should have had prioritized US educated professionals first.

I have worked with many Indian H1B or offshore software engineers and they are subpar to US educated engineers. I would pick American educated fresh graduate over 7 years experienced from India any day. The problem is most companies don't want to train a fresher other than a small number of people, I believe most likely due to some legal requirements.

- New Comment: country not that good ... my question is why u wanna find job here than ? just curiosity yes usa does have alot of problems but I always wonder why u wanna stay at the same time thinking this is not a good country to stay

- New Comment: Which Ivy League school?

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: If you have applied for 250 roles and got one Interview, it is not due to ?sponsorship ?question . It is due to your resume , work on it .

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: You should not check that box. You're just gonna work a full-time job like most internationals do in the summers, but, ofc, you plan on doing that for 3 years.

- New Comment: If you can delay your graduation, do that. Some universities allow that. Next is keep applying and keep learning.

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- New Comment: OP. Listen please. You have NOT let yourself down. You are just on a losing end of an archaic, stupid and unreasonable system which is well overdue for an upgrade but which is not going to change anytime soon. Do yourself a favor. Take your awesome skill set elsewhere. It's their loss not yours.

By all means continue to job search. Be sure to answer no in all your applications for sponsorship. If the hiring manager or HR explicitly asks during the interview process, be honest and tell them ur looking for a 3 yr gig with option to extend(sponsorship) based on how things go.

Above all, stay confident and positive. You'll do well wherever you land. Best of luck!

- New Comment: Good part is you can go back with no debt. Some can't due to huge education loan.

- New Comment: Is the company looking to hire an employee long-term (at least 2 years)? If yes, then maybe that's the reason why they didn't hire you (since you've told them that you won't be needing sponsorship).

I personally think you should not mention OPT or the fact that you will be working short term during the interview. Always show that you want to be working there long term (even if inside you don't believe so). You can quit after a year and it would be within your rights to do so. I did the same ?I did not mention OPT and got hired. I also applied for STEM OPT Extension with the same company. The priority is to land a job. Being too honest (especially in some situations where lying wouldn't hurt anyone around you) will make your life harder than it should have in the real world. Majority of employers are looking out for their own benefits and most of the time we employees are replaceable. You should do the same .

You get stressed out likely because you are thinking far into the future, and because you're not used to failure. Since you are able to enter an Ivy League school, I assume that you have always been a high achiever your whole life. When we were younger, hard work almost always equate positive results, but real life as an adult begs to differ. You can work so hard compared to anyone else but that doesn't guarantee you'd get what you want. Calmly do what you got to do

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regardless of the outcome?that?s the mindset one should slowly learn to cultivate. I am learning as well.

The job market sucks more than it has ever been. That?s a fact. You would have had a relatively easier time getting a good job 10 to 15 years ago. And I know some people might say ?but there are people who can get a good job my age despite the job market being this way? but that?s THEM and NOT YOU. The reality of life if we all varies in terms of ability, personality, luck and the environment we were raised in. If everyone gets everything they want in life then that?s just absurd.

Think about what you can do NOW. And do it regardless of the outcome. You have a supportive parents. I would kill to have them. I see my friends crying over not getting interviews and worry more than they should have when their parents are willing to support them no matter what. I think expressing sadness instead of suppressing it is a good thing, but not when you ruminate about it for days instead of trying to change your perspective and focus on the good things you have around you.

- New Comment: Did you have any work experience after your bachelors?

On one hand I hear stem graduates getting jobs with ease and others saying it takes hundreds of interviews I don't know which one to believe.

- New Comment: Dude, not sure if I can call you dude? you haven?t even started your career and you are already dejected and stressed out? world out is very tough. If you want to survive and excel in this part of world you need to be mentally strong and a long way to go.. don?t get yourself so easily bogged by failures. I don?t even consider this as failure since you have not even started your journey? come on wake up and worst is yet to come? be strong things will be absolutely fine if you are strong with in? Stay brave and face the reality?

- New Comment: If you completed engineering from Ivy League, then you should not stress as you have already proved

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yourself.

Your school should be able to help with counseling as you are not the only one. Many have gone through situation in Covid and others that are equally difficult. Keep Open conversations with family and get help from whoever you feel close with.

Having worked in USA will give you edge that you can work in any country in future that u decide.

- New Comment: Just the new norm. So many applicants with high-level skill that the cost of absorbing someone for a short time without a visa is now a factor. It wasn't a big deal years ago.

It's not your fault. I'm sure that you are amazing/worthy. You haven't "gone nuts". That's just the internal voice in the back of our minds that vies for social rank and tries to keep up with our peers, and these are valid feelings.

Sincerely wishing you the best -- and hope that something comes through.

(P.s. Have you tried running your resume through ATS software, just to see how it's matching or not matching various roles?)

- New Comment: First of all, your story is the same every single F1 kid is facing, or faced earlier. At least you don't have loans to worry about so that's a huge plus. Hit me up if you wanna chat.

- New Comment: While others have given valuable opinions, I just wanna ask if your resume and LI profile is upto the mark. Remember, the demand is low and supply is too high in the job market right now. If you want help with your resume, let me know. I have some experience going through this myself and I think I can help.

- New Comment: At this point, I am not even sure why new students even want to come to the Usa. If it is just for education then great but if it is for landing a job and work visa then they are just setting themselves up for mental trauma

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and financial instability.

- New Comment: A few things to consider:

1) The future of pure data engineering and data analytics is grim. There's just far too many people doing this work for cheap and the demand isn't there, at least right now.

2) You are studying M.Eng. but applying for DA/DS roles. When I interview folks and sense that their desperation is what made them apply for my role, it's an instant turn off. DA/DS are easy entry points in the US market and most recruiters know that. Even if you are truly interested in it, my first impression is that you're looking to keep your options open.

3) If you don't want a job in the field of your study, it's always going to be an issue. I know your plan is not to get an H1B but let's be realistic here. You will not tell your employer to not file it when the time comes. There may be a misalignment of your college degree and your DA role during filing.

4) Ivy league school for tech at best says that you're above average. That's it. This is not to demotivate you but to make you realise that it's a huuuuuuge pool of applicants. My wife is graduating from Penn (MS CS) this May and she has nothing lined up as well. All her friends are freaking out and only a handful have offers.

- New Comment: H1B sponsorship is very expensive for companies to take on. It takes manpower dealing with the government too. Many companies just don't want to take on the cost and time. It's easier to hire a US citizen to avoid the extra cost. Sorry that you're dealing with this but it's true.

- New Comment: I'm also graduating this May from one of top schools in California. I fully agree with you mate. I'm also not staying here permanently (trust me if not for my grad school, I would never come to LA). And another problem is the career service of my school. They say network more, go to event, be open?dude if I have to open more on what I have right now, I would better throw my soul into other?s body :(

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- New Comment: I feel you. This country is a mother***** but stay strong, you don't have to apply to "Google-like" tech companies look for smaller companies while you're on OPT. Then if the universe is by your side you might be able to get a bigger company later. Or if you're like me work your ass off that the xonpy will do almost anything to try and keep your say H1B or EB3.

All you have to do is stay put, do your best and keep calling your family when you're nearing a low point. Things will work out I promise your that

- New Comment: Dude go back to india. If you want I can provide references for some roles. I came to this country in 2014 it was ok at that time got job in 2016 after 4 months into opt worked there until 2021 left the country didnt get my h1b did 2 masters ..life now I came back as I got h1b .. H1b life is pathetic compared to F1 and opt.. Im experienced got 11 full time jobs but not a single sponsorship . Indians and chinese are the ones effected much as no one stays in f1 or h1 for 6 years most of them will already be citizens.. Go back if you can find job in India .. When I went to india in 2021 i was able to secured a job in MNC my life is so good no stress.. Now on h1b its too streeful to find a job begging everyone for sponserhip

- New Comment: There are 2 sides to this.

1. Growth.

I have been where you are. But I must have applied to 3000+ jobs. The general run is 1 or 2 calls out of 100 applications. 1000 applications for intern/coop, 9 calls, 5 first round, 2 interviews until last round, settled with 1 offer. Almost similar story with full time and change of job. During 2015 software/tech/data was selling like hot cakes but I was unfortunately in industrial, addiotional challenge and also no ChatGPT to help automate resume and cover letter process.

It?s competition man everywhere. It?s always the person who puts in more effort gets the task done. Now you have to figure out what?s your motivation to be in this competition. Find a few things they make you happy on low days and get back on the grind the next day. Balance sports, gym, studies, girlfriend, family, personal hobbies on top of the struggle/grind. You can?t ignore 1 thing for too long, them immediately if your foundation is shaken and you would feel

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like what's happening now.

2. Never ending grind.

There will always be a grind. There will always be corporate politics. Some government economy issue, right now it's tech company stability. For far too long tech companies kept growing without roadmap and got paid like crazy not tech companies are not hiring and trying to stability the rampant salary. So the problem may not be you at all. It some weird law/politics. You shouldn't sssociate your worth to it.

The whole life will be balancing 1 and 2. When to grow, when to slow down. I may not be able to help you in this situation directly but I am confident this too shall pass. Come on you are in ivy lesque school. I am sure there's some substance to your smarts. You got it man! Just remember for next time, create a proper plan. A back up plan. A back up to a back up plan.

All the best

- New Comment: technically you can say no because of OPT and if thats an issue you they legally cannot fire you once you submit your i-9 verification so try doing that and you will get more responses

source: i go to a top 5 CS school and landed 4 internship offers

- New Comment: Don't let your emotions ruin your potential.

1. This year the job market is rough. Not to you only. Other people who have families, mortgages, no parents for financial backup, or being single parents are all facing the tough market. Therefore, you should not blame anyone at all.

2. US-born top CS, CE grads also apply 200+ job applications, practice interview questions, and well trained on the questions (search in Amazon, there are books). Your 'gained interview per job applied' ratio is low. This indicated that you need to improve your resume. Hire someone \$200-300 to improve your resume. Remember do not skip cover letter

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and also write thank you email after the interview.

Whether to go home or stay is up to you. However, do not blame the U.S. or the system. Everyone in the world is facing uncertainty in this AI era.

- New Comment: This is my first time posting on Reddit since I am connected to your situation and what you are going through.

I went through the same but about 20 years ago, when I did my masters.

My advice to you is to not let negative thoughts seep in. In a couple of years you will look back and laugh at this situation.

Reason: Career will not stop for those pursuing with positive attitude.

Don't fret on results. Just prepare hard and accept worse case and sleep happily.

As long as you do your best in trying and enjoy the journey, you will eventually settle in a job you will be pursuing.

Health is all that matters and learn to be happy as both are related. Trust me, things will work out.

Good luck to you!!

- New Comment: are you focusing on internships? that may change your numbers a bit

- New Comment: I don't mean to be rude. The situation is the same for everyone. Being in the Ivy League and majoring in Data side, especially for an MEng, which is relatively easy to get into, doesn't make you special.

Reddit Posts

I sympathize with you. However, I don't appreciate the notion that an Ivy League tag will secure you a job. Applying to 250 jobs is not significant. International students often apply to hundreds of jobs. So, stop feeling sorry for yourself and start thinking of ways to improve your situation. Good luck!

- New Comment: I'll say that even with a green card and 10 years experience, I've only got one call back from the HR out of the 250-300 jobs I've applied in the last couple of months. And that one HR call didn't even go any further. So even without needing sponsorship I'm in the same boat ????

- New Comment: It's not an advice nor do I recommend following this route but I, after applying for over a thousand positions back in 2015 and truly answering the sponsorship questions during the 11 months of my opt, decided to answer no to those questions because why not, I had only one month of opt left and wasn't ready to go back home empty handed. I, soon after, lucked out on a job offer that I quickly accepted. I had already lost my first chance at H1B because I didn't have a job in my first year of opt and when I did get the job, I decided not to bring the sponsorship up because I had answered no to those questions. But sooner I became indispensable at my job and found the right opportunity to bring it up to my manager that I would need sponsorship to continue working but I didn't share much details like it's a lottery or this is my last chance etc. My manager didn't even flinch and approved my H1B filing including responding to RFE and premium processing. It was my last shot at H1B but I wasn't scared whatsoever because I was able to get tons of experience under my belt, recoup my loans and my company was ready to explore other avenues for me if I didn't get selected in the lottery. But guess what, I got my H1B picked and approved and fast forward to today, I'm a GC holder and would be applying for my citizenship next year. So put your nose on the grindstone and keep applying, your future you will thank you for not giving up today.

- New Comment: Well, congrats on your great achievements. If it's an Ivy League school and you have no debt due to scholarships then you're probably one of the very few. Which is good news for you.

Now, the real question, the way I read your post, is why do u HAVE TO get a job in the US. if you think it's not worth it, and you want to go back to your home country or any other country, just graduate and start applying to positions outside

Reddit Posts

of the US. It's not 'letting yourself down' when you prioritize your mental health.

- New Comment: Its hard to get job now. Market is not good
- New Comment: Bro, hold on. The first job is the hardest. Also, on the side note sounds like you are in denial, if you didnt care about staying that much you would not think so much about not getting a job (given you dont even have a loan). Keep applying and applying. Took me a lot of interviews, and even more applications to get my first job.
- New Comment: The worst-case scenario is to open your paper company, and you can stay three years and job search. Don't give you shit to your mental stability (check ISSS for the conformation)
- New Comment: Can you make an appointment with a counselor or therapist? They can help you manage the stress and talk through your problems. Your mental health is important. Please take care!
- New Comment: Unfortunately some companies extend the question to include OPT. I'm currently on OPT and applying to an airline . My plan was to say NO until I saw ...or OPT ?.
- New Comment: Really sorry OP. I understand what you're going through. Keep pushing. If you have any money save it. Keep applying. If it doesn't work out at least you can say you did your best. Don't feel like a failure for returning home, if you have welcoming parents your mental health will be a lot better than here but i also understand needing to leave here with something more than just the degree but you cant employ yourself. You can only apply and do your best. Chin up. Life is long, and this is just a small part if it. Whichever way it goes there will be both good and not so good that comes from it. Hang tight my friend. And this is coming from someone who lost their H1b and haven't been working for a year, not the same boat but definitely same model haha, im just taking it a day at a time. You should to.
- New Comment: Always remember what your parents went through to put where you are right now. When things get hard, do know that you should take help - however difficult you feel. Just do it. Consult a therapist, or a doctor to begin with. Practicing Meditation, Gratitude, and helping others in need does wonders on your mental being.

That said, enjoy life. Work life is not every thing. You have scholarship, so why take unnecessary tension? Just enjoy

Reddit Posts

college and give your best! Things will fall in place.

- New Comment: In the same boat applying data roles, graduating in May 2024, not in Ivy League tho. Super scared of what's ahead!

- New Comment: As an international student who goes to t10, I regret coming to the US.

- New Comment: I don't know what is back home for you but if it's india then try to get a job with one of the us firms in their india offices. Your visa situation is temporary but your degree and skills are permanent. If you don't get a us job and have to go to india to work, You can always come back to the us through a company transfer route.

- New Comment: You got this man, we got this.

- New Comment: I'm in the same boat as you. Tbh, I've started to look for jobs in Europe and India. I've gotten more callbacks, where they actually value my degree and experiences.

- New Comment: I'm in kinda same boat as you. But I did all my fretting before coming here. I legit used to have panic attacks back in Jan of 2023 about how I'll handle all this.

I'm also on heavy antidepressants which helps. But I realized one thing that there's no point in fretting over all this now.

The only thing I can do now is see it through. I'll give my 100% and beyond, and if after that I fail, it wasn't my fault.

I don't want it on my conscience that I lacked efforts.

And you are in a better condition than 99% of us since you don't have to worry about finances and are enrolled in an ivy, which is a huge plus.

About your 250 applications, those are rookie numbers, you gotta pump those numbers up. I've seen people applying for 1000 jobs to land 1.

Reddit Posts

It's tough out here but you gotta power through it. Cause that's the only thing you can do.

Godspeed.

- New Comment: If you went to an ivy you should apply to government jobs in small mid western towns.

- New Comment: Tech is a going show right now. It's not you.

- New Comment: Can you go back? Honestly I'd take the signs and collect my mental health and go home. It's not worth it.

- New Comment: I relate big time with this post. Don't mean to undermine what you're going through, I've been through my own hell. This country doesn't seem worth the mental agony it puts us through. My biggest peeve has been the fact that you can't explore other career paths or find any kind of job to make ends meet and have to stick to the path you studied for. I hate how limited opportunities are in the US for international students, while there's a constant trumpet of how the US has the unlimited opportunities for people. The mindset of earning in dollars is also rather ignorant and naive, when you have to spend in dollars for survival. The current economic climate is just out to get us and fuck us. Unfortunately, I'm still here, still looking for a job.

- New Comment: I've been in a similar situation, also worse because I didn't get into a full time 8 months into my OPT - a lot of people kept encouraging me and guess what it is true when people say there's light at the end of the tunnel. I'd say continue doing what you do, give your best and wait. Be patient, it'll all be worth it! You can also dm me.

- New Comment: Look for jobs outside the US. Canada is a good place to look at, middle east is perfect paying 6 figures with accommodations and living expenses covered.

- New Comment: To answer ?No? for the question is such a dumb advice, in theory the complete question is something like do you now or in the future would need sponsorship? You have to answer that truthfully because let's say you clear all your rounds and when it's time for submission for your documents, they would know and the offer would be revoked.

Reddit Posts

You still have few months before you graduate, work on improving your resume, get some certifications and just put your head down and keep on applying on anything which you find relevant. It's all a numbers game. Also I know it's easier said than done but rejection is part of the process especially when you looking for your first job on top of that in data science domain.

I was a master student myself and I really really know what you are going through. DM me if you absolutely need anything.

- New Comment: I went through the same still regretting? short answer you don't need sponsorship is fine to say it, is one of the OPT benefits, now? h1b visa roulette is harder every year? companies after covid are ok hiring remote? see post on SF or NYC local talent is competing with remote against lower salaries? sponsored employment based green card times are pretty much doubled? immigration wise its easier to have a child in US or marry a local.. tech talent is going back to their home countries or not coming at all? I regret because now my kids are used to live here but I could be making so much money living abroad and working remote

- New Comment: Idk if you should be frank to companies about not wanting H1B. From the employer's perspective, hiring a junior engineer, who they have no hope in retaining more than 3 years, is an unprofitable business decision.

- New Comment: As someone that has been here since 2012 and came for college and studied architecture the anxiety never stops.. unless you get married or something or you get lucky enough to get sponsored early on. You have a long road ahead of you if you do stay. I am not sure that it was worth it though but it is for you to decide.

- New Comment: If it makes you feel better, I am in one of the top 3 CS schools in the country and I saw many people getting their job as late as May.

You should contact your trusted seniors already working in companies. Referrals have higher chance. Also look for startups.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: My company is putting me in the H1B lottery which I haven't gotten picked from twice now, it feels so pointless and dehumanizing.
- New Comment: Got my masters from a respectable institute. Landed a job in 30 days after graduation. Got promoted within 3 months. Worked my ass off and saved the organization \$200K+ in 10 months. H1B lottery didn't work out, but my husband is here so I'm stuck here too. :) if there's nothing holding you back, I would suggest LEAVE. I've been unemployed for 7 months now and I live in a small ghost town in Wisconsin with no friends and family around. I may be losing my mind lol
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: You would answer no to the sponsorship question. You don't need sponsorship.
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: ?Still? it's January and you graduate in May. Most roles for May/June aren't even posted and you've applied for roles that are immediate hire. It's not an internship where they post almost a year in advance.
- New Comment: I understand your frustration and its hard to find right help at the right time but taking advise and improving your approach will help you in the long run. Couple of things you had computer engineering degree, but why data analyst? If its not working you have to pivot there is lot of demand right now with use of tools, get a certification in PowerBi and do project to showcase your skills try using Open AI. If i am hiring an entry level analyst or developer I look for motivation, creativity you know skill can be later developed with experience, its one thing to talk about your skills in an interview and another thing to actually showing them, also helps you with confidence.
- New Comment: If you have no plans on staying after OPT your best bet is contract roles. Get into 1 year contracts they dont care if you stay for more than one year so they don't care about your visa.
- New Comment: One thing I realized way early that here finding a job is itself a skill. You might be from top university and one of the best mind in your industry. But if you cannot strategize how to land interviews it's waste of your talent.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Might not be the best advice but try applying for positions that are easier. I went through the same hell as you and the only position that would accept me was a job that I considered I was too good for. I definitely don't love my job and it took a while for me to swallow my pride. But it's still work experience and I get paid. I will be applying to grad school after my OPT ends lol.

- New Comment: 250 is rookie numbers.

​

I applied to 5500 jobs and got one interview, which got me the job.

- New Comment: I am very sorry to hear that you are having such a hard time. But, since you are graduating in May, there is still considerable time left to get a job. If you use the 2 month grace period, then your OPT will start in July and you will have 90 days (3 months) after your OPT starts to get a job, which means that you will have at least till October to get a job (I hope you don't have to wait till then).

I am assuming that you have applied for 250 positions in or around November/December/January which is not really a hiring period in the U.S, so I would not be surprised to see no responses from recruiters (if there are left any after the layoffs). Most of the new grads who graduate in May are hired around that time only, so there is still some time left. I know that the job market is really bad now, and it looks like a lot more applications will be needed to land a position.

P.S - I graduated in December 2022, and it took me 900+ applications from August 2022 to February 2023 to get a job which doesn't pay a lot, but has kept me afloat.

I wish you all the luck in the world.

- New Comment: Walmart, JpMorgan Chase, Amazon all hire an insane number of Data professionals, its not that hard

Reddit Posts

to find a job bro...

- New Comment: Don't think too much , keep applying for roles which your gut says to apply for , filter out things , do it step by step , don't thing too many things at once , everything seems hard , if it's meant to work out it will , and I believe even some experience of 1 year or even 6 months would be great , at least for you to gets roles in india or Middle East or somewhere around the world , don't think of sponsorship, I know many people will say comeback and all , but don't leave unless u spend your visa time , u never know u can find any good role , patience is key , this is the time when u make or break , don't break , no one can help you , with what's going on in your temple (brain) that motherfucker keeps on going 24/7 , I know , just be grateful , and keep on going , I won't give you specifics on what to do , or to go about hunting for job , because everyone in comments section is giving you specifics, but sometimes only simple words in support is needed , if you have studied analytics , I'm damn sure , you are tough , keep grinding , don't let the thoughts win

- New Comment: Make an account on Blind. Get recommended there.

- New Comment: No one is forcing you to stay. Head back home. We have plenty of people here now.

- New Comment: I empathize with your state of mind , given that I came to US for my masters in 2008 just as Great Recession was starting. 2008-2010 was one of the most stressful period of my life, given that I also had student loans and came from a lower middle class family in India. Having said that - US is also the most dynamic job market in the world where hustle will eventually get you results. You got to be strong and pass this slow down period in the economy. This eventually will pass and job market will blossom once again. You got to have a good circle of friends along with you- who can each offer support to each other. Take one day at a time and take assurance from experience of people who have passed through such times before. Focus on the variables you can control and hang in there. Best of luck !

- New Comment: Hey, if you're able to find a great job, amazing.

But set a time for yourself and if you are unfortunately not able to land one, and you're from India, come back and there are ample of really good jobs available here, which can match or at least come close to US compensation, provided you prove to them that you're good enough.

Reddit Posts

At least the decision will be merit and capability based and none of the visa stupidity will come in question.

- New Comment: Hey friend. As a born and raised American, I can tell you that living here is a scam.

Everything that enticed you here is a lie. Even after you get a job, you'll depend on it for nearly everything, and one misstep into our healthcare system will leave you financially indebted for years, health insurance is a nightmare to deal with. Any wrong move in the US adds debt to your account. Seriously, don't torture yourself by staying here.

I grew up laughably poor in a high crime area of SoCal and fended for myself after high school. Managed to get good grades and got a full ride to a reputable college on the west coast, eventually getting my masters from another well known east coast school. Now I have a stable and lucrative career in fintech. It took achieving the "American Dream" to realize it was a hoax. Realistically our country is held hostage by an unforgiving free market "dog eat dog" mentality that fosters no sense of inclusion or community.

Even after you land your job, you'll have to fight to keep it, and then do the process all over again when you apply for another company, and there are no employee protections.

I've lived in other parts of the world and I can tell you that the happiest people are the ones with the strongest communities. People need people, America teaches you to be distrustful and woefully independent. In the next few years I'll be moving out of this country, I'd suggest you do the same if you value connection and relationships over false promises of material gain. Good luck to you.

- New Comment: Start going to networking events. Try Upwork. And keep applying. Networking is the easiest way to get

Reddit Posts

an in though. You got this.

- New Comment: OP, I graduated in December and am still on a job hunt. Feel the same as you do, just not graduating from an ivy lol. So a little worse off perhaps. Anyway, just mass apply and hope for the best. Worst comes to worst you can just go back home and look for a job. Maybe spending your time learning the corporate life may set you well off. Especially with the Ivy League label. I really hope you do get a fantastic job, no matter what happens I'm sure you have a great future ahead of you. I don't have any feedback to give you as such, it I have been continuously improving my resume and helping my professor with research work. It's a good resume filler, experience filler and maybe your professor has some connections they can hook you up with. Good luck!

- New Comment: What country were you coming from?

- New Comment: A few things I did when I graduated and was searching for my first job on OPT:

1. Offer to volunteer at one of the research labs at CS department of your university. I'm sure there might be a of research labs at your university since you graduated from an Ivy League university. Volunteer only if they are providing a volunteering letter. Submit it to your DSO. This should be stop your OPT counter of days without unemployment. This should take a lot of stress off your back so that you can apply for jobs.

If you have a good rapport with the lab professor and he/she have enough funding they can also offer you some RA position which is a great start IMO.

2. In the current job market applying for 250 jobs is not enough. Aggressively apply for atleast 1000-2000 positions. I'm sure with your education background should be able to land a job at some startup as well. Average wait time to find a job is 4+ months. Drop your resume to recruiters on LinkedIn.

3. I haven't tried this personally but reach out to startups and offer to volunteer for them in exchange of a volunteering letter to help maintain your visa status.

Reddit Posts

I know it must be a stressful time but trust in your process and Keep on applying and wish you all the best!!!

- New Comment: Why don't you answer ?No? to the question; you wouldn't be lying.

- New Comment: Take it from someone who graduated twice during recession - you will be fine and you will find a job - right now companies are hiring folks who are experienced and experts in certain areas - GenAI, Cloud. Anyone coming fresh out of school is unfortunately, not a priority as companies have to spend money and time training them and making them productive. I expect things to take a turn by end of Q1 this year once interest rates go down and it becomes cheaper to borrow money and expand business. Do not give up on networking and stop wasting your time applying online. Find people on LinkedIn, go and meet them, build your brand and portfolio and tailor your resume to highlight your AI related skills. On a personal note: If you are regretting your decision to come to the US and are homesick then perhaps, you need to expand your horizons a bit and understand that happiness is something you gotta practice everyday - it is a state of mind. Recommend reading: Think like a Monk!

- New Comment: Go home and stop complaining, I'm sure where you came from isn't any better, but if it is, feel free to go back where you came from.

- New Comment: 250 is rookie numbers. I know a guy who applied for 1700 and got one interview. he is graduating in may and plans to able another 3-4k. stop whining and keep applying. the job market is crazy right now. it sucks for everybody.

- New Comment: It's a shame that the US is at a point where we're unable to keep talented grads. I've been wondering why my parents immigrated to a country that seems to value flash over actual knowledge and seems to keep its population purposefully dumb about finances.

Most likely you'll need to look at your personal network. It's something I'm loathe to use myself, but this is how you'd get past the questions that will unnecessarily hamper you.

Reddit Posts

Keep in mind that it's just not the best time for anyone right now, present company included, but there should be some enterprising company that will want to take advantage of your desperation to stay. You just may not want that job.

- New Comment: Why not apply to SWE roles.

- New Comment: GO BACK. The US sucks.

- New Comment: Okay, I am international student with F1 and only recently found a job. I marked no for ?do you need sponsorship in future?. This question comes up in the interviews, usually in the first round. I answer them honestly and I try to convince that 3 years is more than their average retention period. Haven?t worked for me but I know guys who got the role which aren?t sponsored. So, it really depends. The first year of OPT could be without compensation so take a job, any job to keep a valid authorization. Then start looking for a job that pays, aligns with your interests. I also started volunteering for a exec in company in my preferred industry to build industry experience, networks and learn. Its tough out there and I hope you can survive.

- New Comment: Writing as a third gen who happened upon your post.

I have a weird accent sometimes, a prospective employer's HR person who arrived 20 minutes late to my interview interrupted me during my interview to say "do you need sponsorship?" I said "I'm an American citizen" she said "we don't do that" in the most valley girl tone possible - she was Asian too, different kind than me. All of this was happening over the phone and I was interviewing for an African woman who had been in the US for 20+ years, started from one of the blue collar departments of the company I was applying to. This was all after I completed 3 years of work in the US + master's degree with a written thesis from a top 40 school.

It is okay to be too young to deal with this, it is okay to go home and do a few internships while asking to use one of your friends' addresses for corresponding with prospective employers in the US. If US is meant to be for you, it will happen. You could work for an international company and relocate - one of my co-workers just did this from New York to somewhere in APAC. The only thing you won't have again is your youth and the young age of your parents.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Unfortunately, I Volunteer at a local temple in Chicago and I meet many students at the temple. there are tons of students coming to USA on F1 Visa and they are having trouble finding a job because many companies don't want to sponsor them. It is a sad reality.

- New Comment: Sorry if it's somewhere buried in comments already - why don't you apply for swe roles? Those have way more spots for new grads.

- New Comment: Why don't you apply for H1 with help from some consulting firm? H1 does not mean you need to stay there for ever.

Secondly - your parents are most concerned about you than what you achieve. So don't let peer/societal pressures put you down.

Most important for any graduate/post-graduate is doing projects - personal projects and try to show case them during your interviews.

- New Comment:
https://www.efinancialcareers.com/news/the-fintech-boss-who-received-20-000-applications-for-five-jobs-it-s-sad?utm_source=GLOBAL_ALL_ENG&utm_medium=SM_FB&utm_campaign=ED_NEWS&fbclid=IwAR3TrN6TwTytmkQYyCdRtFiAeLLUhH4EYlxx--kECizOBRIic5v0wuPRo_aem_AbJa3ARKz_OLBq79bQlvoigFEQ7bCha3fB4rtHBd7CypYBmC6WqwOf_aq_acHmv3Jgo

- New Comment: I wouldn't put the blame entirely on sponsorship. At this point, the job market is literally going through a very bad phase, especially in the type of roles you are looking at. Analytics and data related roles were in high demand during the pandemic as many products/websites and applications witnessed a huge surge in consumer traffic. This led to huge hiring spree for such roles and these are the ones being affected now when such companies are downsizing. I'd suggest you to temporarily look at SWE roles for a bit before looking at switching. It's always easier to switch when you have a job and I do know quite a few people who did this.

- New Comment: Unfortunately job market is bad. If you are single and have some money saved, move to tech hubs and

Reddit Posts

apply from there. Many times resumes are tossed just cause your non-local.

- New Comment: Why you are so stressed out ? Markets are down May be because of that are asking sponsorship.

When you feel like coming here, come back if you want to.

- New Comment: You said you don't like the country, you miss home and you didn't even have to pay for school. Why don't you just go back then? I am sure with your background you will find something. You don't have to stick to the plan at all costs if you realized it's not for you.

- New Comment: Now imagine the parents who took out loans beyond comprehension and child can't find a job. You are fine. Relax and do your best or worst case you go home where you will be happy.

One thing we can't time is hiring recessions. And unfortunately you are in one. I speak from graduating twice during recessions and extended unemployment.

- New Comment: After being 10 yrs in US (did Masters and applied to 1000+ jobs with 50+ interviews) I want to break this misunderstanding for you. Do you need sponsorship is not whats not making you not get interview calls.

You are not getting calls because nobody is looking at your application!

The most efficient way to get calls are reaching out to hiring managers and recruiters directly either by guessing their email ids or thru LinkedIn or via referrals.

Is that the easiest way? No. But is there is a more efficient way? No!

- New Comment: What city you live in ?

- New Comment: Right now the tech market is terrible. Haven't your ehwr'd the news about people being laid off from Google, Meta, and other companies. Try applying to jobs in Canada if you can. Good luck

- New Comment: Don't forget that you came to study not to stay in this country.

That's the issue we face as visa holders, there's way to adjust your status but don't expect that all will be green at end of your visa stay.

Reddit Posts

Wishing you all the best and the world is vaste, and nothing like home.

Take it easy on yourself. Keep your head up.

- New Comment: I have a lot of friends in a very similar situation. And I see this is going one of two ways:

1. You realise that there?s nothing worthwhile you want to accomplish by staying back in the US for a year and you focus on recruiting big in your home country. With your parents potential network, the growing job market, and increasing opportunities, you could get an 8/10 gig there (whether as an employee or founder) versus a 5/10 role here.

2. You realise there is inherent value to staying back and working at a particular type of company before you head back and do you what you want to do. In that case, I?ve helped a bunch of my friends land roles at companies and startups using LinkedIn and networking.

Not sure how you?ve been applying to companies, if it?s just online, but I?d suggest starting with the networking first and full sending that. Every morning wake up, go on LinkedIn search, look for data companies (or any other relevant industry), set location to your dream locations, and start sending connection requests. Test between short notes, longer notes, and no notes where you send a message after. Generally being transparent here and saying you like what they do and you?re looking for a job is better. Try to get on a call learn more about the company, ask for relevant roles the team is looking at, other companies if the one you?re talking to is not too relevant. You?ll start seeing a lot more opportunities.

But again, don?t just stay here for a 5/10 when you can go back to where you might feel better with a 8/10 job.

DM me if you have any specific questions

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I applied to over 500 jobs last sem and lucked into one early this sem. A lot of dead job postings that aren't hiring anyone it seems. So what was 250 before is 500 now.

Have you reached out to alums on linkedin by using the alumni list that is typically shared through career services?

Don't give up, but be ready to go back home and apply to US jobs from here. Your OPT only begins when you start working so you have 3 years granted to you in the US either way.

- New Comment: Read through Anthropic's website and their offer to support sponsorship. I think you got it right to prioritize quality over quantity. It sounds cliché but find the jobs and companies that actually align with your needs and work them like a sales account or a school app. One day at a time.

- New Comment: Why aren't you applying to mechanical engineering roles? Data is going to be super affected by tech layoffs

- New Comment: So you are here on a full ride from a foreign country and are complaining about the USA?? Why didn't you just go to school in your own country?

- New Comment: Analytics roles have the highest competition.

Folks from all majors apply to analytics roles.

Leverage your comp eng degree and apply to roles on the engineering/systems side, you might be better off!

And if you really want to get into analytics you can always make a switch after starting.

- New Comment: Not everyone is cut out for a life and career in the US. Besides you're a CS major, one of the most generic, saturated fields. Go back and be with your parents.

- New Comment: Dude! You don't have loans and your parents are supportive and you're happier back home, these are bigger reasons to leave than what you think as letting yourself down, how are you letting yourself down if the system is broken? You shouldn't take this so personally! It's not you! Go back home and save your mental health, this ain't

Reddit Posts

worth it!

- New Comment: Just don't mention at all, I said I don't need sponsorship (OPT doesn't), if they even mention "what about after OPT expires?" I said I have an additional process (which I do) and won't need authorization. If they approve that process or not is a different story lol.

Once your OPT expires just say oh too bad bye, they hide the truth to potential employees anyway, you're just using the same strategy to your favor

Title of the post: After 1 year of job searching on OPT

Body of the post: I finally, finally did it. Long story short, after a little more than a year of rejections and ghosting with literally one week left before having to pack up and go home, somehow I have two job offers both willing to sponsor me for an H1B.

The day before I got the offers, I mentally checked out and had completely given up. I brought up my work authorization and sponsorship needs with one company after the initial job offer and they stopped responding for a few days, and the other one took 2 months from the interview to offer me the job so I wasn't even expecting to hear from them.

I still can't believe it, and I still have worries about the future, but I wanted to share for those who want to keep trying. There's absolutely nothing wrong with calling it early, but if you want to keep trying and are able to, it's possible that things will work out last minute. Happy to answer any questions. My degree was in computer science.

EDIT: trying to get back to everyone's questions but it's gonna take a bit, promise I will get to all of you though!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Congrats! What did your everyday look like within that year?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I am so happy for you. And at the same time so so worried for myself, I'm graduating in march and already so stressed. No interview lined up. What was your job search strategy and what all you learned. Do's and don't for fellow job seekers in this market.
- New Comment: 1. Did you just do Undergraduate or MS as well.
2. Any internships during college?
3. What college if you dont mind and how were your stats etc?
- New Comment: Congrats this post make me so happy. I might cry ?I graduated in Dec applying for jobs. No call backs or interviews so far. Hoping for this to change.
- New Comment: I've had very good luck with academic positions (nothing fancy, certainly not teaching positions, just doing research since I don't even have a PhD), but it's been relatively straightforward to get those. I don't think every field works for such positions though, but I've found that to be a great option. I've not been successful with any industry position I've applied to.
- New Comment: Congratulations!!!!???
- New Comment: I know the struggle. I respect your hustle and thank you for sharing your struggle. Also Congratulations, you deserve it.
- New Comment: How can one go for the self employed route on OPT? Do you need a green card co-signer?
- New Comment: Congratulations! Treat yourself to something nice tonight. Maybe some good dessert or whatever you fancy
- New Comment: Congratulations, OP! That's so nice to hear! With the job market really unstable now, people who are graduating this spring/summer like me are getting anxious. It's so good to see that your diligence paved way for you. Go nail it at the workplace now, best wishes :)
- New Comment: congrats! is it a SWE job? what was the interview process like?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Which company? Is it a contract or full time. I see most of them are getting contracts with fake job experience.

- New Comment: Can you give details regarding job role, interview process, your tech stack on cv, also is it mid size company or startup or big tech

- New Comment: Congratulations OP ? happy for u. Can you shed some light on how you fed yourself financially during this one year because volunteering doesn't pay right? So is it all our savings or do we have a way to earn for our living

- New Comment: Dang Congrats!

How do you find not one but two employers willing to sponsor H1B for you?

Any secret on how to find those? When you apply do you select yes when they ask if you need sponsorship?

These days when I go on LinkedIn, all I see is ?we will not hire anyone that need sponsorship? or ?sponsorship not available? ?

- New Comment: Congratulations!! OP giving hopes to all the unemployed.

- New Comment: Isn't opt for three years

- New Comment: I?m a CS major graduating this fall. When should I start caring and applying for full time based on ur experience? I?m happy for u btw.

- New Comment: When you applied for jobs how many did you apply per day. Did you reach out to the team or post on LinkedIn. Did you do anything to standout?

- New Comment: Congratulations ?

- New Comment: Good luck!

- New Comment: Congratulations!! That phase can be nerve wrecking

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Hello OP, I dmedt you about reviewing my resume. I am in a similar situation as you with no job for a year on OPT and I uploaded my resume on Reddit and got no feedback. Can you please help me?. Please ??
- New Comment: Congratulations ????? currently in the same boat of applying and waiting to hear back. It?s been 6 months applying
- New Comment: Congratulations! Quick question about your resume- did you run them through ATS to match it to the job description? Because it?s been really hard to get interviews from any job postings on LinkedIn even in spite of doing that!
- New Comment: Congrats man! How did you exactly do this for 1 year without a job? Can you explain? I might be stepping into the boat you just left
- New Comment: Isn't opt for three years ?
- New Comment: Hey, I have a quick question regarding OPT, mind if I dm you?
- New Comment: Congratulations
- New Comment: Congrats.

I've been on the market for the last year and a half. Gotten to some final rounds at some big names. No luck. Pretty much called it quits at this point.

It's nice to see that at least someone else in my situation is doing well. Puts a smile on my face.

- New Comment: Congrats!

You mentioned that one company responded back after 2 months. Did you follow up with the recruiter and hiring manager during this time? Were they responding to your follow-up emails. Have you ever felt that after follow-up email, your chances of moving ahead decline?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: What is your major?

- New Comment: Hope. ?

Congratulations.

- New Comment: Did you apply for jobs before graduation

- New Comment: How did you manage to maintain 90 day unemployment opt rule?

- New Comment: Hey how can one search jobs on OPT for a year? I thought we had 90 days after OPT start date to find a job? Can anyone let me know how we can stop the clock? Thanks!

- New Comment: With so much negativity everywhere, this post is the ray of hope to keep going. I read about your schedule and I respect that hustle a lot. Are there any technical resume reviewers in particular that you would recommend?

- New Comment: Congrats bro!!

I'm just a freshman in cs, so would be really grateful for tips on what kind of projects, or programs better to start doing.

And how would you change your own path from freshman year in undergrad if you could ?

Thanks for answering!

- New Comment: **Congrats!**

- New Comment: While applying on LinkedIn do you see the same job posting every single day? Like if I search for software engineer the algorithm will populate the same job posting that I've applied to or the ones I've hidden.

What's your take on that? What kind of filters to use to search efficiently?

- New Comment: Sorry to see all the opts going through this stress even sending thousand and thousand of dollars

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Congrats, OP, you did it!!!
- New Comment: Congrats OP! Happy it worked out!

Title of the post: Never felt so lost in life

Body of the post:

I 24(M), just been feeling like a loser since a long time now. I have always had a knack for technology, computers and stuff and have been good at it. So pursued undergrad in CS from India, realized that pure coding wasn't for me so then went for Masters in Information Systems from US which was a more business management + tech focused degree.

Right now in US, struggling to land even an interview as a fresher for even entry level Analyst roles. And more than that, I'm just so unhappy here. I'd taken an education loan which I want to pay off myself that's the only reason I wish to get a job here otherwise I feel miserable over here. I learnt cooking, staying independently, doing all the chores on my own after coming here but I just don't feel happy. I've always wanted to move back in few years once the loan was paid cause I want to stay with my family and being an only child, my parents have also wanted the same. But right now, I'm in this constant battle with myself on what to do?

At one point, I feel like going back and finding something in India but at the same time I feel ppl around me will call me a loser for not able to find a job in US after spending so much after my masters degree. My parents have been very supportive in that regard, they ask me to not take any stress and are fine with my decision to come back if I want to.

But it's not that, lately scrolling thru reddit, linkedin etc, reading job posts of ppl, I just feel so under confident that I'm doubting if I'm even employable. Like if I'll even be able to find a job back in India. I feel like shit man! I was always a good student and I've just loved diving deep in technology and learning new things around it. I was literally better than most friends my age around me when it came technology and here I am feeling so low about myself. Idk what to do!

Reddit Posts

Should I keep trying in US? I've 1 year to try and find something! Or should I return back? Will I be able to find something back in my country? Will that be the right thing to do? Will I be able to pay off the loan eventually from India?

What will society think of me?

The list goes on?.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: More power to you man! Hope you land a job that not only helps you pay your loan back but something you actually like!

- New Comment: One sentence in your paragraphs long post was enough to make a decision if it was me - ?I'm just so unhappy here?. If I didn't have the American dream and didn't get a job and was just unhappy to live in a country that wasn't my home I would go back immediately. It's not worth it to stay on a temporary visa if you don't even like where you're staying.

However I do have the dream and am following it, so I'm happy with my decision to stay in the U.S. forever :) you just need to follow what makes you happy!

- New Comment: Everything will be fine! Just relax! Zoom out and think where you are as a person, as a human and appreciate life! Try your best to find job in US till legally eligible time! If you can't find job, then you can try in India. Trust yourself, support yourself! Life always teaches in a hard way, glad you can do so much on your own! If you don't have anyone to talk or share, feel free to dm me! Good luck!!

- New Comment: Do yourself a favor and stop scrolling LinkedIn feed. Use it only for the job postings. I avoid the feed like the plague.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Same here and on same stage.

Keep trying and keep pushing.

- New Comment: Exact same situation, 24 M, undergrad computer science, masters information systems, don't like coding. Market is fucked up right now and specially for people with no experience it is just crazy.

1000s of People applying for a single entry level roles.

- New Comment: In your position my first question would be, can I pay back the loan on an Indian salary. If you're not sure of your employability back home, you can start applying there same as you're applying in the US. Unfortunately, student debt does rather limit your options.

I'm not in your field but we hire a lot of internationals, and unfortunately it's just really hard to overcome the extra hurdle that comes with visa sponsorship+uncertainty of US work immigration when you're entry level. If your resume is education only, no work experience (or interesting research, idk what else matters in your field), your resume is probably not strong enough to make it through a generic online application process. You can try networking, but generally yeah, the expectation in the US is that a person especially with a master's has a fair amount of relevant work experience, which is an unpleasant revelation for the many people coming from other cultures where it's normal for people to not work at all until they complete all their education.

- New Comment: I am not Indian so I don't know the loan dynamics work in India. But if you are expected to pay off the loan from your own pocket or if your parents would be stressed out from paying your loan then I'd highly recommend you stay in the US and find a job to pay off that loan. Sometimes situations would require you to take decisions that are beyond your emotions or feelings. The most important thing is that you are in the US and sometimes looking for jobs isn't always as easy as it seems. Even some PhD students find it difficult to land jobs at times so don't give up yet. Keep searching and applying for open positions in your field you will eventually land one job.

- New Comment: Bruv, I'm a US citizen and I especially feel this way when it comes to internships. It's a hardass

Reddit Posts

market right now and there is not much we can do about that.

Like other people said, just keep applying till you have to go back. And even if u have to go back it?s not the end of the world. You can land a job there bc at least u are educated, especially educated in the states. Not many people can say that or take that away from you.

- New Comment: going back to india looks like best option for u dont worry u have talent so u will have no trouble finding a job !! good luck

- New Comment: I feel every word you typed. Going through the same exact thing. Feels like I?ve almost lost sense of who I am trying to adjust and live here. And the job hunt doesn?t make things easier. Hang in there and just know that even if there ever arises a situation where you have to go back to India, there is no shame in that at all and it doesn?t make you a loser. I feel that all the time too and then I tried telling myself that even if I do go back, it?s with a masters degree and I?m not useless at all. You can hmu if you ever need to talk

- New Comment: In US atm you need luck not skills

- New Comment: Just relax and tackle small steps at a time. Almost all F1 students sail in the same boat. Times are tough, but you have to be strong. Today you are finding it tough to find a job, tomorrow there will be something new. Just be yourself and trust the process and don't think about society too much.

- New Comment: > I?m just so unhappy here

> I feel ppl around me will call me a loser for not being able to find a job in US

Those are not the kind of people worth keeping around anyway. The people who really do care about you would want you to be happy (even if that means going back) instead of judging you for not getting a job in the US.

- New Comment: I'm in ur similar stage !!! Keep finding and hope for the best man. Dont blame yourself...tbh no one is

Reddit Posts

getting job here..market is bad ..lets wait!!

- New Comment: Hey man

Take care, ik how it feels when you have a large loan to pay off

But keep on trying, you will get through!

- New Comment: I understand your situation and I am sorry you are feeling that way. However, you said it yourself, you have the option to go back home. I know the loan situation is stressful, but you might find yourself having better chances back in India than being constantly stressed in the US. Money comes and goes, it's just money, and you have the skills to find a job. Reality hits so hard here in the US once you start living day by day. I'm also an international student looking for a job in the US and I know for sure that if it doesn't work out, and if the times comes I'm going back to my country, I'm lucky to have that possibility. There is no point in being constantly stressed and feeling miserable over things I can't even control. You are not a loser, you did what you had to do and you got your degree, that is fucking impressive. We got this!

- New Comment: Bhai india vapis chala jah

- New Comment: What society and others think of you, not worth it. Even if u start earning million dollars there will be someone to complain. Next finding job in us or in india both are going to be tough. Atleast if you work here you can pay back loan way faster and may be even have some savings sorted if u decide to go back.

And your parents and well wishers are ones to whom you are answerable to as they just want you to be happy. You have one year. Try your best and see things will fall in place.

I always go by these two quote

?Whatever happens happens for good. You just need to be strong enough to wait and see when the good starts showing up.?

Also

Reddit Posts

?You did not go all this for nothing?

I am bad with inspiring folks or giving too much learnings but i know you will be good. Just try to breathe and solve one thing at a time

- New Comment: Sorry you are facing this. From reading your post, it feels like paying off your loans is the most pressing issue, otherwise you would just go back to India. If that is correct, consider taking up research assistantship roles at universities, i.e., something that is easier to get, and pays enough to pay a big chunk (if not all) of your loan back. Then go back and apply for roles in India. Consider also not sticking only to tech roles, but applying to roles in banking etc as well.

​

All the best. America can become very lonely without family, so consider strongly going back and/or applying for jobs in India already

- New Comment: Me graduating this summer.??

- New Comment: Except the loan problem, every single point you mentioned resonated with me. I just got a job after a lot of struggle too and idk what advice I can give but if you want support, DM me bro happy to talk.

- New Comment: I feel the same way. I started off as an MIS major and just added an Accounting as my other major to improve my chances. I couldn?t even land an internship here

- New Comment: ?Will you help me pay it??. This is a money grab. Go back to India where people do that everyday to Americans. I mean who?s collecting on US student loans from people in India. What jobs are you applying for? There is a lot out there. How are you paying your student Loans now? Go on YouTube and look up Scammer Payback. They will help you if you help them take down the millions of people in India stealing from Americans. You?re of value. However you didn?t explain the difference in how you would pay here or there then came straight out with the will you pay. Sad.

Reddit Posts

Lots of jobs in the US. No one send this person money until they explain what difference it would make on paying if they were here or there without a job.

- New Comment: Nah go back to India

- New Comment: Hey which college was it. Can you dm me if possible.

- New Comment: Take a break and you'll be fine.

- New Comment: same dude applied close to 300 internships not a single offer or interview. ?

- New Comment: Are these people who are going to call you loser going to pay all or any of your loans? Or are these people going to help your parents while you are away?

Why always bother about those 4 people who show up only to your funeral to lift you till your grave?

- New Comment: Dont listen to no MFS BRUH

INDIAN HERE , I FEEL YOU

FOR US ITS LIKE GOING through SOLIDARITY AND SHIT

But yo, the thing is bhai yaha pe duniya madarchod hai and the only thing which make you out of discomfort is you gotta say whatever you want and takk to to whoever you want here , maybe like a crazy nerd talkative guy, people will really help you out here, and also small jobs outaide under table jobs not bad, its a way here ...

You've lerned cooking thats not archery medal man, you are in a culture where baap tell his son to get fuck out as soon 18 or start paying for every small shit.

And my guy if you wanna make your way out just meet some nighas around the corner and they tecach you, but better work in a customer centric environment so you can talk to people alot.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: OP, please know you're not alone in feeling this way. I'm not from India but I'm also an international student with a student loan. If I have to go back to my country (Eastern Europe), I will have a very hard time paying off the loan and I'll also feel like a failure, so for me, the option to go back is plan Z. I am not happy in the US right now and I haven't been happy in awhile. Another person in this comment section mentioned they lost sense of who they were because of this. I feel the same, I lost all sense of confidence in myself and I don't know why since I came to this country all by myself and I've been through so much. And now all my confidence is gone because I can't impress some lame ass recruiters who don't care about me whatsoever. We are worth so much more than that and we should remind ourselves of this every day!!! Stay strong and don't give up - at least that's what I tell myself.

- New Comment: Good luck and keep pushing man. There is a saying in my language that goes like "knowing someone is better than knowing something", sometimes even if you asked every technical questions, the person that knows the right person might still have better chance at landing the job. My advise is to try to expand your network while you are at it, you never know someone someday might just have something for you!

- New Comment: IT is one of the most saturated fields in the US. A major %age of foreign students, mainly from India come to the US and face similar struggles as you. I know people who are in the same boat as you right now. Unfortunately, having good grades isn't enough, you need a holistic resume that showcases you have strong experience, certifications and skills that make you a unique candidate. The American job market is very different to India in that aspect and frankly if getting a job while on OPT is proving difficult, getting an employer to sponsor your H1B will be a nightmare. In the end, even after all that, if you're not happy its not worth it. You came to the US for a good education and got it! You're an adult, so stop worrying about what ppl think and take charge of your own life by taking steps that make you happy. I knew a friend who was unhappy like you, he went back to India, got a great job in Bangalore and is happier than ever. So imo, nothing worth more than being happy, thats the only reason I decided to live in the US, because it makes me happy, the day it dsnt, I'll pack my bags. Go home, be with your family and be happy.

- New Comment: You came this far and need to walk bit more to make your parents proud and be independent. So I

Reddit Posts

would say don't lose hope.

If you aren't getting any interviews then I would highly recommend to be little bit more creative to tailor your resume according to job description and keep applying. Also make contact with HR/Managers through LinkedIn and ask them for any opportunities. If possible then you make consider to buy LinkedIn subscription (as they give many perks). Apart from this to fill job application use Simplify so that you can fill application much faster. And talk with your friends as they're great support system.

Again, don't lose hope!! Keep going.....!

- New Comment: the competition is 10x more in India, so you will swap competing with 1000s with 10000s

- New Comment: You are not a loser. The worst thing American society has thrust upon the world is the concept of winners and losers. There is no such thing.

Second, you should ideally find work that you have a talent for. You say you have a knack for tech, then stick with it. That said, I think entry level analysts might be harder than entry level development. Maybe get into development (everyone can code) and find a path to analyst.

Third, when you say you have a loan you want to pay off _yourself_ - why yourself? It's just adding stress you don't need right now.

I was freaking out too, months post graduation and no job, My advisor told me it's a common experience, you apply to a 100 to get 1 interview. You're probably doing this, but knowing it's how things work, helps.

And lastly, the US is not the only country in the world. At your stage of life, the world is your oyster. :)

Good luck!

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Dont care what others might think, if you are successful back home then they will think you made a right decision.

Mental health is really important and money is secondary.

Im really curious though, i discouraged my cousins to come to the US but they still came. Whats driving the youth to come here, dont you folks do any research before coming or is that feeling of teenage invincibility that drives you to take risks?

- New Comment: Even my American friends are struggling with finding jobs nowadays you're not alone. I'm an international student as well and I definitely feel you with the question of "to stay or to go back". It sounds like either way will benefit you. Staying for a job for a little while if you can will make your future job hunting process easier. But just don't do it because you care about what others would see you.

- New Comment: +1 to what most people have been saying.

One additional piece of advice I can give you is: try applying to jobs in places you normally will exclude, but actually have jobs waiting for you. For example, I found a wonderful job at the university I graduated from in their IT department.

Try looking for public sector IT work in general. There's a severe shortage of qualified people who are willing to learn, partially because these places don't advertise it. And nobody who takes these jobs advertises on LinkedIn either.

Don't give up hope yet. There is still time.

- New Comment: Just keep trying. If you love tech so much then you need to expand your skill set. If you are not getting calls from analyst role. With your CS background try software dev, do a JavaScript course. Try to make some front end projects, it's easier than backend and you don't have to be a pro DSA for cracking Front end interviews. Create a wix portfolio, create git profile. I myself had a CS degree from India and masters in MIS. I am currently doing job as a software engineer. Give your all I am sure you will land a job, don't beat yourself up. Try your best and if nothing works

Reddit Posts

here you go back India with an improved skill set. The tech scene in India is real good and even freshers get good packages. With your masters you will have an edge and you can easily pay off your loan. At the same time spend time with your family. Don't think about what people will say, it's your life. Just keep your head down and keep working.

- New Comment: OP, I just wanna say that you are not alone in this. Take care of yourself. There is only so much you can do and you aren't in control of everything.

Are you currently doing unpaid work to keep up with your OPT status?

Sometimes it's okay to give up and change plans. No need to push so hard to the point that you are miserable. Given that you have a year left, it's still uncertain to say whether you will have an employer that's ok with sponsoring and the bigger question is if you would be picked for the lottery.

I understand how you feel because same. Although, going back to your home country shouldn't be considered a bad thing, but unfortunately it is perceived as one. If I were you, I'd start looking for work in other countries.

- New Comment: It sounds like you're so unhappy you just want to quit and move back home. Mental health is important, and if you don't have the energy to try you might not be doing your best in trying to find a job (or sabotaging it).

The problem with analyst roles is that it is very generic and people from different fields can get it: CS, IT, and even people from business school. And it may be hard to find a company willing to sponsor someone for a visa when they could get someone locally who would cost cheaper to hire and have native US communication skills. Couple that with all the tech layoffs and competition is extremely fierce. It's a bad time to be job-searching for an IT position right now.

With a master's degree, you tend to be over qualified for entry-level work. Companies will think you will leave them for a

Reddit Posts

better job once they have trained you and given you experience.

If you can, keep trying and you may get lucky. You may have become more active in networking and find people to give you a chance and vouch for you or hook you up with an interview.

Otherwise, in India you may be employable. For example, there is a WITCH company there that hires people who have a pulse, and fires them when they can't do the job. They have a huge turnover rate, even replacing whole teams in one shot, but that may get you in the door to prove yourself.

- New Comment: Which school? Program sounds shady

- New Comment: The day you stop caring about what others think about you, that will be the day you will really find happiness

- New Comment: Its not you. It's the current market. It is a battle to find a job as a fresher plus the current market will make it doubt yourself. Trust me this shall pass. You returning to India is a right choice but not now. I see your emotions are taking over you but this will ease off once you secure your 1st job trust me. It is always better to go back to India once you have paid back your loan and with some experience. My friends with 3 years experience got laid off and even he struggled to find a job. It is a slow process and everything will fall into place.

My suggestion will be to have a strategy and stick to it. Decide a number of jobs you have to apply per day. It can be less as 5 or 10 but tailor your resume for each job. Dedicate x amount of hour (could be 4 or 6hrs up to you). After that keep a time apart for working out or playing a sport this will keep you refreshed. Lastly put a jour or 2 in learning a new skill. This wont benefit you right away but after few years it defines will.

These times are tough and is part of the process just don't lose hope. Keep hustling.

Will wait to see your post on LinkedIn soon.?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Sometimes I feel the same way and it's completely normal. I landed a high-paying internship and still feel the same way sometimes.

You've just gotta accept this new life as some sort of temporary downgraded vacation. It's like a long shitty vacation. Just know that 2-3 years from now you'll have a completely different life and you'll be in a better position to decide whether you want to stay here or go back. Until then, put your head down and work!

- New Comment: Bro, to be honest. All us F1 students are in the same boat right now. The US university career centers say they help you with resumes and getting you interview ready and all that BS but most of us are already good at it. The problem right now is getting that interview call itself which is way harder for all of us. You're not alone. Honestly speaking, all of us masters students are practically cash cows for the American economy which is why they don't ask any questions when issuing you a F1 visa but ask so many more when giving you a job. I'd only say one thing, keep fighting my soldier, you're not alone

- New Comment: you can't say that you have a knack for technology if you do not know coding. only with great coding skills one can survive in a tech oriented job.

- New Comment: Where do you reside? The US is huge! I live in Central California and there are IT jobs everywhere. I work for a school district and they have dozens of IT people in the Central office. I would start applying outside of where you live. Sounds like you're unhappy where you are, so take the opportunity to move if you can! I hope you land somewhere amazing! Once you do, get into a league bowling, soccer, basketball, or baseball and you're likely to make some decent friends.

- New Comment: I don't understand how/why someone with an advanced degree, earned in their home country, would want to leave that country for the US.

Don't you want to contribute to the improvement of India? Make India more prosperous? Help create opportunities for the next generation of Indians? The USA doesn't owe you a living my friend...go home and make Bangalore the tech

Reddit Posts

capital of the world.

- New Comment: If you are bothered about what other people think, you will always be unhappy. Just focus on yourself, prepare for interviews. You will find something. If you don't, and your only option is to go back, then that's ok too. Don't kill yourself over what someone is going to think. Focus on the things you have control over.

- New Comment: I am sure you came here to study and studying in the US doesn't offer immigration. Pls follow immigration laws here and stop stressing. It's that simple. If you are not able to land a job, which is what should happen, the best thing will be to go back and do something there. I know people are being nice here and suggesting to keep trying. I suggest stop wasting your time. All it will do is demotivate you. Unfortunately, a lot of people think if they come to the U.S. to study, they somehow have a right to stay here.

- New Comment: This is exactly how majority of us are feeling. Some of us even left cushy high paying jobs in pursuit of the American dream. Stay strong king! This too shall pass. Try to pick a hobby.

- New Comment: I had the same feelings as you and currently in my 2nd sem MS. I'll just disclose it since it's a reddit acc and no one knows you. I have a 54k loan for 1 year. Working my ass off currently to find an internship, which I think I am getting one soon.

But better, I am also getting a thesis offer under a professor close to my field of study and that covers the remaining tuition with stipend. That's one route you can opt for, if finance is an issue and if you have time. I am further planning for a continued PhD as well as I like my domain.

Dont get me wrong, I still have all the feelings that you do, and I'm unhappy myself, my parents and my girl I am about to marry are all in India, and it's just stressful here.

But I left my FTE in India to pursue MS outside for the thrill and hurdles. It's not fun to just settle in a 20 LPA back there and live on, at least for me. So when we all make a choice to move to the USA, we should know, it's only downhill until

Reddit Posts

it's not. And I am thriving on it currently. Sleepless nights, attending meetings, networking on LinkedIn, classes, assignments, Exams, research work, job hunt for summer, food, health blah blah.

Those who come on loan should know the consequences it can bring and how to mitigate those consequences. Too late to regret bout that and being sad about it. Now focus on what you're gonna do about it, what are the next steps.

Have you paid for all the semesters? also which Uni?

- New Comment: Just become trucker bro

- New Comment: Send me your resume- I'll find you a job in my state. We're dying to get IT folks.

- New Comment: Being a 24-year-old male, and especially immigrant, in the US is tough man. This is a country where you work your way up and enjoy your 30's with significantly more wealth and opportunities than you would back home. I am also an immigrant who was a 24 m in America. It's lonely, and way better back home at this age range, but it pays off big time now at 31.

Look for new grad programs. They're the best thing America has for young professionals in tech.

- New Comment: Best life advice I can give you: Stop comparing yourself to others. Life is not linear and you are not comparing yourself fairly.

Let me give you an example

At 18, I was managing a law firm. A whole law firm.

At 21, I was graduating with a 4.0 from business school with \$200k in the bank.

Reddit Posts

At 22, I started to learn how to invest. Was on track to making seven figures a year.

At 23, i lost it all. Lost my girlfriend because i was severely depressed.

At 24, I started my own business. We were making mid seven figures a year.

At 25, my business partner threatened to sue me, I got sued by clients, my girlfriend who I was supposed to be engaged to left me, and I had a mental breakdown

At 26, I nearly went bankrupt, I owed the IRS money that I didn't have because my partner wiped our accounts

At 27, one day, out of nowhere, my heart started to race at 210-240 bpm. I was rushed to the emergency room. I nearly died. I've been getting treatment ever since. My doctors don't know what's wrong with my heart or my body.

28 I hope is better.

The gist is, shit may be bad now, but there is only one certainty in life: impermanence. Everything is impermanent. Including the bad times.

Keep applying to jobs. Make it your only duty. Use chatgpt to help you. Keep going.

In life, most regrets come from acts of omission.

Things you wish you had done, but that you never did.

- New Comment: Well not sure I have an answer but what I can say is don't beat yourself down. The market is

Reddit Posts

absolutely trash for entry level job and I imagine is 10x worst for internationals. Everyone is struggling to get entry level.

Not being able to find a job doesn't mean you are a good for nothing.

- New Comment: May I ask Why are you unhappy here?

- New Comment: Most people have made similar decisions and have equally shit moments here. My advice is stop scrolling through reddit, linkedin posts and reading negative comments. You ll get a job.

The one major change I made was to unfollow csmajors subreddit and some others too. I spent my free time at the gym, watched some shows, went out with friends and kept my grind on. I managed to secure a job, not the most glamorous job but I'm doing fine. Its high time you start being more accountable for your decisions and learn to make the most of it. Back yourself to take care of the loan.

Be happy. Things will fall into the right place! Its good karma!

- New Comment: Post your resume

Let's start there. You can mark out your private info but let's see what you are working with.

Stop bashing yourself. And who gives a F**k what others think of you. Place that negative image you have onto a paper in your mind and watch it go up in flames. Make it disappear.

Start some small physical excersise (walks and resistance training) just to give your body a shock out of this dull habit you sunk into.

- New Comment: I did MS in info systems as well. Trust me when I say that the quarter before graduation is mentally taxing and it's probably the worst experience ever as an international student.

I graduated last year, right in the middle of all companies laying people off. My anxiety and depression was off the

Reddit Posts

charts, and the only thing that kept me going was the loan I'd taken (~\$55k). There's no way I'd have been able to pay that back on an Indian salary.

A month before graduation, things started looking up slightly. I got some interviews, and two of them translated into offers. Some of my friends got their full time offers 1-2 months after graduation. But everyone I know found a job. And a lot of us, including me, are on track to pay off our loans by the end of this year, if not sooner. Definitely before the end of 3y of OPT.

Nothing I say will make you feel better. I know this because I was in your shoes a year ago, and nothing anyone else said made me feel better. But know this - there is a light at the end of this awful tunnel. And you WILL get there.

Just get through the next 6 months. Don't stop trying ?

- New Comment: When you say you can't even get an analyst role what kind of analyst are you talking about? IT Support Analyst, Security Analyst, Systems Analyst, etc? Also do you have any IT working experience at all?

- New Comment: Go back to your country if you don't like it here

- New Comment: Learn a low code platform. Its where tech is going. Outsystems, mendix or appian. Most trainings are free

- New Comment: Bro. DM me. It took me a year and a half after graduating my Masters to get a FAANG job. Till then I worked for \$0 on OPT for 6 months and then a real shit tech job for \$40k annual. 40 fucking k. (McDonald's worker wage).

Life is rough but you can do it. Don't lose hope.

- New Comment: You can reach out to me. I can refer you to one of the big banks.

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- New Comment: Stop applying for that soc analyst job and downgrade to help desk maybe revise your resume cause I have none of what u have and I'm still getting interviews.
 - New Comment: Return to India and hide from those loans. You'll be a big fish in a small pond. Better than a small fish in a big pond
 - New Comment: Your decision doesn't have to be binary between US and India. Canada, Europe, Australia and Singapore are excellent alternatives. Don't limit your horizon.
 - New Comment: Hey, I am in the same boat as you, have 1 year to go in the US. If you overcome these feelings, pls share how you did it. I am lost too, I want to overcome this feeling but don't know how.
 - New Comment: Personally I would wait it out for the year. Apply everyday to 20 jobs as if it were your full time job. Learn skills and do case problems online. Take on a personal project. The market is tough. However, if you don't put yourself out there it, you will never know what could have been. Don't live life with regret.
- Also it only takes a moment for life to change. You don't know if you will meet someone, if you will find your foot in the door, or what the future holds for you. You don't know if you will find something out there, but if you don't try you know you won't.
- New Comment: Try searching in both countries and then if it doesn't work out you go home. Dont be discouraged, currently finding a job is really hard so you are not alone. Just keep trying
 - New Comment: Why not give it a shot where you're from then?
 - New Comment: Apply for Canada
 - New Comment: Currently hold an MIS and have been through 2 layoffs. Life is tough. It's lonely here, but I told myself I came here for a reason.

My suggestion is to just try with your remaining time left. If you leave early, you might have the lingering thoughts of all

Reddit Posts

the what ifs. The pain of suffering is still lighter than the pain of regret.

- New Comment: Dude, you are looking at a historical event in AI. No one knows what will happen after this. A lot of people are negative and see bleak future prospects. A lot of existing web/mobile projects can run lean. I have FANG experience and am still not getting any responses. So it's not you it's the circumstances around you.

I think the future will be more like black mirror, and so we will see a new wave of crazy new products on AI. However, we need the fed to lower rates to stimulate the economy. So jobs will improve.

- New Comment: I was in the same exact place as you after graduating from my masters. I struggled and finally landed a job 10 months after I graduated. Those 10 months were hell and each morning I woke up, I felt like shit and was contemplating extreme things I wanted to do. I still kept at it due to the same reasons you have, loan repayment. But after I landed the first job, things changed a lot along with my mental health. 5 years later, and now I'm in a better place (still not the best due to dealing with H1B visa bs). But I think that if I had returned back, I would have missed all the experiences that I had these past few years and I would have not tested my resilience. Things are not going to be perfect anywhere (US or your home country). Each place has its own struggles. You need to ask yourself where you would have the best outcome. If staying with your family is your top priority then you should definitely go back. For me it was not (due to several personal reasons) and I decided to stay back and fight. Screw society and what they think about you. They'll say things for a few days and then switch to some other juicy topic. I have made certain decisions in my life which are not going to be looked at in a favorable way by "society" but it was right for me. What you need to definitely worry about is your job prospects in India. Sure it'll take a little longer for you to clear your loan when you're earning in rupees but that's not the end of the world. Mental health is the topmost priority and what society thinks about you should be the least if not a non-priority.

- New Comment: I can't tell you to choose stay here or leave quick, but one thing I can surely say the current job market is too tight, even for experienced professionals, this might change next few months when summer approaches. If you are mentally strong to stay and sustain here, for now you need to get more references from your friends / known circle,

Reddit Posts

keep trying. re: leaving back to home, don't take too much things personally on others in India, even when you're successful there would some people / family / friends would drag you down

If you considering your loan repayment, going back India would be really bad decision IMO, and other side not sure what degree you actually earned, if you claiming that is shit, why did you invest your time and money on this in first place? Lot of people thinks they can pay premium to come college and get job easily in US, they never see the stats how many numbers of visa comes even after getting job. Never wants to advice anyone, if the damages are done already, Try your best, always have a backup even you get a job. All the Best!

- New Comment: The only Zen that you find at the top of a mountain is the zen you bring.

So no matter where you go, US, India, wherever, your happiness is a matter of you more than anything else.

And, I?m not saying just philosophically, I?ve tested this.

The US has a way of humbling you. Here you?re with the best of the world. You obviously know this. Do you aspire to be one among them. Of course you?ll have to do things that you don?t like, but that?s adulting and nothing to do with happiness or the place you?re living in.

- New Comment: Sorry to hear the struggle.

First things first - We?ve all been in your shoes as an F1 student.

If you?ve taken a loan, I highly suggest staying here for atleast 5 years. It?ll take time to find a job. You have to sustain yourself in the meantime somehow.

In the short term - cut down housing expense, find a way to make cash & focus on internships and job hunting.

If you can find a remote or remote-friendly job, that?s great.

Reddit Posts

Save big. Switch jobs after 2 years to unlock another 30-40% pay bump.

Even if you can save 50k-75k in 5 years, that'll go a long way in paying off the loan.

As for family, many companies are now okay with you working remotely from india for a few weeks-months.

Do that to spend time with your parents - if you can get the H1B sorted.

Do know that you're feeling the same things 1000s of us have experienced. You're not alone.

As for society, you have to work on your mindset. It's hard but those are the cards you've been dealt.

- New Comment: I just came across this post, I never respond to anything on reddit, but I was in your shoes few years ago so here is my perspective-

Firstly, have a little fun while you're still here. Yes, studying and applying jobs will take up most of your day, but don't forget to live a little at the end of each day, I know you're desperate but eventually everything works out. Lot of people in perfectly fine jobs are unhappy, so it is important to stay positive and have a healthy perspective.

Second advice is, do not keep scrolling on reddit or linkedin or blind. Don't read those posts. Average people with average jobs post very rarely about this topic. Also the algorithm learns what you're doing so it keeps feeding you more doom and gloom. Do some gym, meditation etc in your free time.

Thirdly, society doesn't care. You do good or bad they don't care. Everyone has their own problems to deal with. A lot of my friends went back to India because they couldn't find a job. Fast forward few years they're all thriving. In the moment it is hard to see, but zoom out and you can see eventually everything works out.

Reddit Posts

My last advice is do not ignore the midwest. There are a lot of jobs and very few people apply comparatively to the east and west coast. There will be less competition and people are generally empathetic. Once you land something you can move to your dream location once the market gets better.

- New Comment: I'm going to be rough with you. I wasn't from here too. Had a different life trajectory. Stop feeling sorry for yourself and sit up. Change your mindset. You'll land a job if you are aggressive. There is no American dream. It's just you. If you want to be successful and happy, make it happen. Stop complaining.

Sorry. I had to be point blank.

- New Comment: I was at your situation 6years ago. with PhD in civil engineering. unfortunately, the higher your degrees the worst and most difficult to find a job. once you get a job, it will pay off. it took me almost 2 years to get hired. I was working in Lyft and Uber with PhD to survive. Just dont give up. based on what you mentioned, I recommend you to go to silicon valley in California. you will have much better luck and also jobs pay much higher there than anywhere else.

Good luck?

- New Comment: Few points here, it wont solve all your problems but it will put you in a position for you to reach for where you're trying to go; land a respectable job as deemed by you.

1) I'm in my 40s, and have experienced this feeling many times, I also came here (US) alone. Read the book "Peaks and Valleys" it tells you about the flow of life. The paths and flow of life is not linear and its not perfect all the time, tough times will come but we have to be ready to tackle it.

2) Exercise daily, you will be surprised how exercising daily will help clear your mind so you can focus on the long term goals and not be distracted by your feelings.

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3) Find and start with a low hanging job (retail, restaurants, etc..) this will get you out of the "loser" feeling to a feeling of i am getting something meaningful done. This job will allow you to regain your employment confidence in the workplace, then from here you patiently look for the real jobs you're seeking without been stressed out.

DON'T STRESS, WE'VE ALL EXPERIENCED THIS, WORK THROUGH IT, DON'T GO BACK TO INDIA. DOCUMENT (Photography, Journal etc..) YOU'RE EXPERIENCE AND SHARE IT WITH YOUR PARENTS ONE DAY, THEY WILL BE PROUD OF YOU. BE PATIENT.

If you need someone to talk or exchange some ideas, you can find me at bigben2023@protonmail.com say hello. Drew

- New Comment: Are you on a H1B visa? Have you tried applying to the WITCH companies? They may be a great temporary solution. Also look into Open Avenues. I think they all hire h1b. I also heard Info Sys just got a big contract so they may be hiring right now.

- New Comment: Check-out time buddy.

1. US debt is not enforceable in India.

2. Indian jobs are red-hot for guys like you.

US is in a long dark cycle and has been since early 2022. People assume that the downturn will end this year, but in reality - its only just begun. Could be a decade before we get a boom like 2013 to 2021 again.

When you get old enough you realize that there is no right/wrong or perfect/imperfect.

The one lesson I have learned in life is that its all just just one big trade-off after another.

Reddit Posts

US door closes. Many opportunities and benefits disappear.

Indian door opens. Many opportunities and benefits appear.

You have no idea where your life in India will take you, that story is yet to be written.

Good luck.

- New Comment: "But it's not that, lately scrolling thru reddit, linkedin etc, reading job posts of ppl, I just feel so under confident that I'm doubting if I'm even employable." "I was literally better than most friends my age around me when it came technology and here I am feeling so low about myself. Idk what to do!"

One thing I've learned in my life - comparisons with other people is not a fair comparison. You only see their highlight reel but you know every detail about yourself. You don't know if they're getting help from their family with loans, you don't know if they know people high up at the company they were just hired in.

You're in a tough spot and I'm not trying to minimize it. But you're also making it so much harder on yourself with the comparison. The only fair comparison is making sure that today you is better than yesterday you.

Life is long - people who were more "successful" yesterday may not be more "successful" tomorrow. Keep working hard, keep learning new skills, and challenging yourself.

Also - if you're comfortable, please share a PII redacted version of your resume. I've found that people are not investing enough time in writing a good resume even though that's the main thing companies look at when making a hiring decision.

- New Comment: Former hiring manager here. Your degree is useless to get hired in the US unless you have amazing

Reddit Posts

Hunter Biden connections. I was hiring 2 awesome Sri Lankan applicants every month that were extremely excited to earn \$500 a month (working remotely in Sri Lanka). You got ripped off and should sue the university to get your money back or cancel the loan. Was it even a real university? Further the work visa headache, labor laws and minimum wage/salary requirements in most US states = a huge liability for any company to even fill a position in the US.

- New Comment: How about working for a US firm based in India? Have you looked at Big 4 positions?

- New Comment: bhai dekh....tune jo kia sab krte hain ...koi bada kaam nai kia tune US aake....rahi baat naukri ki to kuch mat soch aur krta reh apply ...i got my first interview after 400 applications. Try dice, indeed, anything and everything....haar nahi manio bro ...hoga

- New Comment: Same boat, same course, same history as you. Listen, this is a test of endurance. If you've come this far, it's for a reason, of course the time isn't ideal, people around you whom you felt were less deserving may be getting the job, settling in life, travelling and having fun and you on the other hand feel like a constant struggler, but just as seasons change, this too shall pass. Remember that - nothing is permanent: sad phase or the happy phase

Being on F1 isn't easy, but what mindset you keep - putting your head down and putting in the work day in day out or giving up, it's up to you.

Happiness doesn't come with finding the job, getting a house or even the person in your life, it needs to come from within. You have to be the source of your happiness. When in doubt, go out, just look at buildings, restaurants etc like a tourist and remind your self - I am in the f**in United States of America!!

Keep at it, you got this. God speed. ????

- New Comment: First off, there are many many people who feel the same way. You are not alone. Secondly, it can be hard for Americans to find jobs in America so I know It can definitely be hard for foreigners. I say this as an American. Again, this is to be expected and you are not alone. Thirdly, you are only 24, which is young and don't think so

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negatively about yourself. Keep trying and think positively and positive things will come your way. I didn't believe that either until I tried and it worked. It is not the end of the world. I would say try some more, a year if you can.

- New Comment: Fuck what society thinks, if you think that you're seriously depressed, you should go home.

But if you can hold out for longer, things look like they could become better here this year. Right now the market is complete shit, but a lot of startups are hiring! Reach out to seed stage and smaller startups and pitch them. Don't go with the resume submission route, just reach out to the founders and go from there. Use Angelist or YC Startup Jobs.

With STEM OPT extension, you should be fine for the first 3 years, and ideally you can switch once the market settles.

You should get something soon.

- New Comment: Hello! I will say i was in a similar position last year and was very worried about having to go back home (3rd world country too). In terms of job search, make a plan and break down goals around it eg. apply for 5 jobs a day, attend 3 networking events a week, attend your school's job fair, score 5 interviews per month, speak to your career advisor once a week, etc.

Rejection only builds resilience and you will be very proud of yourself when you do get the job with all the rejections you've received! Even if you are unhappy here, earning for at least one year on an american salary on OPT will give you an advantage with your loan. Good luck!!

- New Comment: Not from your culture, but I feel some of what you're feeling. I loved studying CS, but what I do for work is so different and it sucks. I have to work with awful personalities working on shit software and every task is a drag. I'm not learning anything that I want to be learning, and I want to leave the career because just the worst personalities are here that I need to deal with. But I need to pay my student loans so I'll try until that happens. The job market is so bad right now, I feel hopeless for anything better. And when my confidence falters, I blank out during coding interviews.

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- New Comment: I sincerely feel sorry for you. My situation was similar but somehow different. I came to us as an undergrad in math. I then realize that a math degree does not line up well with a career the industry. It's more like prepping you for PhD, which is something I'm not interested. I then transferred to something close to quantitative finance (my school has a fancy name for it, but it's basically QF). It's definitely more industry related, but I also realize that in the business world, sometimes connection and soft skills are what you need to get a job rather than hard skills. Like kids in my major can basically suffer in all courses, but still land internships and then full-time because they are good at presenting themselves and have acquaintances in the industry. A lot of the job interviews are purely behavioral, with one or two technical cases at the maximum. So you get a lot of advantage if you can just improvise well during interviews. I couldn't give you any advise on whether you should stay in us or not. But if you choose to stay and keep looking for job, My advise would be that start connect with folks in the major and develop it into the industry. You'd have a better chance than just sending applications on LinkedIn.

- New Comment: This is a terrible feeling as an Asian. Most of the students from any asian country struggle to adopt themselves with the highly individualistic nature of American society.

If you can pay your loan and then go back to india , then do it. People will forget about your USA life after one year.

Don?t sacrifice tour happiness simply because you wanted to be a hero in eyes of those who never spend a minute thinking of you.

Failing well is a real heroic task !

- New Comment: u/Cancer_ian hit me up via IM. Things are not always gloom and doom.

- New Comment: My honest advise bro is try working with a staffing agency they have access to to hiring system of hr departments of different companies and if it come down to it embellish your resume and see how that works

- New Comment: The questions you have you?re the only one who can answer. You?re still young, I wish I was in

Reddit Posts

America when I was 24, got here later in life. Why would you consider going back to India? Are you homesick? Missing mommy? If you're not, F*** India! you're in America buddy, make it happen! Swallow your pride and get a job to keep going, find what motivates you and work on it, learn some new skills, a different field of work, just do something and don't give up. Everything is a cycle, life is made of ups and downs. Just keep going

- New Comment: If you feel like you won't make it, you already lost.

- New Comment: You have to believe in yourself! You must be extremely smart and intelligent to have gotten your masters! Keep pushing through! One thing I learned recently is that I can't control what people think of me. I tell myself negative things but with no evidence of being true. Try to redirect your thinking first by telling yourself you're not a loser, because there are a lot of kids out there your age didn't even finish high school. You should be proud of yourself! Keep your head up and ask God to direct you. I'm praying for you ??

- New Comment: What's this MIS degree? I've conducted over 300 onsite interviews at Amazon and Microsoft and I don't think I've seen someone with one of these degrees. Then again I've rarely looked at someone's educational qualifications on their resume. I had to lookup the curriculum at UDub, and wow it seems like an almost total waste of time. It's like it teaches you stuff that is neither deep in the SWE job family or the PM job family.

For someone who doesn't like coding, this Masters degree seems to add nothing to your education. Stay away.

- New Comment: CEO of a fintech startup, would love to talk.

- New Comment: If you want I can take a look at your resume. It's brutal out here

- New Comment: Stay in US, expand your network, meet people, if you aren't able to land a job on your own, try to find consulting companies via people who work in such companies, then work with them and get a consulting job, then using that experience after a year or two, try again for a full time job.

- New Comment: Keep trying. It's hard for everyone to find jobs. When I graduated , most of my international friends could not find jobs in the US , even though they were (I think) smarter than me . But they only had 3 months to find a job.

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So they went back to Europe . Don?t lose hope and keep trying and don?t feel discouraged. Know you?re not the only one. I had an easier time finding a job because I networked a lot . Try to have one contact person you have talked to , at every firm you apply to . Even better , have someone submit your resume for you , don?t just apply online, and have talked to a couple people at the company and mention that in the interviews.

- New Comment: I am going through the same thing now. You have summarised my feelings as well. I left coding for her roles but the result is the same. Wish I just joined my batchmates to get a coding job in India itself. Would have saved me so much trouble of convincing everyone of me only to go back and start a job hunt

- New Comment: Stay. It?s just a bad time in the job market. It will pass. Keep desi consultancies as backup. They will find you Business Analyst contract job in a few months.

Another tip: go out, make/hangout with friends, do activities and hobbies. But when you talk to friends and family avoid talking about the struggles of job hunting all the time. That just adds to the negative narrative and makes you believe that it?s getting tougher. Just keep applying, change strategies and try to not stress about it

- New Comment: not true. You only have to have the right to legally work. I work in the government and there are countless immigrants working. United States government doesn't only hire American born people. That's just to become the president. So yes he can search for jobs with and federal or local government.

Title of the post: Didn't get picked the 3rd time

Body of the post: I came to US in 2018, and honestly yesterday I realized I have not "genuinely" felt happy in the past 5 years, but today have finally booked a 1-way ticket to my home country. (and very weirdly I am actually a bit excited)

Sadly I didn't really do anything in the last 5 years but did pay off my loan. I know people saved up like crazy, but no matter what I did there was always some stupid expense like car breaking down or insurance went up and stuff. Also couldn't really find a "high paying job" but to be fair live in a low cost of living area.

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I have a offer lined up back home and it's not really that bad honestly.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: you did good brother. Don?t be hard on yourself. Having a loan paid off and job lined up is better than many people are having it. Best of luck at home

- New Comment: Are you talking about H1B lottery attempts?

- New Comment: I am in the same situation. No worries my friends, you still have a whole life in front of you. I?m sure you will create a good life for yourself no matter where you go.

- New Comment: Sounds like a success story to me man, you paid off your loan, you worked hard and now get to go home comfortably with a job and enjoy your life. I think you did great, US is not everything in the world, there is places where quality of life is much better than here, and I would take that over more money any day. In the end we only have one life how we spend our time is more important than money in my opinion.

- New Comment: That's the mentality anyone should come with, if it works out it works out, if it doesn't, let's go back to a less stressful life (I hope).

- New Comment: It's a success story in short. Thanks for the inspiration.

- New Comment: Bro I have an H-1B and I am in London right now with family. Came to US with big dreams, really high paying job, amazing prospects, lovely gf and I am still thinking about moving to LDN right now.

US makes us such bitches to itself that we tend to forget other places in the world has amazing healthcare, money, prospects, much more welcoming visa policies etc.

I will probably seriously consider just moving here with some job or something and get resident permit at some point. I can't help myself but resent US and regret trying to survive in this system that chews the hell out of you and keeps you

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on the edge for so so many years on and on and on. The appeal will die at some point, I know it.

- New Comment: yeah tbh fuck the US sometimes. Good for u bro

- New Comment: You paid your loan, and that is what matters. You have a job back home, which is great. I went back home without a job offer, and I was waiting on the decision from an interview. Luckily, I got a job offer 2-3 days after getting home.

- New Comment: Been there done that!

No success in the lottery. And everyone I talked to was just telling me H1B is not the end of the ladder. There were a lot of similar stressors in future. And although I loved the USA for travel and money, nothing else made sense.

I started making an exit plan during my 5th year while my employer was trying other ways to help me stay. I had moved in with friends and sold my car so I can save some money(I had already paid off my debt prior to this). I took some sabbatical and went back to working. It's been great!

Don't worry my friend! You are doing great. Things will get better. If not, try something else down the line. Life's a fun little puzzle. We all should focus on having fun and not dwell too much on our mistakes.

- New Comment: I think this is more common than most people think, the chances of getting selected in an h1b lottery has decreased over the past few years. You did well finishing your degree and securing a job back home.

- New Comment: I have been there and returned home due to same reason. I would say it's unfortunate but destiny might have different plans. Initially it will be tough but once you get over the phase , you really get time with yourself to really introspection and think and also take it as an opportunity if you want to transition in the career or wanna explore a different place, it's not the end of the world friend, god's plan, trust on the process and move with it, years down the line there are people waiting for green cards while you might already have something better, so keep the faith and restart. Feel free to ping in case I could be of any support :) best of luck!

- New Comment: everything happens for a reason. i bet there are much better opportunities for you in your home country

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- New Comment: How do most of you deal with the fact that you have better career prospects in the US and most likely better pay as compared to other places, but at the same time you may not have family in the US, you still have not found love, you are approaching your 30's while all of your family is back home including some friends....I struggle with this though sometime but I try not to overthink something that is out of my control, but it haunts me sometimes...just food for thought

- New Comment: The U.S. is a sinking ship. An Uber capitalist nation with little social safety net. Your experience shows it - there is always a major expense to pay here. You build your own here and people are so individualistic. Sounds like you got the best deal - paying off your loan and getting to go home!

- New Comment: Jealous of you bro

- New Comment: I guess it depends on where you're from. If you're from a country like Iraq/Rwanda, it's actually sad. If you're from Europe, Japan, China, etc., then you're set up for a good life!

- New Comment: I think this is actually great. It's great that your loans are paid off, you got some exposure and maybe you've got a little bit of money left. Now that you have a job in your home country, I think that's wonderful. Now you can live there peacefully without the ticking time bomb of a visa expiry date behind your back. You also don't need to blame yourself since it's a lottery. What's meant to happen will happen, so I am glad you see this as a good thing!

- New Comment: You are doing great. I was in the same boat and relocated to Canada. Been over here for sometime, and I feel going back home would have been a good option too, in some cases better. Good luck on your next step!!

- New Comment: You not only got a job and paid back your loans, you also got another one lined up for you back home.

From someone who had to get another degree cause no one wanted to hire me, you're balling right now even though it doesn't seem like it.

- New Comment: I'm in the same boat. I've an entire life there a house and was about to get married. Now I've to move back to home. Thankfully I was able to save some money and work remotely for a while since my employer is

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nice. In retrospect a lot of this is unnecessary and hope you do great in your home country.

- New Comment: ? am planning to study in US so i would like to ask you couple of questions.

1. Did you look to Canada? Migrating to Canada seems easy and pays are one of the highest after USA. (? ask because i can't go back my own country and would like to know if you considered Canada and is there any catch, problem i didn't see)

2. What about L-1 visa? Can't you go back to US after 1yr working in your country to same company?

- New Comment: That's sad .. if you don't find studying interesting then simply you should file an Asylum and work for rest 2-3 years gather that money and then come back to India...

looking like you are a bread boy which is born in Delhi Bombay lack of testosterone... be a man...

- New Comment: dinosaurs juggle disagreeable spoon apparatus fragile ring door oatmeal busy

This post was mass deleted and anonymized with [Redact](<https://redact.dev>)

- New Comment: sry you can?t have red lobster, apple bees, buc-ee?s, costco, ?free? freeway, drive-thru anymore

- New Comment: At this point, going back home is the best decision, instead of finding a way to work in some other western/european country. Good luck.

- New Comment: Good luck in your endeavors and ? never forget that this is new chapter of your life ;)

- New Comment: All the best buddy!! Wish I took this step a couple years ago but chose to go back to school. Everyday I think why did I not take the step to go back when I could. Proud of you to take this step. I am now trying to return back to India. could you explain how you started your job search in India and what is your specialization?

- New Comment: I'd say If the job back home will pay you peanuts as compared to what you had here perhaps it's time you joined the gig economy, no visa required you already have a social. You just gotta sign up all the platforms and out

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in 8hrs/day you will easily net 70K or more easy plus it's 1099 so you get to write off a bunch of stuff. Take your time, find love get married and file for greencard.

- New Comment: decide disagreeable money engine follow fanatical concerned smell murky narrow

This post was mass deleted and anonymized with [Redact](<https://redact.dev>)

- New Comment: I have a few friends, even with their jobs, who decided to go back to the country. They decided it was better for their family and kids. Just packed up their stuff and left.

- New Comment: Good luck bud. Perhaps it'll lead to a more fulfilling life for you h1b might sound like you've won but would still have a long hard struggle just to survive

- New Comment: Similar story. Had gone to the US in 2016, left in 2021 with no debt and decent savings and had a good job offer in hand while returning. Been 2 years and I am happy. Just sometimes get frustrated because of pollution and traffic but I WFH permanently so can't complain much. Mental peace on top

- New Comment: What country is that

- New Comment: Good luck my friend. Trust me, within next 5-10 years you'll be very happy with the decision you made. Don't let money get in the way, you can earn sufficiently in your home country as well and have the luxury to stay close to family and friends.

- New Comment: You're in a fortunate situation! Good luck to you!

- New Comment: Good luck to you! You came and did what you intended to do, the H1b is a mere perk and not indicative of how productive you were. Best of luck, it's great that you will now lead a life of happiness.

Title of the post: To all incoming students: Please Get a Bank loan for your entire Masters.

Body of the post: I've seen far too many people coming here under the assumption that they can pay off their college

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fees on Part times Alone. This basically raises two problems:

1. There are no part times for incoming students:

I personally know several people who have graduated in 2021, who are still holding onto their part times, because of the job market right.

In fact I know probably three guys from the entire Fall 2023 batch in my college who have managed to secure part times. The rest of the students are suffering immensely by living with 10 to 15 people in a 2 bed room apartment barely making their ends meet.

Obviously this is no way to live and you will never be able to focus on your studies.

2. You will never get a job if you are working these low gigs all throughout your masters:

I see a lot of people complaining about how the job market is extremely hard and they've apply for 100s of jobs everyday without a single interview call. There are multiple reasons for it, but one of the biggest reason I see is ****lack of portfolio and projects**** during your masters.

Since Majority of Students come for MS CS. If you are working 40 hours per week on your part time you'll never be able to focus on learning new technologies, improving your DSA skills or get any certifications.

Here's What you should do instead:

1. Spend a lot of time in the library. Library is your friend and this is where you are going to study and work during these two years in order to get a 6 figure job in the future.
2. Be active on LinkedIn: It doesn't mean to keep posting "interested" under job posts. It means to write articles pertinent to your technology showcase projects from Github.

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Remember that right now it's probably one of the toughest job markets since 2008. It's only going to get harder as AI is getting smarter and smarter everyday.

It's even hard for US Citizens to get tech roles right now. So YOU NEED TO EXCEL AT WHAT YOU DO IN ORDER FOR THE COMPANY TO CHOSE YOU OVER A USC.

Don't make the mistakes I did and please for the love of god FOCUS ON YOUR CAREER EVERY SINGLE DAY.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Here is the even better post: don?t take out loans for a masters. It is not worth itz

- New Comment: "toughest job markets since 2008" :O

- New Comment: Don?t go the United States because it?s your last option. Don?t go to a random US university. Don?t go to a university that is not in a good location. Don?t go to a university that is making you pay exorbitant fees for a degree. Don?t go to US with the assumption that the loan will get paid off because ?i will get a job?. Arizona State, UT Dallas etc are just money making machines. The job market is only bad for the students at average and below average universities. International students come here thinking if they just get good grades in their classes they will be fine which is absolutely not true. As OP said you need stellar projects to get through. You also need many other things like research contributions, projects that are funded etc that set you apart if you?re not from top universities which i?m assuming is most people on this sub.

International students are still being hired who graduate from top tier institutions like CMU, UW, UIUC, UT Austin etc.

Most people come here to work part time at a gas station or a motel and waste their time. If you want to come here to do

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meager jobs and expect to succeed in tech, that's not gonna happen. You'll succeed wherever you put most of your efforts. Considering you're doing part-time jobs as full time you might get yourself a promotion at your gas station, but not a job in tech. The resume isn't gonna build itself. Cheating in interviews might get you the job, but you can't cheat on the job. Cheers

Edit: AI won't take your job. AI will only take jobs that are repetitive and require no use of your brain (customer support). SWE is far away from being threatened by AI.

E2: CMU - Carnegie Mellon University, UW - University of Washington, UIUC - University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Also, the best way to research about universities for me has been connecting with students who are already there in the exact program you're aiming for. Be genuine when asking for help and be polite. Most won't reply, but one will. I say this with experience.

- New Comment: While the post provides some insights, this is an oversimplification. Good grades account for some merit in getting a job but that's not a priority. Don't spend too much time studying.

Please mind that my advise is more biased towards Comp Science majors.

The best way to leverage a Master's degree is to try to get an internship. Granted, finding one is quite difficult during these times. But, if you manage to score one, you might be able to transfer that into a full time offer after you graduate. Even if it that doesn't happen, having an internship experience at a US company provides a substantial boost to your resume. The summer break is the best for this. Also check if your school offers co-op opportunities. And in many occasions you get a substantially better paycheck for the internship.

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Also, network alot! For example, if you have an interest in Cybersecurity, join the club. Talk to the professors in a subject that you're interested in and see if you can get in on a project. Or offer help. These experiences can really help you and also build a good network of friends/professors that might be able to provide you with referrals.

Having a portfolio of projects helps a lot too (especially when applying for startups and smaller sized companies). Leverage hackathons and open source projects.

Although I listed a few things, it'll be impossible to do all these things at the same time. So pick your flavor. Also, mixing things up like this will really help you manage stress and stay consistent.

I agree with OP on the fact that it's not very realistic to think that you could fund your whole education career with part-time work/in campus work. However, the type of school you pick can make a big difference. Masters programs generally tend to be big money makers for schools. However, public research universities do tend to offer some tuition waivers if you can score a teaching assistant position or a research assistant position. Instead of trying to get a loan for 2 years (especially if it's high interest), I'd advise to get a loan for 1 year and see what you can leverage. Having said that, not having the constant thought of figuring out funding will save you a lot of stress and help you stay focused.

Anyways, wish y'all the best!

- New Comment: Thank you for your advice! Even if we put in all the effort we can and make sure to do everything in our control, would you still recommend leaving a job in India to pursue a master's degree? I've heard that getting a job afterward can depend a lot on luck, it seems like a gamble at this point taking a hefty loan.

- New Comment: Here is a better idea, don't do masters and save that money.

- New Comment: Please add "Indians" to this. I've never seen non-Indians doing this in my entire time in the school. A lot of us non-Indians such as Chinese are sponsored by parents and live comfortably in 1 bed 1 bath without

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roommates. This sub is not Indian-F1. Not all of us are Indian.

- New Comment: If they graduated 2021 ,how come are they doing part time ? OPT is one year right ?

- New Comment: I completely agree with this. Sometimes part time jobs aren't easy to get and don't really pay that well. You may earn enough to pay for your food or even rent but this isn't what you came to US for. You came to get a 6 figure job and that should be your primary goal regardless you do part time or not

- New Comment: Great advice can vouch for this!

- New Comment: But what if we take a loan for the entire masters and then cannot find work during OPT? That would be quite dangerous, no?

- New Comment: Honestly would suggest not to take bank loans.The market, the h1b are in sambles - the last thing you want is some loan.

Pick a school that gives you the most scholarships and cost you next to nothing - you might need to find a small no name school but in here no one cares about your school. In the end you are gonna be out in an year or two.

- New Comment: 100 % agree with OP

- New Comment: Number 2 hit me hard.

- New Comment: Motivational! Thanks.

- New Comment: You know that you can't get a loan like that everywhere lol?

- New Comment: But its very hard to get a loan as an f1 student!:(

- New Comment: Disagree with both things mentioned above but yeah market is not the very best right now. Part time or full time.

Title of the post: Want a job? Simple. Don't be international.

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Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If they said no then why keep replying. They'll hire someone else who doesn't need sponsorship but will leave after 1-2 years. Don't bother with these companies.

- New Comment: I know it sucks, and I understand your point of view too, I am a F1 student on OPT. But they're not being misleading with you, and you have to understand if they don't sponsor they will eventually lose you, unless you get married, apply for school again or win the lottery.

- New Comment: I hate that question on applications! You have work authorization for 3 years, who knows what you'll want to do by then? You could even marry a US citizen and not be on a visa at all. You could hate the company and not want to work there. You could decide to go back home or move to a completely different country. So many options! I always tell my students to check no on that one.

- New Comment: They want someone who can stay more than 3 years. They are being too overconfident with that stay estimate though.

- New Comment: OP isn't wrong to answer this way. chances are these questions are filters and had OP put no they wouldn't even get a consideration. It's best to mention the OPT status at the phone screen instead. I'm a F1 international and it's practically impossible to find a job on this status. At this point coming to the US and working the F1 route should be for all practical purposes be written off since the govt doesn't provide a streamlined pathway for working after. I'm on a contract position on opt so at this point it's looking like I won't get the chance to use stem opt.

US immigration system is based on family ties, illegal migrants and middle east refugees. They simply don't care and honestly I don't blame them. It's our misfortune not to be born as US citizens.

- New Comment: I was in the same situation and it was for a 6 month internship with no conversion to full time or extension

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Recruiter : you'll need sponsorship in the future in 3 years and we cannot provide that.

Me : But it's a 6 month internship.

Recruiter : we cannot sponsor you.

Me : I don't need sponsorship.

Recruiter : but you will need after 3 years.

Me : is there a chance of an extension of internship or a potential full time conversion?

Recruiter: No it's just a 6 month internship

- New Comment: I don't like these questions. I get the idea, but I don't like them. My husband is going through an immigration process and when it gets approved it will include me too. So if they ask me if I need sponsorship I say no, but if they ask me if I'm on a visa that requires sponsorship I have to say yes... Who knows how many interviews that bar me from... And even if I don't have this, I have 4 years of work experience, my average of staying in a job is less than 1.2 years... So I could have 2 jobs with the same pattern with no sponsorship needed. I still get the idea of a company, but it is a bit unfair...

Edit: will you need sponsorship is a very open ended question. The answer may be "no" even if you do not have an unrestricted work permit. Your intention may be working for anywhere for less than 3 years or you may have other things in the running. But will the company pay for your h1b visa? No.

- New Comment: I don't see the issue here? The company is being straight forward about sponsorship constraints. Also, OP needs to understand that a company puts in lot of time and resources into training someone for any role. They surely don't want to do that knowing the person WILL have to leave at the end of the 3rd year.

If the OP is a non Indian or Chinese born person, they can try to apply for EB2-NIW (budget permitting) and provide the appropriate information to recruiters that they are self sufficient in terms of immigration needs.

- New Comment: Wanna work full time in the US? Don't come as an F1? Jokes aside, the recruiter is not wrong here.

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They are looking to hire someone who can work beyond OPT period (Ones without visa uncertainty after a couple years)

There are plenty of companies who hire and sponsor non-immigrants. You just need to keep on applying.

Btw, I am an international too.

- New Comment: So you're upset because you lied on your application about needing sponsorship and the recruiter asked you to clarify and it turns out you need sponsorship???

I mean, it's not really a good idea to start a new relationship with an employer with a flat out lie

- New Comment: Most international students think they are playing smart saying that "I don't currently need sponsorship as I have 3 years of OPT", but companies are not dumb. They have a set policy that they have to abide by and sponsorship might not just fall into it at that point in time.

Why lie in the first place? Save yourself time as well by focusing on companies that offer sponsorship.

- New Comment: The company is being upfront, and it seems there that you're not. The reason companies ask this is because they all want to develop and **retain** talent, and most of these questions are worded to ask if you need "future sponsorship" as well, which means if you intend to remain in the company long term, the sponsorship is an extra necessary step.

- New Comment: Try to marry a US citizen or work on campus as a graduate student, or go back home and try your luck for a green card if your home country is eligible

- New Comment: I've had my share (hundreds, if not thousands) of emails like this. Remember, you only need 1 YES!
Good luck OP!

- New Comment: Filling up NO in application for work authorization is a red flag. You can have legal outcomes. Never fill
No

- New Comment: Yeah, sponsorship has become deal breaker for these companies these days. Tough for us.

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- New Comment: Unfortunately it is getting harder and harder for jobs to sponsor H1B and let alone Green cards. It is not a good time to be an international student in the USA

- New Comment: To be honest, staff accountant is a very "entry level" job, I bet most of the companies out there wouldn't and couldn't sponsor such jobs that requires minimum skills and experiences. I know it's not quite fair but it is what it is. Governments tend to keep such basic jobs for their voters first. So I don't blame the company above.

Keep looking or try a different path. It's extremely difficult to get a entry level job with visa sponsorship.

- New Comment: Why did you lie though on your application?

- New Comment: You shouldn't have lied in the first place. You should have saved your time and recruiters time as well. Use that time to research and apply for companies willing to sponsor visa (I know it's tiring but all the best OP)

- New Comment: Yes you gave an untrue answer in the application, simple.

So in this case, it's your problem

- New Comment: Damn!

- New Comment: Even if you are a F1, you need sponsorship. They need to be e-verified. They need to provide you a letter of employment for your STEM OPT.

- New Comment: With CZ/Green card: no need sponsorship;

Others: sponsorship needed.

It's not about what you plan to do, it's solely about the type of your visa status in the US.

- New Comment: I'm on h1 and got laid off and just finished up two interviews for which both the HR and hiring manager said I'm a perfect fit. I had mentioned I need sponsorship/visa transfer in my application and in the last step the companies told me to go kick rocks because they don't do sponsorships anymore. It's rough.

- New Comment: JFC I can't believe this!!!!

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- New Comment: Those who cross the border illegally are unfortunately treated much better than F1 students in the current system, they get permission to work, free hotels, free food and permission to stay
- New Comment: I don't see anything wrong here. It's the company's right to choose not to hire internationals if they don't want to.
- New Comment: It is correct you lied on the application.
- New Comment: Honestly, just say no to sponsorship and move on. Negotiate when you have multiple offers.
- New Comment: You didn't need sponsorship to begin working, but you will need it to continue working. You lied and wasted both of y'all's time?
- New Comment: 1. You CANNOT say "NO" to visa sponsorship if you are an F1 student. That's risk and could have legal consequences.

2. We all knew the risks before moving to the US to study. No point in yapping about how our visa status hinders our job prospects now. I was in the same position a year ago.

3. US is a bad option if you want to do a MS, find a job and immigrate permanently. We aren't in the early 2000s anymore.
- New Comment: I don't understand what's wrong here? Firstly you lied and said you don't need sponsorship now *or in the future*, and secondly they made it clear that don't want sponsorships at all now or future so I don't understand why are you frustrated.

My opinion is to use the h1b tracker on Google, it tracks what companies sponsor h1b's per fiscal year, and also what job titles they sponsor.

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Good luck

- New Comment: You should not say you have F1 and 3 years of work authorization. You are digging your own grave. He never asked you that. Just say no I do not require sponsorship now or in future. Always. Unless they point blank ask you. In which case just say that I am comfortable working on W2 or whatever. If they still insist then that's fine. But in this case he never asked your visa, so you should not have told that. I believe you applied through LinkedIn for this position. Just on the application level save your responses to match this. So it will auto fill always.

- New Comment: They should just take out f1 visa

- New Comment: Side note, it seems like many comments thinks H1B holder are different?

Question: if you're an H1B holder, do you answer No or Yes???

- New Comment: Yeah well, your fault for not being born American lol \s

- New Comment: Send this to Harris

- New Comment: You don't need to tell them you're on OPT unless you plan on them sponsoring you one day.

Even then, it's still more likely that they sponsor you after you've worked there for a couple years rather than if you let them know right away.

- New Comment: Contrary to some arguments, you were the one who mislead by stating you don't need sponsorship.

It's a fact that every employer asks a variation of the question of whether you need sponsorship now or in the future and the answer is always yes if ur on F1 or even H1b. H1B'S too require sponsorship in the future. As much as it can be frustrating, there is always a hierarchy among hiring candidates and F1 are unfortunately the bottom of the barrel. H1b's themselves are not too far ahead especially in this economic climate but F1 got it bad. It is completely untrue that u are allowed to select no for sponsorship questions on ur application just because u have OPT.

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- New Comment: Is sad but true
- New Comment: Don't tell them more than they need to know. The correct answer is "I don't need sponsorship." They don't need to know anything more than that. Recruiters are dumb as a sack of bricks and have no actual skillset besides dogged persistence at irritating the hell out of anything with a pulse. Omitting information they're too dumb to interpret is not lying.
- New Comment: Who gives a shit? Ask them to cry to the president of the united states; it's their country's stupid policies that caused this.
- New Comment: My friend got lucky, they they they won't sponsor, he said i dont need it, i can join a day 1 cpt and continue working. They bought it!!!
- New Comment: Never lie about your visa status. If you lie in the first place, how can a employer trusts you in the future. It's okay to ask whether you can work and you do not need the sponsorship. If they're okay with that then everyone is happy. Lying is a completely different story..
- New Comment: Or don't lie and get caught. Plenty of international students get jobs back home too. Being international doesn't mean you won't get jobs back home or they country your in.
- New Comment: Its time to make our home country best. For people who are settled here, make sure you invest in home countries and create jobs. This needs to reverse
- New Comment: Next time have some integrity and don't lie
- New Comment: The candidate lied. The talent acquisition officer was not at all wrong about not moving forward.
- New Comment: I think the employer took care of it in the first email with "WE WILL NOT SPONSOR IN THE FUTURE."

Any time after 3 years? would qualify as the future.

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- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I thought this was illegal

> Federal law prohibits employers from discriminating against people based on several factors, including their citizenship or immigration status, or their national origin.

So the fact you are legally allowed to work is all that matters.

But obviously IANAL.

<https://www.uscis.gov/i-9-central/employee-rights-and-resources/preventing-discrimination>

- New Comment: Q. Will you need visa sponsorship IN THE FUTURE?

A. I will not need visa sponsorship NOW to start!

?!!!

I mean honestly, the candidate here should be disqualified for lack of comprehension and ineffective communication, no need to even get into immigration status.

Title of the post: Looking for a job is hurting my soul

Body of the post: Hey all, I'm just here to vent. I'm an international student graduating with my masters in May. I'm looking for jobs and getting a bunch of interviews just to realize that no matter how good you are, most places won't sponsor international students, specially in the social sciences area. It breaks my heart how much effort I've put on

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getting my masters and how much emphasis universities make on bringing international students to then shut the door in their faces. I know the system is difficult, but man we are treated very poorly after we graduate. The US is a place I really enjoy because the people and friends I've made are great, but I'm thinking that it might not be worth it to stay in a system that cares so little about immigrants well being. As humans we sometimes forget that immigrating is a human right, but who am I to change the system?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: What is your degree in? I would do the lottery and the diversity visa. It's so crucial to network as an international student. Go to as many networking events as you possibly can and introduce yourself to people. It's hard I agree but keep your head high and if it doesn't work out - don't let that break you.

- New Comment: That's why most international students do STEM. And even they are jobless. So your case is pretty commonplace.

- New Comment: I had a 2 second interview today. "Do you require a visa?" "Yes" "Sorry, bye".

Of course, my "yes" was basically me saying I can continue on STEM-OPT but I got a clear no and the call was cut. It was truly frustrating.

- New Comment: Gosh I hate seeing some of these comments. F1 visas are not immigrant visas? yeah well duh?? I'm sure OP knows this lmao. Every person that comes here as a student (at least those that I know) face a period of serious depression during the job hunt because of these sponsorship challenges. I hope you find some comfort in knowing you aren't alone. I wish you the best, I know how hard this time period can be and I hope you get through it!

- New Comment: Download Tinder, Bumble. Get to work

- New Comment: Why don't you try for full time jobs in academia instead of industry? Sure, academic jobs might pay a lower salary, but WLB and job security will be good. Plus they might even get you a cap-exempt H1B

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- New Comment: Immigration isn't a human right my dude. It's whatever the government defines it to be. And US immigration is the worst. That's just how it is.
- New Comment: Honestly, your best bet with social sciences is going for a Ph.D. and trying academic jobs. There is a lot of competition with those, too. However, anything else in social sciences is even more difficult, almost on the verge of being impossible.
- New Comment: Apply in bigger cities like New York, Chicago, LA etc. Also change that to your location on your resume. When I relocated to a bigger city I had more people willing to hire me on F1. No one had a problem. However, I am in a rare field and on STEM so my case is a bit different.
- New Comment: Yeah, I'm sorry you're going through this, but outside of a few majors (CS, certain engineering majors), finding an OPT (let alone H-1B) friendly job is extremely difficult. Unless you have a PhD. Then you can go into academia, and that should be significantly easier.
- New Comment: I went through this job search twice - once for undergrad and once for grad. Hang in there and keep your head up you'll find something. It's just a part of the process. Thousands go through this so you're not alone. Look for smaller companies I think that is the key and good luck
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: Hey, I hear you. You're not alone. Everyone's situation is different so people will have different views on it. But you're absolutely right about the struggle especially in recent times it has become even more competitive and that too in a market like this. But like most people recommended in the comments keep at it and try your best. You definitely cannot control external factors but can sleep peacefully knowing that you tried. Your feelings are very valid and it is rough out there. But you never know when something might click so don't lose even a single avenue or opportunity.
- New Comment: Luckily I got a pretty good job right out of college, I did my undergrad in STEM and they are sponsoring me. They also said if I don't mind working in their European branch for a year they can transfer me over and bring me in

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on a L-1 visa and get me a green card in 2 years

- New Comment: Were you aware of the challenges with getting jobs in your sector prior to enrolling in your program?

Especially since you are in a non stem field presumably

- New Comment: I understand your frustration, but facing challenges with job sponsorship for F-1 is part of the reality in the U.S. Immigration, especially for work, is governed by strict policies and isn't considered a human right in this context. Rather than focusing on the systemic barriers, it might be more productive to look for employers known to sponsor visas and use your network to find opportunities. Your feelings are valid, but adapting and finding practical solutions within the existing system could be a more effective way forward. These are just my two cents. Good luck to you tho.

- New Comment: I know exactly what you are saying? This is a tough time for everybody. All these layoffs are putting a lot of experienced people hunting for jobs too.

This means that when the job market has a lot of highly experienced Americans looking for jobs, is a bad time for immigrants/ International students to find a job in the US.

I am not sure for how long this job market crisis will stay? but I feel like things will get worse.

I am just starting to advise friends not to invest their lives here, they better start to look for other countries that really need us.

- New Comment: Problem is you still have a soul.

- New Comment: You should check out jobs in education. I found a lot more success applying for jobs in education because there is a shortage of teachers, so a lot of independent schools are willing to sponsor for the right candidate. In addition, some charter schools are cap-exempt and willing to sponsor if it is in your field of study. The good thing about this is also k-12 education is a good baseline position to later go into academia, so if that's the route you want then this could be the right way to go for you.

- New Comment: My co-worker was also an international student. Our boss, who was also a foreigner, advised my

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coworker to tell potential employers that once he got the offer letter, he could use the offer letter to submit for a work visa and be set to work in the US. The next interview he got, he got the job, and things went his way.

It is supposed to be a simple process. I haven't experienced myself, but this is what I heard.

Hope this helps...

- New Comment: That idea that some of you guys have about non-American citizens not being capable of performing the same job as an American citizen is very colonialist. Look back to your countries of origin and think who would get the job when a person coming from the US and a person from your country are competing for the same position. Colonialism there as well. I understand that the job market is hard right now, and yes, American citizens have the priority. And yes, F-1 visa is temporary, but we do have the right to apply for work at least a year here if we want to. And no, I'm not trying to skip the latter or not follow the rules. I'm just saying that the skills that we have gotten from the education we received and paid for in the US should at least let us participate as candidates in a hiring process. Most of the times they reject us from the beginning because of our visa status. And yes, is not all the time and some of you are outstanding in what you do, specially in STEM, and that is why you get your chance. But I guess you were also stressed at some point.

- New Comment: At this point I don't believe it's doable to immigrate by employment, as it's way harder to find a job before immigration, and the unemployment timer will be a nightmare for a long time in this process, especially if you come from certain countries they discriminate blatantly. It's really better to take whatever other routes to get around it.

And the amount of immigrants shouting "immigration is a privilege not a right" is really annoying, how is the system ever going to change when you don't even view yourself as a human being?

- New Comment: I lost you at "Immigration is a human right" ?

- New Comment: I feel bad for you. I hope everything works out for you. You still have a lot of time. A lot of people get a

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job months after they graduate. So please don't be discouraged and just keep looking. And we can't really blame the immigration system. Because in contrary to what you said, immigration is not a right, it is a privilege.

- New Comment: I am a masters student in software engineering and will be graduating in may 2024.

I have been applying continuously for a very long time now. But haven't heard a single positive response back. I don't know what mistakes i am making.

If someone can guide me it Will be a huge help!!

Thank you

- New Comment: Immigration being a right is a very privileged and liberal western way of thinking. That's not how the majority of the world and countries work.

Would you let just anyone into your home? You would have certain criterias-can afford the rent you're asking, are they pleasant to deal with and won't destroy the place. For a country-would they be someone contributing to society? Though in the US it seems like illegal immigration is easier than legal right now.

That said I feel you on looking for a job, it's tough out there right now.

- New Comment: F1 visas are not immigrant visas. You had to demonstrate in your application and your interview that you have ties to your home country and that it is your intention to return after your studies. So I'm not sure why you're surprised by this result.

- New Comment: <https://www.reddit.com/r/csMajors/s/dZyvl2MocP>

This should give you hope.

- New Comment: Unfortunately, you are just not good enough. Especially when you degree is in social science. I think you are aware of the fact that you understand the industry for this degree is really hard to break into, in comparison to the other stem degrees. I would assume you did not have any internships or have a decent resume. Start with

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applying for unpaid position to maintain opt. Develop your resume and start mass applying, like 10 jobs per day. I understand the struggle, but unfortunately, it's not the company doesn't sponsor, your degree might be irrelevant and you are not good enough.

- New Comment: Universities put emphasis on bringing international students because it's a huge group of people paying out of state tuition and a money printer for them?

- New Comment: OP try finding a job in finance or consulting even if it's not what you enjoy just to stay in the country. Switch over to your passions later when economy improves

- New Comment: Thank you all for all your supportive comments! I'm glad I'm not the only one on this boat. I really appreciate your advices, I will keep them in mind. I will keep doing and working on what I can control. I don't have it in me to be miserable and suffer and go against my values and beliefs just to stay in another country. And I am also not going to do something I don't want to do. I am lucky enough to always have my home in my country of origin!

- New Comment:

Yea there's likely no jobs for social scientists these days. Especially for internationals . It's hard even for stem majors for whom there's pathways like h1b that exist .

- New Comment: You don't need a sponsor to work for someone while you're on F1. Just don't tell them till you have the offer

- New Comment: Dude, I feel your pain. I'm also in humanities and the situation is very unfair. Unfortunately it is designed to be as such. The American dream of equality for those who work hard is dead. We have to be much more exceptional than Americans to survive, to the point that places will want us regardless of the bureaucratic difficulties and expenses related to visa sponsorship. It's a hard road. It's tough. It requires patience too. My advice to you is to consider continuing on with a PhD in case you can't find anything to do for your OPT year. Then, apply to academia teaching jobs and look into non profits (but big) organizations OR consulting jobs for big companies, those I think offer the best options for work visa sponsorship. Of course apply to the Diversity lottery but unless you're from one of those

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countries that comparatively get a lot of visas don't hold your breath for it. Be proactive. Secondly, don't get in the mindset that having to return to your home country will be definitive and will amount to a defeat. You will still have your U.S. degree and the option to apply to U.S. jobs. Or return to school here later and try again. And don't put yourself in trouble.

- New Comment: Its easier to climb fence or walk through a broken fence and claim asylum then find a legal way to be the tax paying citizen of this country. Legal immigration is so cumbersome, companies tries to stay away from hiring international students who got their education from American colleges.

- New Comment: Move to Canada

- New Comment: This was my issue till I started lying. ? I'd say I won't require sponsorship. I know it's not the way to go but that's the only way I'd get a job. Once in, I'd ask for their e verify and ein number??. Also try starting with customer service representatives jobs. I will probably get downvoted for this but hey. They leave us no choice.

- New Comment: Immigrating is not a human right. It is a privilege that is being afforded to you specifically because Black activists protested against white only immigration policy in the 70s. Maybe our parents had voted better, corrected mistakes and we wouldn't have to beg other countries. Even now, NRIs themselves support regressive policies in India, enjoying freedoms here. So we are getting what we deserve.

The Americans don't owe us anything. If they want to allow illegal Mexicans but not Indians, it is well within their rights morally to do so since we nor our ancestors built this country or this system.

- New Comment: Let me make this clear, dont say no matter how good you are its a boasting and no, noone like that.

When youre misled by a praise before being rejected pls know that its just their habit of rhetoric, they didnt mean that and you know best.

If youre good enough, believe me, youll be accepted.

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- New Comment: Job hunting is pretty hard. It's even harder for undergraduates who only have a bachelors and tons of student debt with no experience to prop them up.

- New Comment: Life is unfair, but I feel like focusing on how unfair it is and how often human rights are violated etc is the wrong attitude if you want to win.

Sponsorship is an extra hurdle that can be overcome, but it's very hard to do when you are entry level or close to that. Being an exceptional candidate means having immediately relevant skills/experience and a network to vouch for you, and while that's possible for early career entrants who really focus on internships, it's rare and tough to do for the average person. I'm a social scientist working for a team staffed almost entirely with social scientists, and while we do sponsor and have gone to bat to sponsor people before, lowkey nobody wants that headache. I'm trying to help a very talented F1 college senior get an entry level job with us right now and like, it all depends on them both being an exceptional applicant and our pool not having someone with less uncertainty around them who is a comparable applicant too.

- New Comment: Well, I graduated in December and I'm still jobless. So yeah

- New Comment: Technically you don't need a sponsorship if you want to work there only during the OPT period.

They don't need to know these details.

- New Comment: Very hard disagree on the "immigration is a human right" part. In no way is a country not letting every single person immigrate that wants to a violation of human rights.

- New Comment: Unfortunately, the student visa originally were made for people to study in the US, get a few years of experience then go back to their home country. That was mostly the case back in the 80s, 90s and early 21st century.

Obviously now with tuition so expensive and bloated in the US, the only way for to justify that investment is to stay in the US permanently. So I understand the struggle.

- New Comment: Oof im so sorry. Social science has a LOT of locals unfortunately. Of the 30 American friends i had in

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college 25 of them were doing social science. That doesn't mean all hope is lost, maybe you can try to pivot to IT?

- New Comment: Tons of US citizens can't find a job out of college. Half my friend group haven't been employed after a year of graduating.

- New Comment: How about migrating back to your country and finding a job over there ? I am sure that you can make a huge contribution to the wellness of your country by taking your skill set back home.

- New Comment: this is the same in China.

- New Comment: You came here to study not to be legal immigrants. Also, social studies, my guy, you must be bugging, lol.

- New Comment: I'm getting a math PhD and applied for ~200 jobs. I didn't even get an interview yet (as they were asking whether I will need sponsorship now or in the future).

When the market is full with experienced people who apply for junior jobs (which are very rare), there's no way the internationals can easily find a job.

- New Comment: Can u please text ur city (where u r planning to work at) and ur major? We might attempt to help u find a suitable job collectively, everybody has different resources plus everybody's network is different

- New Comment: One option can be learning some tech thru bootcamps, self online and applying for the technical roles.

- New Comment: Do you realize the situation of the current job market in the USA ?

Do you realize the amount of Americans out of work ?

Unfortunately the timing for international students is terrible.

- New Comment: Immigration is a human right. However, citizens and LPRs of a country are also the priority of that

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country's government and if you are in their country, you follow the immigration rules. Also technically, you are on a student visa, not an immigrant visa and so technically you are a temporary visitor and not an immigrant, so you shouldn't be calling yourself an immigrant. The U.S. is not obligated to get its employers to hire you.

- New Comment: Do you know how many people in the world are well-qualified to do jobs at American companies? Should they consider all of them for hiring? That you thought that doing masters degree in the US is a pay for play quick immigration scheme is only your problem.

- New Comment: I got a social science degree and qualify for the STEM Extension.

Just want you to know that you are not alone. The job search is BRUTAL. Even for STEM students. Even for STEM students who are citizens.

It is what it is.

- New Comment: ik the money wont be great but try applying at non profits. i work with one and they're funding my h1b visa and with non profits they're exempt from the visa cap

- New Comment: I sent 843 applications before graduation. And the majority of conversations went like "do you intend to get H1B?", "Yes?", "Okay bye".

- New Comment: Apply this this if you're interested

QA Engineer | <https://g.co/kgs/5HjxmR2>

- New Comment: Because Dems decide it is too expensive to buy your vote if you become citizen and with a job.

- New Comment: I just put in no when they asked me if I needed a sponsorship. I did do a stem degree though so my thinking was 3 years of work authorization is more than enough for a company. Maybe some people consider it bad practice but I don't think I'm even going to stay here after my stem opt ends so technically no I don't need sponsorship

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lol.

- New Comment: I graduated back in 2013, and I got a job within a month after graduation. I had no idea recent graduates have such difficulty ? the US is shooting itself in the foot by not making the immigration process easier. No country can survive without a strong labor force.

Title of the post: STEM OPT Extension denied - my experience & advice for future applicants

Body of the post: Sorry for the long post.

- Early November 2023: applied for STEM OPT Extension. (EAD expiring mid December).

- Late February 2024: STEM OPT Extension denied due to DSO not submitting recommendation into SEVIS at all. Even though she said she did.

Skippable backstory/explanation: I wanted to apply early October, but my DSO was extremely unresponsive. Not the first time either; back in June I needed her to write a letter to my employer stating my degree was eligible for STEM OPT Extension, which took her 2 weeks and 3 attempts to get right.

I tried for a couple of weeks to get her to send me a new I-20 and put in my recommendation (clear in the emails). I gave up and asked for her availability to meet with her in person. I drove 3 hours roundtrip to meet with her. This was early November. I submitted my application 2 days later.

In our meeting she mentioned she had never done this before and wasn't sure what to do. I should've seen this fucking massive red flag, but I didn't. 3 DSOs at my school and she was in charge of OPT matters, so I just assumed she was trained and knew what to do. I was so wrong. She gave me my new I-20. I asked her to update my SEVIS employment records, and asked her if she put the recommendation for extension in, and she said yes. She did change my

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employment records, so why would I have assumed she didn't put the recommendation in?

I get denied. I ask her about it. She then emails me saying she doesn't have my I-983. This is the first time she ever mentions this form. I wasn't even aware of this form. Why would I when she told me back in November that my recommendation was submitted to SEVIS? Either way, it became clear to me that she didn't know about that form either, as she never asked it from me in the whole hour we met and because, again, she said she put in my recommendation in SEVIS. Not to mention she had months to figure out how to do her part in this process, but she never bothered. My school also has a lot of the blame. International student services have always been almost nonexistent, so it's not surprising DSOs aren't trained at all, and they go through so many of them.

Clearly my school and DSO aren't fit to deal with these matters. Untrained, incompetent, and dishonest. Sucks that I was the one who had to find out the hard way. Keep in mind my employer would've gladly filled their part of I-983. My degree being extension eligible was the condition for me to get hired. Could I have done some things differently? Yes. I genuinely do think my school/DSO are to blame. They're not responsible for me filling out the I-983 (btw the form only comes up in the employer section of USCIS website), but they very much are responsible for doing the bare minimum: being trained in DSO matters, and being honest to people.

Unfortunately, immigration matters in the US are extremely unforgiving. I knew this already, but the thing with STEM OPT Extension is that even though the application is very personal and considered optional, it's very dependent on your school/DSO. If it was just up to me, everything would've been ok. But sadly, it isn't.

What I recommend for future applicants:

- 1) Apply day 1 (90 days before your initial OPT ends per your EAD). This will hopefully allow you to reapply if denied.
- 2) Even if you can't afford premium processing, do it. Open a credit card if you have to. Not worth risking a denial and not being able to reapply. Unlike initial OPT, you'll be losing your STEM OPT extension years for that education level.

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- 3) Never trust your DSO or school to do right by you. Confirm your new I-20 is right. Confirm recommendation was entered in SEVIS.
- 4) Don't plan life too ahead until your extension is approved.
- 5) Don't submit application until after recommendation is in.

Lawyer consults: I consulted an immigration and a civil litigation lawyer. I can sue for lost wages only. And I'd be at the mercy of the court/judge. There's a case because there's email evidence. But it's still a foreigner vs a U.S. institution case. Unclear if I'd need to be present in the US, but I'm out of status. Also, contingency is rare when suing universities so it would take \$\$\$ and months of waiting.

What's next for me? I'm going to be honest, it's an awful, massive setback for my life and career. My family is affected greatly too. I don't know where to go from here. I'm going back to a third world country where opportunities are extremely scarce. Unlike many international students, my family is not well off by any means.

Ask any questions if you have them.

Naming and shaming school: Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. Not sure if DSO should be named.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Wow. That's utter incompetence on the part of your school. I know many will point out that it's also your responsibility to submit the right forms and comply with the law. But DSOs are supposed to be professionals whose advice we can trust.

You're probably out of status now and must leave the country. I'm so sorry that this happened. I hope your company can figure out a way to employ you at your home country if they have an office there

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- New Comment: Every single person who wants STEM should be bookmarking and familiarizing themselves with the STEM OPT hub.

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub>

This seems so negligent - I'm a DSO and this seems like a mistake we could be sued for or I could be fired for if it happened the way you described. But this is also a reason why the regulations are fully public and there are resources for students and employers. If someone's uni doesn't have the steps to apply for STEM OPT listed, check out a big schools website so you at least know.

<https://www.cmu.edu/oie/employment/f1-students/opt-stem-opt-extension/opt-stem-extension.html>

- New Comment: I'm sorry that this happened. I ask every student I issues i20s for, to check p.2 for any errors or corrections. I'm not sure how you, or your dso missed this, it's literally the only thing you need to look at on the i20.

- New Comment: Man, I'm applying for OPT and so tempted to do premium even everyone said I will get my card in time. But I'm worried that something is wrong and I may not have enough time to reapply

- New Comment: Damn brother. That's tough.

Similar case with my roommate. This was in 2016.

My friend had submitted his documents for stem extension. He asked me to make sure to meet dso and submitted the docs. I lived 10 mins away from uni and he was 4 hours away. I asked dso again and again if he submitted docs. He said he talked with my friend and he had submitted it. I don't need to be involved. I said that to my friend and we just left it that.

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And we'll, he didn't submit it on time. My friend's stem extension was rejected. My friend laid it in the dso. My dso accepted his mistake. He submitted some kind of letter to uscis to rectify my friends application. His stem extension was approved. But it took a while.

All this while, my friend had applied to different school and attending classes to keep himself in status.

This was Years ago. You need to take it up the chain in uni.

- New Comment: If you can do your job remote, ask your company to let you work remote from your country as B2B contractor, and they can apply for H1B until you get selected.

- New Comment: This kinda thing is always a risk when international students enroll at sub-par universities. What you said sounds horrific and almost an incomprehensible amount of unprofessionalism you rarely see from reputed institutions in general. Sorry this happened, best of luck.

- New Comment: Man why are some of these DSO like this. Wish you luck and strength OP. Check if your company can sponsor another type of Visa L1/O1 etc (bar and costs are high but just explore option). Also check with this lawyer if there are any options for you (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/bobwebber/>)

- New Comment: My first STEM opt was also denied because they apparently could not process my credit card. They mailed me back my entire application, and I got a cashiers check from my bank and it worked out. But I had to pay shipping AND for the cashier's check, but thankfully I applied 90 days before my deadline so I could reapply. It was such a nightmare.

- New Comment: Ty for sharing this and I hope you find a solution soon. Also fuck that dumb DSO bitch, I hope she rots in hell and gets the most painful death. Playing with other people's career and life is no joke.

- New Comment: Is that required to upload your I-983. DSO told me the I-983 has to be provided to them(school) and keep it in my file in case USCIS or SEVIS ever asks for it? So I haven't upload it on my stem application.

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- New Comment: I'm sorry, OP! You should take this up the chain at your university.
 - New Comment: I feel you dude. Why did u go to one of the most conservative state to study? Hind sight is 20/20 but Kansas school must have been hard as an international student
 - New Comment: What country are you going back to?
 - New Comment: That sucks man. But unfortunately, that's the reality when it comes to documentation. I can share a similar story here. This was back in 2018 when there was no premium processing or anything. I was working for a company which had me in a certain location for a project for 6 months while I was applying for stem extension. My company was in Michigan but my project was in Ohio. My DSO printed out my i20 wrong but putting in the project location as my company location. If almost even mailed this over (it was the time when this application had to be physically mailed, when for some luck my GF asked me why it had the project location on there. I had provided all the information regarding this prior in my i-983 as well and still this had happened. To call out here, I attended a top 10 school in the country and this still happened. I ultimately drove to my uni and had a 1v1 and upon asking for clarification here, my dso just said oops! As if this was a small mistake.
- Review your docs yourself. Read immigration and other guidelines yourself. DSOs don't look out for you (even if they should) .
- New Comment: I'm so sorry to hear this. Don't blame yourself. Like you said, the USA immigration is very unforgiving. Hope you figure it out.
 - New Comment: You can start a new M.Sc program and do a day one cpt this should allow you to continue working
 - New Comment: What is the name of the school ?
 - New Comment: I had something very similar happen to me, and now I live in Belgium ?? I had the same feelings when I was returning back to my home country, feeling like a failure, but I also had absolute faith in my abilities that things will get better, and they did. Wishing you the best !

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- New Comment: My STEM OPT EAD card was not delivered to my house. USPS said they have returned it to the sender on July 6th. Please guide me on how to request USCIS to resend the card to me again. Thank you.
- New Comment: My ead card was delivered today at mail box but I couldn't find it .Please help me I have raised the request with usps
- New Comment: What school is this
- New Comment: Which country are you from OP?
- New Comment: I'm sorry to hear that. How about cpt colleges?, you can file for H1b . Did you consider that option?
- New Comment: Try contacting an immigration lawyer and see if you have any grounds for appeal or reviews
- New Comment: good luck. Sue the school and get something.
- New Comment: lawsuit.

Title of the post: Graduated May, experience so far

Body of the post: I apologize in advance for using this forum like a diary but quite frankly I have nowhere else to share my experiences.

Since graduating, I've been crashing at a stranger's house. I have applied to 500+ jobs over the span of 2 months while waiting for my OPT to arrive. I have been able to secure some unpaid volunteer work that will allow me to not worry about the 90 days for the time being.

The thing that messes with me mentally the most is not the lack of jobs or the fact that interest is being capitalized on my student loans every month that I don't pay them or even the possibility that I might have to return to my home country with a degree that will do me more harm than good -- it is how people treat you when they see you as a migrant worker.

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Over the past 2 months, I have been told that I won't simply get a job by applying to them, that I need connections, and that I should have prioritized making white american friends during college instead of hanging out with other international students. I have been told to not expect to get handed anything for free in this country, as it continues to squeeze every last bit of uncompensated labor out of me and my other friends. I was called a slave by someone who genuinely thought they were helping me.

Despite how hard you work, if you're not producing any results, people will keep calling you lazy and unmotivated. And I took it as a pep-talk for as long as I could. I told myself they were right, if I just work hard enough that would solve all my problems but I can feel myself reaching my limit. I don't want to go back as much as the others, especially to a home that does not want me back, but I don't know how much longer I can keep this up.

All I ever wanted was to have a space where I didn't have to worry about what other people thought but lately it feels like too much to ask. I want to give up. I miss having a full stomach. I miss talking to other people my age. I miss my friends. I miss having free time.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I see that you are a fellow Nepali.

Returning back home with a loan that big would be a huge problem to say the least.

I hope you have a better luck in your job search, but it's tough out there for CS people right now.

- New Comment: I am very sorry to hear that you are going through such a tough time. Another way to stop the clock is to get a IT tech support position at a public university. From what I know, a lot of public state universities hire OPT folks for tech support/software engineering positions. The pay is a bit less, but you can work for at least 3 years.

- New Comment: Hello there,

First of all I'm sorry you're going through this it is tough. I graduated in 2021 with a undergrad in Information Systems? 99% technical , 1% business. I ended up in a role as an associate instock manager contractor in amz, definitely not the

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route I was hoping for and not the pay I want either with no benefits but it stop the time ticking. Look into non-traditional routes. It sucks but things will get better!

- New Comment: im sure you have done this, or at least this has crossed your mind, but if you havent, please try to apply jobs at universities. they have a large amount of international students at their schools at is, there are higher chances they will hire international people since they already have the resources to deal with the paperwork as well as understanding the situation. good luck

- New Comment: Hopefully things will get better for you soon and you?ll land the job of your dream!

- New Comment: As a fellow Nepali citizen, I understand your frustration and share the same sentiments as others have shared in the comments. I can?t imagine the level of exasperation that international students have been going through at the moment. But you must realize that things are outside of your control, and patience will be your greatest strength in these trying times. The I.T. job market isn?t what it used to be 4 years ago. You understand the dilemma, so I will save myself from giving my opinion. If you have the time and money, I would suggest you to start shopping for graduate school, who knows which direction the market will be heading by the time you graduate. Again, I am sorry you are going through this ordeal. Keep applying for jobs and never give up. Good luck!

- New Comment: Well they do say it?s not what you know, it?s who you know. Worked two internships and at both I?ve noticed my peers were always well connected (related to the VPs and MDs)

- New Comment: I?m also on OTP though I?m post-graduate and from a top 5 school in the US. I am feeling similarly to you are even though I haven?t yet done even 20% of the amount of work you?ve put into it. To me that suggests you have a lot of resilience and have already overcome a lot ? good reasons so keep going until you win.

Have you considered doing informal work just to keep the lights on in the meanwhile?

- New Comment: Have you looked into non-traditional roles? Perhaps RA or baccalaureate experience? Comp bio opportunities need CS background even if you have no bio experience perhaps look into that? I understand what you

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are going through. I am in your place but also worse lol. I wasted my graduate years in a country that didnt sponsor me and now i am hope applying for roles in hopes of getting something unemployed and hated by my parents haha. Your feelings are valid, please dont lose hope and keep applying. I would also recommend looking outside US. anything if you are desperate to not go home!

Best of luck!

- New Comment: I am not going to sugar coat it friend. You might apply to 1000 jobs everyday and scream at the top of your lungs for a job but no one is going to give you any job in this economy.

While I still don't have a job. I've managed to secure 3 interviews after I realized that it doesn't matter how much I optimize my resume, because I was doing the same things that everyone else does.

You have to ask yourself the same question I do when applying for any job: Why should the company hire you over any USC.

First of all stop mass applying for jobs hoping that something sticks.

Second follow this strategy when applying for jobs:

https://www.reddit.com/r/resumes/comments/1dw6dp4/ive_been_reading_cseecemathphysicsitsre_resumes/?share_id=RE2k7dQjCp1Z4fojmdOIL&utm_content=1&utm_medium=ios_app&utm_name=ioscss&utm_source=share&utm_term=3

Third be extremely active on GitHub. whenever I see a job listing with a particular tech stack, I only highlight those portions of my job role in my resume and then always show projects that are only related to their tech stack in my resume. It made 100x difference in my job search.

- New Comment: Tech industry isn't that great right now. TBH don't know when things would get better.

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- New Comment: I have seen my friends who are on the same boat. I was in the same situation. I was jobless for around 84 days of my 90 day period. Although I got my current one through mass applying. I have sent 1000's of resumes and I only got one interview which I managed to secure it.

We all know the competition is very high with less jobs and all.

1. try looking for IT roles in university even though most of them pay less(some university pay better) but the competition is less. [higheredjobs.com](https://www.higheredjobs.com) is one place to look at these.

2. Keep resume ats friendly and put keywords as in job description and reached out to the job poster if you can.

3. Keep grinding and just wait for your time or luck. don't lose hope and I wish you all the best.

- New Comment: Can definitely relate to the getting stressed by what other people think. I just finished my sophomore year and was even pushed harder by my own parents and other people who are supposed to support me. The more I feel disappointed about my life the more I try to get a good job, good money. The old life just traumatized me so much that I feel more grateful for this life I have now.

- New Comment: I really am going through the same struggle. Also graduated in may and looking for jobs constantly applying but no response. I'm Industrial/engineering Management master student and the market is terrible out there. Going back isn't an option too cause too much loan to pay and they don't want us back. It's all piling up still trying to find a job is the only option i have.

- New Comment: Took me 8 months to land a job. Keep trying, keep applying, keep doing anything that's part of best practice. It's slow these months coz most hirings are halted during summer months due to employees being on vacation. Before the hiring spree is back by august, make sure you are ready. Aim for atleast one interview every 2 weeks. When I was interviewing, I was getting 1 every 3-4 weeks.

- New Comment: My roommate is in the same situation, not as much as you, but hes not able to land a job. For cs it's

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the worst out there now. There's literally too many.

And I get the whole migrant worker issues. It's just pissing off.

Most times I want to leave the planet, because I'm done with humans altogether lol.

Take care of yourself.

Hope things work out!

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: ?

- New Comment: Apply in the Midwest. Never had an issue getting a job there

- New Comment: Took me 2000 applications to land a job (got 5 offers). Reach out directly to hiring managers after you apply. Read more about the work they're doing and express specific interests to stand out. Tailor your resume to every job. Don't apply to jobs that were posted 3 months ago.

- New Comment: Curious, i have loans from Mpower too, but what would happen if you were to go back to your country and not pay?

- New Comment: What is your major? I can relate to your experience somewhat as I was a student myself not so long ago, but I'm unable to understand who exactly you are frustrated with. Unfortunately you knew what you were signing up for when you decided to do a degree in the US. It's become a much riskier proposition now. At least for you being not from India, there is hope in the future of getting your GC if you can somehow find a job now. All you can do is keep applying and hope for the best, but prepare for the worst

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Job search experience as an international student

Body of the post: Hi everyone,

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I want to share my job search experience as an international during my time in school. So I'm on my third year of my OPT (STEM) and been working for a while now. Didn't get H1B and planning to go home soon. I had a chance of thinking back about my struggles and how hard it was to look for a job.

During my sophomore year, I started looking for internships, by attending career fairs. This was when my school career fairs didn't really take international students into considerations. So most of the companies, did not look to hire international students. I had to go booth by booth explaining my situation where I required sponsorship. I remembered as soon as I mentioned that, their facial expressions changed. Suddenly, it became "we have to get back with you on that?", which obviously means I never heard back. My school was non top school, so most of the attending companies weren't big companies that would hire international students at the time.

It was rough, but god damn I did put in work. I participated in many school events, volunteered, became school ambassador, research project, worked as TA, got many scholarships, and did everything I could just to make sure I stood out. Of course I still have time for myself, a life, and friends etc.

One day I attended to one of the career fair and I remembered one of the recruiters told me that I would have an easier time looking for a job as Jane Doe because of my name sounds nothing like an American. This was so fucked up and I remembered her till today. This killed my self-esteem where I wanted to change who I was, but I never stopped trying.

Eventually everything paid off. After 400 applications, 10 interviews, 3 offers for my internship, which led me to a full time position today. There are many other things that happened, good and bad, but maybe for another time. I am proud of where I am and appreciated all the opportunities I got.

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I just wanted to share that I understand that some of you are having a hard time and it is ok to feel tired and desperate. Never stop trying until the end. You will never know how you will turn out unless you try. Don't let people tell you otherwise!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Cheers for sharing. I'm still struggling and trying hard and it's really easy to get demoralised and desperate easily.

- New Comment: Want to share a similar story. I completed college and was on OPT. Eventually I had to leave the country because I couldn't find any jobs that would support H1B. I could have continued that existing job on STEM OPT but I wasn't confident on my job profile and didn't want to suffer the H1B lottery fate. So I went back home to my home country. Took some time to relax and recuperate. Decided I should do grad school because the PhD stipend is actually more than what I get paid at home lol. So I finished my PhD, got a job (it was way easier to get a job as an PhD intl student in the US), and now applying for EB2-NIW. My lawyers are very confident about my profile. Funny thing is I didn't ask for my company to file H1B but they filed anyway and I got selected for H1B in my first try.

- New Comment: I really needed to read this, so thank you. I'm proud of your journey and persistence, hope you are too. ?

- New Comment: Did u fail all 3 attempts of H1B?

- New Comment: I had the worst time finding something after getting my bachelors with an f1 I had to work in something not so related to my degree and they were family friends. After that I did h1b and GC so it was good at the end but getting recruited on f1 is the worst

- New Comment: Beautiful post, OP! Thanks for the boost, we all need that right now. I love how you remained persistent even during the tough times. This is the mark of someone who doesn't wanna take no for an answer! Congratulations and all the best for your future endeavors!

PS - I'm down to 950 applications, no interview yet! 9 OA's, that's it! CS grad student here.

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- New Comment: Thank you so much for this
- New Comment: Thanks for sharing! Motivated me to not give up!
- New Comment: Congratulations! You are a star! Thank you for giving back by sharing your story.
- New Comment: Can you do a masters for another 3 years of OPT?
- New Comment: Did you cracked your first internship in your sophomore year?

Title of the post: How do you all find jobs that sponsor?

Body of the post: Current MS student graduating in May without a job offer yet. I see people with jobs talking about OPT and sponsorship and all, but I can't seem to even find one job offer yet. How did you all go about finding jobs in this economy?

Personally, I've had my resume reviewed dozens of times and am a generally very well qualified candidate (not to be arrogant), but have had 2 offers turned down after final round simply because they found out I was international. I have both Bachelors and Masters degree in CS from the US, still unable to find a single job to work. No clue on what to do and very panicked about the next few months.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: General rule of thumb for me has been to look at companies with at least 200 employees, even better if they have a presence out of the United States. I also look at how many internationals work for them, maybe even connect with a couple over LI and inquire if the company entertains sponsoring. That's worked for me.
- New Comment: Could use one of those chrome extensions which tell you if the company that posted the listing has a history of sponsoring candidates. Just search the terms f1 h1b on the chrome store.
- New Comment: Go to H1B visa database and see companies who sponsor. Usually, when they have an entry there,

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they'll sponsor. Keep in mind that these days, they're more likely to sponsor higher-end positions.

What's your field anyway?

- New Comment: I just used to apply everywhere and in the initial recruiter email/call I'd mention the sponsorship so we don't waste each other's time.

Another tip if you're not able to land a FAANG job is to look into midwest, less people so less competition.

- New Comment: [H1bdata.info](https://h1bdata.info)

Search for roles you are interested in with location filters. You will see list of companies that have sponsored visas since 2015.

- New Comment: Back in 2017, a mid-sized company owner wanted to hire me before bachelor's graduation on a part time basis, I told them I'll accept it if they give me a word to do my immigration paperwork. 4-5 years later I got my master's, and eb2 green card in hand before my STEM OPT expiration by like 4 months. No h1b, straight green card. I resigned when I reached 5 years, and accepted an offer that is x2.5 my previous total compensation. Very thankful for that experience.

- New Comment: I used H1b data h1b grader website for companies that offer sponsorships.

- New Comment: you can get the chrome extension F1hire for linkedin. it's a great tool that provides sponsorship info for each job you view, you can also upload your resume and it will give you a match score for each job against your resume

- New Comment: This is why we should say yes to the sponsorship question in applications. Otherwise, we will get rejected in the last round when they find out that we need a sponsorship

- New Comment: I faced the same issue as well. With the current market in mind, I would suggest you to get any job first and then worry about sponsorship as you have time till next February to get sponsored.

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My current job didn't sponsor and was looking for H1-B or citizens only. I told them I can work without sponsorship for 3 years during the interview. Once I got in, I convinced them to sponsor my visa this year. I work for a startup btw.

- New Comment: Try <https://h1bvisajobs.com/>

They have multiple H1B visa sponsorship jobs.

- New Comment: Honestly, from day 1, my school's international student advisor told me that if I wanted to stay in the US I needed to do a STEM degree and that my best shot at getting sponsorship would be to apply to jobs in big companies in Tech, Finance and Consulting

- New Comment: I would suggest clarifying sponsorship requirements in the first call. Getting kicked out in the last step is not worth even if you do get the interview experience. Clearly communicate STEM OPT timeline and that you can work without any sponsorship till the end of STEM OPT.

- New Comment: you can check on linkedin where seniors/alumni international students interned/work full-time.

- New Comment: International cs jobs are fried. Sorry

- New Comment: Hey buddy I was in the same boat in 2019 so you're not alone I spent 3 months after graduation doing nothing but applying for jobs, literally. I got 3 offers. Not to mention the job market for tech now is hard. Anyway Most companies ask if you need sponsorship, make sure to answer yes.

- New Comment: if you're open to the EU market, I built an aggregator for visa sponsored opportunities

<https://relocate-with-us.github.io>

- New Comment: While you have resources that others mentioned, in this current market your top goal should be getting a job. Sometimes employers who do not usually sponsor end up giving you sponsorship after the value you create. I'm telling this coz filtering our jobs will only make it even tougher for you to land one. I know many ppl who were told during interview they don't sponsor but ended up giving the sponsorship with GC. You never know.

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- New Comment: check these

<https://x.com/i/sudeepa/status/1767902956781989935?s=20>

<https://www.f1hire.com/>

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Do search companies like others mentioned and stop wasting your time applying on non sponsored jobs. Applied 900 jobs, landed 30ish interviews, and 7 final interviews, and 1 offer

1 yoe with no name masters. This is the reality

- New Comment: Look for mid size companies and prepare to do the 3 years whole heartedly. Your performance will determine sponsorship

- New Comment: 1. To get list of Past Sponsors : <https://h1bgrader.com/>

2. You can use one of the chrome extensions and use LinkedIn or Indeed. Check <https://h1bgrader.com/extension>

- New Comment: Go to angel list and start applying for volunteers and un paid jobs. I got 3 offer within 10 days. I worked with one for 1 year and got converted to full time. Also this year they applied for h1 and it got picked.

- New Comment: I?m in the same boat. Masters in CS. Graduate in May. Need a job that sponsors as well

- New Comment: Use Department of Labor h1b disclosure data. Is has all data. Thanks

- New Comment: Bribery and scams

- New Comment: samsung austin semiconductors just sponsored my buddy. try applying there

- New Comment: I worked for a very small company (50 employees when I joined) that was unfamiliar with the H-1B visa

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process. Despite this, they wanted to hire me and were willing to go through the entire process. So don't restrict to just h1b only company and you never know!

Title of the post: Why is no one hiring F1-OPT

Body of the post: Hi I'm very frustrated and disappointed because I feel like there is no opportunity for international students in this job market in 2024. I know it's not my profile I have 7+ years of experience as Senior Financial Analyst, 2 graduate degrees 1 Ms in Data Science and 1 Ms in Management Information Systems here in the US. I had applied to at least 1000 positions from finance to Data science and had at least 25+ job interviews but the only problem and I have confirmed it from the recruiter teams is my lack of US Citizenship/ Residency. I don't know if there's some sort of disadvantage to use F1 visa vs other types and I'd like to hear whatever advice and/or positive feedback you can give me.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: In the same situation. 2 master's in CS and Human-Computer Interaction. 5+ years of experience and an internship during master's. Graduated last May and not landed anything yet. I used to have interviews till last year, but from the past few months it's either an instant rejection or a rejection after learning about my F1 status.

It's a brutal job market for citizens, and twice as worse for visa holders - especially F1. Sending good vibes your way!

- New Comment: I understand that this situation is applicable for most of the job markets in the US right now (especially CS), but from what I gather, the demand for civil engineers is at an all-time high.

Is the situation for OPT hires for civil engineers the same? Or is it better than other disciplines out there?

- New Comment: on a same boat with a PhD degree. I am now actively looking for post doc

- New Comment: I'm not sure how you're looking for jobs but on specific job seeking websites like handshake there's a filter option to select to see jobs that offer sponsorship for OPT and I've seen quite a few.

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- New Comment: Everyone, if you know anyone on an F1 visa planning to graduate soon, please advise them to delay it as much as possible and not rush it. Additionally, if you know anyone (family, friends, etc.) planning to come to the US now under an F1 visa for a Master's degree in Computer Science or a related field, please advise them to delay their plan by at least two years if you care about them. This job market situation is not something you would wish on your worst enemy. However, someone starting their bachelor's degree should be fine. Our biggest challenge is not our F1 OPT status, but the ticking time bomb we face to find a job.
- New Comment: The market is bad and some companies don't want to only have you for three years. There's a reason why underpaid postdoc positions are still popular among international students.
- New Comment: Don't tell recruiters your visa status unless asked about it. Bring it up towards the end of the interview process after already having interviewed with the hiring manager. Recruiters will be unlikely to fight for you, but if the hiring manager likes you, they may fight for you. Regardless of this advice, job market is really tough these days. Luck is a big part of it. Don't give up!
- New Comment: Is that really a question? International students on OPT are on temporary visa and H1B is not likely to be selected, and why would a company hire short term people and train them. Especially when there're so many local competent people available in the market.
- New Comment: Well obviously there's a disadvantage being f1 opt, many firms do not want to go through the process and spend the money to sponsor h1b, and they would want employees that are able to work long term without any issues.
- New Comment: Look for companies within myvisajob.com. By typing the names and seeing whether they sponsored H1bs or GCs. Also, most companies only sponsor engineering roles, i.e. even if you find companies with a high number of sponsorship applications, check out the roles. If you are interviewing a company that didn't sponsor anyone before, chances are they won't sponsor you.
- New Comment: Okay, I was in this same situation. Let me share what worked for me.

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I went to the offices of companies in my local area. Talked to managers and dropped in my resume in person. I was able to get in 2 offices, and got a job in one of those. I had applied to over 2000 jobs on LinkedIn , Indeed , and a portal called jobright (I may be wrong with the spelling) , gave a dozen interviews with 0 convert.

I hope this works for all the people who are struggling. Best of luck!

- New Comment: because what happens after 3 years of OPT. They dont have the budget to hire h1bs. Ontop of that everyone be they us citizens or not are being replaced by indian contractors. The contracting firm handles h1b visas or whether to have em placed directly in india. The era of tech being the pathway to america is dead. The previous generation got that benefit. now u wanna be in the US? go learn to be a truck driver or a nurse then america will shower you with green cards.

Source: I;m on regular opt on a contract rn. our team is laying off senior engineers US citizens and replacing them with desi contractors most of whom are physically based in india. WFH means first jobs that can be chopped are IT.

- New Comment: As an F1 myself, and someone who worked in my college?s career center there?s a couple of things:

1. They may be ignorant about F1/OPT being lawful employment
2. They may be lazy and broke, and won?t allocate resources into accepting an OPT because you may need another permit afterwards.
3. They might be just plain ole xenophobic and/or racist, and may prefer to only hire white Americans (bigger corporations might not fall into this category so overtly so much, but it?s still an issue).

If I knew that all the rights I was granted after pouring so much money to be here were only nominal, I would have

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probably ended up somewhere else. I had luck and was able to be hired, but I literally got rejection calls explicitly referring to my VISA

- New Comment: Create your own company and hire yourself not sure if it's doable, but you can definitely create LLC.

I am not 100% sure but I know F1 can create their own LLCs

- New Comment: It's fine if you don't have a US citizenship or residency. Just make sure when they ask if you need a visa sponsorship, you say no. Your employer won't need to pay a penny for your OPT, so both you and your employer have nothing to lose. On the other hand, an H1B application costs an employer 8k or more. This said, if your employer finds you valuable, they'll still sign you up for the H1B lottery, especially when your employer is a large firm.

- New Comment: Well obviously there are disadvantages being f1 opt. Many firms do not want to go through the process and spend the money to sponsor h1b. They would want employees that can work long term without any issues.

- New Comment: Why hire you/someone still on f1 and deal with H1 lottery when you can simply pick someone else without these hassles? Every position gets 1000 applications nowadays. To be fair you knew the risk and you know what you signed up for. Good luck!

- New Comment: Can't hurt to apply to jobs worldwide.

- New Comment: My status didn't ever come up until I filled out my i9 with HR! The employer were not aware of my status until I asked them to sign my STEM OPT lol

- New Comment: Which Uni did you go to?

- New Comment: The unfortunate truth is that the F1 program exists to bring in additional workforce to support areas that the US domestic labor market cannot fully fill. At the moment, there is very little need for additional workforce as the domestic workforce is struggling to find employment in many industries at the moment.

Sadly it is going to be an uphill battle. The system was designed with the priority of ensuring that US employers have the

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skilled employees they need. Giving foreign people the ability to live and work in the US is a lesser priority to the system and it really shows in times like these.

- New Comment: It's that time of the world , a few years ago when past generations were coming to the US to get an advanced degree and work especially in the tech industry, the proportion of US civilians who met the qualifications of a F1 grad wasn't as much as today. Now, many civilians have the same, if not more, qualifications. Unfortunately we have to accept that there is 50:50 chance of finding one and start looking for jobs in our home country or elsewhere ????

Hang in there ! ? you will find the perfect role for you soon. All the best :)

- New Comment: We can't compete, we just can't

- New Comment: Im currently on F1 OPT, and my understanding is that

1) Employer has to sponsor for H1B

2) If you're not picked for H1B, you only have 1(+2) years to work - especially smaller companies won't want that. Not sure if MISM falls under the STEM category.

- New Comment: I'm in the same boat with 2 YOE, opt expiring next month. Applied to 3-4k applications with 10+ screenings that just reject me after knowing that I'm OPT. Time to go home

- New Comment: Can you take a job in any field?

- New Comment: You need to fight and at the same time look out of the box, different interdisciplinary jobs, different states whatsoever, don't give up keep pushing and try also emailing people personally on LinkedIn

- New Comment: cuz opt sucks as employer pov

- New Comment: Is it the same for electrical engineering? VLSI domain?

- New Comment: It's bad for everyone

- New Comment: Come to AV; we're short-staffed. Can get you temporary job in SF, dm me

- New Comment: Passenger of the same boat with masters in DS having 7+ years of software engineering experience.

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F1 OPT days are almost half gone and no STEM jobs yet to extend my OPT.

Only option left- seeking PhD or go back home.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: If you are Indian (anyone for that matter), there is an option called 'consultancies' (Pl. google). You essentially cut a deal with them, they find a relevant job for you, and you share a portion of your salary with them for a limited period of time. I am not an expert on this topic and the legality of this arrangement, but worth asking around in the college to see if it is feasible.

- New Comment: My company instructs us not to even interview OPT people. Paperwork/reporting and supervision is a hassle and the visa is temporary.

If we ask you if you need sponsorship and you answer anything other than I'm a citizen or green card holder, you're rejected. Tell the truth regardless. Your employment depends on it.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Simple answer you are more likely not gonna get a H1b in the near future, if they hire you they gonna need figure out how to transfer you to Canada or other countries.

- New Comment: If you are non CS. I can't comment. But if you are in cs domain and can't find a job in 3 months - you are the problem. The market is literally frothing with AI mania. You just need to mention that and Zuckerberg, musk will be in your room. Getting a job in US is far far easier than anywhere, freshers who jump to F1 from undergrad have no idea how brutal competition can be.

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It's very difficult to teach street smart. Jobs are there, apply properly, make yourself stand out. Don't use those generated resume, all would have used the same

- New Comment: 2 masters here, and 1 phd.

1 master and the phd. are from a top 10 US university.

Finished 2nd master and phd in under 3 years. Got several job offers in private sector as well as national labs under f1 opt. Stem, subfield of physics.

- New Comment: if not this, it's the uscis taking their time to process and approve EADs making it much more difficult for us to keep up with our employment status

- New Comment: That's why a lot of international students try to date and get married to residents to obtain a green card

- New Comment: I feel the same way about not getting any opportunity searching a job in Data science I'm so frustrated. I hope all of you and me get that opportunity that we are searching

- New Comment: Job market has been awful, especially for F1 visa holders. Almost no employer wants to go through the hassle of sponsoring anyone for H1 B or green card. Too much money, lots of time and effort. It is much easier finding another person with similar or even inferior skills , but that doesn't require any sponsorship. Things will only get worse

- New Comment: Hey, we are hiring DM me to get the link and referral.

- New Comment: Noone is hiring now

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And your profile is dime a dozen, not that amazing.

A bit ironic a data scientist cant look at the data and figure these 2 points out yourself huh

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: F1 Husband in Early Mid-life Crisis

Body of the post: Hey everyone,

This is my first time posting anything on Reddit, and I could really use some support or advice.

I've been living in the US on an F1 visa, and my wife and I have been renting an apartment together. Recently, my world was turned upside down when I discovered that my wife had been cheating on me. She even brought the other man into our apartment to stay, without my knowledge, on the property for which I am still paying rent and living (I mean, come on).

This betrayal has left me with no choice but to proceed with a divorce. Despite my efforts to save the marriage and explore all potential possibilities, it's clear that I need to move on. To make matters worse, this situation has put a hard pause on my Permanent Residency (PR) application. My wife is still willing to support the PR process, but after consulting with an attorney, he suggested that it is no longer an option.

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What's most painful is that she has brought this up with no remorse and has simply moved on with her life, having this man stay at our apartment. I have a job that requires me to work a lot of hours, but I still work from home and do all the chores and care. Despite all my efforts, all our dreams and plans now mean nothing to her anymore. Her family is also shocked by her actions. For the record, she has Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD).

Given these personal circumstances, I need to take a break to focus on my mental health and deal with the divorce. I've given my two-week notice at work, which means I'll be without a job soon. Since my F1 visa is tied to my student status and job, I'll likely have to leave the US once it expires at the end of 2025.

It feels like the system is penalizing me. My wife's actions have not only shattered my personal life but also jeopardized my future in the US. I've done everything I can to support us, paying 98% of the bills while she's been unable to find a full-time job that contributes significantly. Now, I'm left with no choice but to close our shared bank account and figure out my next steps.

If anyone has been through something similar or has any suggestions on navigating this situation, I'd really appreciate it. Feeling pretty cooked right now and could use some guidance on how to move forward.

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Thanks for listening.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Praying for you ? it will get better. I don't know how to help but I am hoping that all goes well for you my friend. Take care ?be strong.

- New Comment: This is by far one of the craziest post i have seen here. Is your wife your dependent? I would guess not based on the post. You can still apply for OPT and get 1 year, 1+2 years if you're in STEM. Honestly dude, my only advice to you is take a step back. Maybe take a hiatus for a month if thats possible. Go home to your parents for a bit or visit some friends and keep your mental health in check. I have dated someone with BPD and its no joke. Almost impossible. As people with BPD dont have a consistent view of the world they usually leave you out to dry. NEVER GET BACK WITH THAT WOMEN. She cheated and violated your trust, move on. If she tries to get you back, which she will do, say NO. Fuck opt and visa status, if you are able to find the peace within, you will be able to get through this, even if it feels insurmountable right now. Stay close with people you love.

- New Comment: DO NOT LEAVE your Job in this stretched and tight market. Please apply for a 3 month sabbatical and sort this out.

Finding a new wife might be easier than finding a new job in this market.

- New Comment: I have no words, but I am sending you positive energy. Just take one step at a time. This challenge may be a redirection to something greater. You'll never know. So, just stay strong and have faith that difficult time shall pass.

- New Comment: Hope things work out in your favour and your future stays secured in US.

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- New Comment: By far, BPD is among the nastiest personality disorders to deal with? as you can see plainly.

I?m sorry you are going through such a dark chapter in your life, but honestly consider this a blessing. You?ll look back on this one day and be grateful that you don?t have to spend a lifetime with her.

- New Comment: As a person who has been through smth similar, believe me, this shall too pass. After couple of years, you will start wondering why you were even feeling hurt. Take care of yourself. If possible, have some counseling sessions. You will feel better with time. Take some time to grieve and start focusing on things you can change and things that benefit you.

- New Comment: Being someone with BPD might?ve some negative effects on you. So take care of your mental health. Have self compassion and cry if you feel like it. Crying, Exercise and healthy food will help you to heal faster. Speaking from experience.

- New Comment: bro, she doesn't deserve you, let her go. Even on F1 with the best gig you can live your best life. Even in 30s you can still make it, it is never too late. Have faith, believe in yourself and put in the work (gym, pool etc) - lead a healthy life and it will happen. Don't force anything on you or let this put you behind. You can always DM for more tips

PS - I have been cheated on once and I have never been more resilient than ever, it takes time, vent but hold your ground, stand up for yourself and have faith.

- New Comment: U deserve better my friend. I am sorry Indian girls these days are becoming total whores. Don?t worry so much things like this brings important things in perspective. I an sure u have a good summer saved, go back home and home will treat you right

- New Comment: She is at the top and the randomly decides to cheat, Jesus. Ngl never date someone with mental problems, you may think I?m not being fair but this type of people are not stable enough to be in a relationship let alone be stable on their own.

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- New Comment: What is the status of your wife ? On what grounds did your lawyer say you can't adjust status? How long have you guys been married ?

- New Comment: First of all, I'm so sorry that happened to you. This is a terrifying situation. Hope you also look for some mental help as emotional support. Second, have you tried a second opinion about your application? I did a quick Google about a case like yours, and it says while a divorce makes it harder, it's not impossible. Especially since she seems willing to help (AT LEAST THIS for such a betrayal)

I really hope everything works out for you! You deserve it!

- New Comment: I'll suggest you file for VAWA, you can still get your green card. What she's done can be categorized as abuse. Consult with a good immigration attorney. I can recommend one for you if you don't have any. All the best.

- New Comment: As an F1 student too, I am sorry this happened to you. Wishing you all the best and hoping that everything works out!

- New Comment: To those encouraging OP to move forward with green card application, that is terrible advice! She is mentally unstable. If she goes cuckoo at any point during the process, OP could end up in jail or be deported for trying to cheat the system.

- New Comment: Why are leaving your job? You dodged a bullet so the trash is taking itself out. Stay at job and stay at the US divorce and carry on with life, you deserve so much better!

- New Comment: If she has BPD, you knew this for a while. Her new lover will not last that long. Why does the lawyer say you can't get your PR? This sounds kind of opportunistic, but just stay with her. Her relationship with him will fall apart, as it did with you. Get your PR, endure a few more years, and decide if you want to leave or not. Ask the lawyer for the time you are looking at. Good luck.

- New Comment: Actually you can get green card because you got abused by your wife just get evidence and you'll get

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a green card with no conditions.

- New Comment: Omg Huggg

- New Comment: I will be praying for you. As a married F1 student myself I can relate to your frustration and pain.

God bless you and opens up a new path full of light for you to fulfill your goals and also for your heart to find comfort.

Amén

- New Comment: I agree don't leave the job. It's not your fault. You have time until end of 2025. You can apply for another visa type and stay in the US. Stay strong and get yourself out of this situation

- New Comment: Just move forward with the PR, let her help you and get your 10 year card! If by then you're still not liking each other, get divorced

You've been married two years, you probably already started filing, then why cancel now?

- New Comment: Have some self-respect for yourself

- New Comment: I am speechless and teary while reading this. Sir, for all the difficulties and problems that I faced in my life, I never prayed to God to fix them. All I pray for is good health of my family. But I'll genuinely pray for you. I hope you recover from this and bounce back in life.

Please do remember all the great stuff you have achieved so far. All the battles you have fought. This too shall pass.

More power to you.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I rarely comment on Reddit posts but your situation sounds truly awful. You sound like a wonderful and kind person (not even trash-talking your wife or remotely being rude to anyone) and I am sorry that you are going

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through this. I don't have much advice but just wanted to send some positivity your way. Life has a way of working itself out. Everything will be ok at the end and if it's not ok, then the end is not here. If you ever need to talk or vent, feel free to reach out. Good luck and stay strong!

Also, are you able to get an employer sponsorship through your current job or any future jobs?

- New Comment: US immigration sides with women abused by their husbands and granted immigration status. I suggest you report to the police and / or file against her in court claiming emotional and financial abuse with exploitation of her status requesting to be treated as an abused spouse and granted immigration status independently from her

- New Comment: Why would you leave your job? The market is crazy and aren't you two dependent on your salary?

- New Comment: I know another case like this, so you are not alone.

- New Comment: I am gona guess the girl was American, if yes tune apna PR ka jugaad kho diya...uska dukh zada hoga ?

- New Comment: I?d say reach out to the USCIS or a lawyer and explain your situation and next steps. You might be able to qualify for a green card if you can prove your American wife ?hurts? you that led to the divorce. I personally know someone who was abused by an American citizen spouse, filed a complaint with USCIS and was granted a green card as a survivor of abuse in a marriage to an American.

- New Comment: What a bitch, damn. Stay strong, man

- New Comment: I don?t think bringing her mental health diagnosis into this was necessary at all.

- New Comment: at least your English is pretty good.

Title of the post: Stressed as hell.

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Body of the post: Just another post ranting about OPT and the lack of callbacks or responses to the 100's of job applications submitted over the last couple months.

I'm graduating with a Masters' degree in Computer Science now, my OPT starts on Feb 10th (using the 60 day period), then the 90 day countdown starts as well, and I haven't gotten at least one interview. I'm starting to question my decision coming here to get this degree.

I worked for 2 years after my undergrad as a software developer back home, and spent the next 2 years here, getting this degree. I'm grateful for the experience and the personal growth I've gained, but this uncertainty is way too stressful.

I've explored all my options, I've talked to my thesis advisor and she helped me make a list of PhD programs that I could apply (for next Fall), but that's another 3-4 years of study! She was kind enough to offer me a volunteer research position to maintain my status and stop the unemployment clock as well. It's been hard to feel happy about graduating tbh, I withdrew my name from commencement this semester in the hope of doing it in a happier time (with a job) at a later semester.

I know that there is still hope, but I'm struggling. I've had my resume reviewed, apart from minor nuances the feedback has been generally good, except I haven't heard back from any prospective employers. Most of my past work experience is with Angular and NestJS (a backend framework) and I hardly see any job postings for those skills. I've been transferring my skills over to React and SpringBoot gradually. Working on small projects and slowly building a portfolio to start applying for those positions.

I also feel like I have a cool idea that I could work on as a small project/startup, but I don't see any opportunity to earn from it. Maybe I'll just end up working on it to put it on my resume. I'm open to any suggestions that'd help me endure these stressful times. I have alternative options figured out, just that none of those provide me with an income for a

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foreseeable period.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Be more targeted with your search.

The VAST majority of US companies want nothing to do with foreign students. Whether it's justified or not, hiring international students is perceived as an administrative burden. Use one of the many databases out there to see which companies have sponsored H-1B's in the past, and focus on getting into one of those.

It's good your thesis advisor is helping you stop the unemployment clock. That in itself is a luxury some students don't have.

At the end of the day, you only need one job opportunity to work out. I'm sure you'll find something.

- New Comment: > I'm starting to question my decision coming here to get this degree.

I'm surprised you're only doing it now tbh.

November-December is kind of a dead zone in hiring because it's the holidays and many companies are wrapping up their fiscal. Because it's the holidays people are working much slower, and because year-end results are coming out for many companies, nobody wants to increase their costs by starting a search or hiring on new staff this month when they can do it next month and not get the balance sheet hit. Hiring should pick up in Jan but ngl this is one reason I don't think it's a good idea for F1 folks to graduate off-cycle.

- New Comment: I feel your pain. I am a USC now, but I went through the hell you are going through many years ago. So much pressure from everything while on F1. I was also not happy while I walked at graduation. Even though I graduated with honors, I knew the struggle was far from over. It was just barely starting. I did work on OPT for more than a year until I ended up meeting someone and settled down (nothing wrong with that). My path ended up being a family

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based green card. Marriage is fun and many happy moments, but it can also be very stressful. Marriage is not for everyone. My advice is if you really want to stay here and you are young, push as hard as you can. Try every single option until you are definitely ready to give up.

- New Comment: Hey I am American now but at one point I was a f1 student. So I can understand the immense pressure.

Just keep working hard and hope for the best. Nothing else you can do (I guess you can marry a USC)

- New Comment: you should still walk at commencement! I graduated without a job too but getting your Master's is still an accomplishment and you should celebrate it. I am in the same place and I've been looking since May. At least you have a volunteer position and your grades are I'm assuming good enough for a PhD too, so don't start spiraling and look at the positive sides.

- New Comment: i applied to a million jobs and only got like 4 or 5 interviews and i managed to land a job which only had one round of in person interview and the interview was just general talking about life stuff and nothing to do with electrical engineering knowledge because the employer trains everyone from scratch. so yea just keep applying and something will hopefully click.

- New Comment: Getting a job in general is hard. It might have been easier during 2020 to 2022 but in general it is not easy. Gc or usc have hard time getting one. In terms of pecking order opt is the last category that company will look at.

I was f1, h1b, gc and now usc and i am now on my company's interview team. It is hard to convince myself or others to pick f1 opt due to uncertainty. Why? I don't know whether we can keep you long term as we don't officially sponsor any visas anymore. And we are fortune 500 company. It sucks but the environment has changed significantly last few years.

- New Comment: The job market is bad but hang on. It is also so nice from ur advisor to offer you a research position so that u can stay. Give it time and ull find something.

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- New Comment: I feel your pain. I'm about to be laid off in two months and when the boss told me the news I was stressed. However, being much older and less delusional about being in this country really helps me from going into a downward spiral. Being in the US and getting a stable job is definitely a dream, but it doesn't have to be the whole life. There are many countries out there who can offer you equally good opportunities for a decent life. If you do not confine you into this one box called America, you'll find it much easier to breath.

- New Comment: I've been on the same boat. Except that it was bachelors instead of masters. Didn't attend my commencement either. Was impossible to find a full time job granted the only experience I had was some internship experience. I had to do the consultancy route to make some money. I wouldn't do that unless it's your last hope in my case it was. Although the job I got was a senior role believe it or not I managed for 2 years and they offered me a full time role. Unfortunately I had to leave it ultimately because of immigration. Applied for H1-B for the last 2 years didn't get the lottery. At this point it's been 5 years since I visited my family since my f1 expired 2 years ago and covid before that and I don't have anything to show for it. I have one more chance for H1-B which I probably won't end up taking. I'm thinking of going back. I typed all this out to say life here could go either way. Whatever's gonna happen will happen so just chill out for your part and enjoy the time you're here.

- New Comment: This is the life in F1. Not new for long time.

- New Comment: IMO, whether an F-1 student or not, the best way to find work is to build relationships or contact with all US work, school, and family contacts and tell them about the work you are looking for and if they can't help you directly, always ask if they can keep you in mind should they meet someone who can or see something you may be able to do. Tell them about your strengths and the things you have overcome.

While you look for paid work try to do that independent project you were talking about, freelance work, volunteer with nonprofits, and share all of the significant experiences on LinkedIn or other social media. Ask intelligent questions in gatherings for your industry-virtual or in person. There are a plethora of talented folks who may have taken the same route as you. Refer others to jobs, they may later be in a position to recommend you or give you some insight from the inside. Making and working on personal connections is the best way to go and makes a difference.

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It is discouraging and it's hard not to take the job search personally. There are lots of variables in play and one is that market is hard for everyone in the US right now. Keep going and circle back to the jobs that you didn't get. Sometimes the folks that are hired don't make it past a month.

- New Comment: On the same boat buddy. Got graduated now and not a single interview till now. Let me know if you wanna connect.

- New Comment: I don't have any advice to give you since we're not in the same field of study but all I have to say is I'm sorry. Only we know what we have to go through here. It's not easy and the stress is real. Hopefully in the years to come they start making better laws for us because it makes no sense how difficult things are ..

- New Comment: Ask your international/ISSS Office if they have a list of places that have hired students on OPT in the past.

You also could look at the Ultimate H1-B Sponsor Checker app to find companies that have sponsored international people recently.

Worst case, go through a consultancy.

In the job applications always check "no" on needing sponsorship, since you don't need it- OPT is work authorization.

Also every single resume and cover letter you send out should be reviewed by your career center, and they should be individualized to each job posting.

- New Comment: If you've got work experience- hmu, I can get you referred at Fiserv

They hired a 100+ folks at Berkeley Heights last month

- New Comment: It's not you, it's the market!

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- New Comment: Use your connections. Know any friends or even online friends whose company is hiring? Use them, ask for referrals. I found this is the most effective way to at least land you an on-site. Good luck.

- New Comment: Take any job you can get in this economy. Why against startup? Or the field might be fit perfect with you.

I joined a startup at F1, once you get in recruiter would reach out and you can network to the job you want.

First job is not that important, get a job and go from there.

- New Comment: I was in your boat after my bachelors finished last year . Apply for midsized consulting firms. They may pay less but the training and experience you get is vast.

- New Comment: Run through YouTube videos on how HR people shares how they filters your resumes?

Or pay a service to get it reviewed and redesigned to get the desired results you need?

- New Comment: I recently recruited an OPT candidate into a data analyst role. He knows that we can?t guarantee sponsorship, and we know that he has a time limit. This still means a solid 2+ years of working getting done, so it?s a fair deal for both sides.

There were 800 applicants to the role over the course of two different recruitment cycles. The market is absolutely flooded with masters grads. You?ve just got to keep trying. You?re battling against recruiters who know how to exclude you from searches and companies that aren?t interested in your shelf life or sponsorship. This is the way our shitty system is set up.

- New Comment: Look into hiring agencies while you look for more permanent solutions. Those will at least stop your unemployment clock

- New Comment: send me your resume and do a resume over view also dont send docx format computer cant understand use a pdf format with all the key words.

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- New Comment: Don't worry OP, I am in the same boat. My OPT also starts on the same day as yours and I haven't got no interview or job as well \^-\^' no fucking clue what I'mma do

- New Comment: have you tried applying to open staff positions at universities, not in teaching? if you go this route not only will your OPT be sorted, they might also sponsor a cap-exempt H-1B as a full-time staff member if they like you (I'm saying this from personal experience)

bear in mind - you are not allowed to work on a startup idea while on F1 or on H-1B for that matter, and it cannot help you maintain status.

- New Comment: Getting a job in Tech is extremely difficult these days due to all the lay off and saturation in the field. It is easier to land a job as Healthcare graduate with good salary

- New Comment: Jobs picture will get much worse before it gets better. Its a good idea to enroll in another masters or phd

- New Comment: Dude I knowww. If you're struggling with stress especially anxiety related to school/work- this really helped me feel heard and i found that it gave me real advice
<https://www.how2college.net/chronic-stress>

- New Comment: I'm in exactly the same situation, 2 years of work back home and 2 years of masters here, graduating with no active interviews let alone an offer. I'm not interested in doing a PhD, and I don't even have a good enough grade to get into good PhD programs even if I wanted to. Stressful? yes. Hopeful? Yes again.

At least we're not alone, let's keep pushing I guess!

- New Comment: All I can say is it might not get better even if you get a job. H1b is just modern slavery.

- New Comment: I went back home, I'm a remote software developer for a US company, it's awesome, no need to stay in that country

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- New Comment: Just wanted to add to the comments here to say you're not alone. I've been searching for almost a year since graduating (also in CS). I had a few interviews a few months after graduating that didn't go anywhere, then complete silence for a few months, and now back to getting a few interviews again. I don't know if I'll make it, but there's hope. It's really tough, but as long as you at least go through the motions of applying to jobs and networking, your chances aren't 0. Best of luck friend. Things will work out for us in the end.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: What country are you from OP?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Another day, another CS/IT major struggling to find jobs.. why are people blindly moving to the US on loans they cant afford and pursuing these degrees without basic research and due diligence?

Title of the post: Please consider teaching.

Body of the post: Hi all! Please hear me out!!!!

If you have a degree that may be used in teaching(math/statistics/comp sci/IT etc), please apply to schools for a teaching job. I don't know about other degrees but try this if you're running out of time on your OPT and don't want to go back to school at least immediately.

Middle/High schools are DESPERATELY looking for teachers. Most private schools do not require a teaching degree/program. Explore Christian schools if you are one/don't mind teaching in one.

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Money is not that great but better than running out of time.

Good luck.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I did not think of this option. I think most schools districts don't look at visa status, do they? My backup option if industry jobs fail. Sure, they pay less, but better than being jobless in the current economy.

- New Comment: I worked as a teacher for 5 years before doing a masters in math from R1. Please show me where to apply for teaching jobs.

- New Comment: I didn't know this was possible. First of all are they considered valid as in related to your major for OPT? And also don't you need a masters in education or something?

Also will schools even sponsor your visa?

- New Comment: Know someone who's had success?

- New Comment: Might work for first year of OPT. I doubt if they're e-verified to continue on STEM OPT and highly doubt middle/high schools to sponsor for H1b

- New Comment: Fusion academy doesn't require a teaching credential. It's a 1-on-1 school. So you're a fancy tutor. The pay isn't great but it's option if you can't find anything else.

- New Comment: Can I do this with an MBA? Just graduated.

- New Comment: Does it work for stem opt?

- New Comment: I think OP is omitting the fact that you do not only need the degree to teach in a k-12 setting, but also the state accreditation and teaching license for the specific field you teach.

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- New Comment: Can we be a sub?
- New Comment: I've been searching for teaching jobs. It's true that they are desperate, but they have rejected me several times due to the visa.
- New Comment: Currently a high school basic computer class teacher on opt. Did my bachelors in computer science. It is a really good option if you are running out of time. Some schools do apply for h1b as well once they know what the process is. But mostly schools dont know about the immigration side of working with f1 or opt
- New Comment: success academy is looking for people urgently
- New Comment: How much do schools pay?
- New Comment: I asked to my DSO about teaching or mentoring roles and she said no, I could not teach.
I studied MS in Computer Science
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: here is my 2 bits, dont
- New Comment: Hi do you guys have any idea if they will sponsor H1B visa to those who are currently holding H4? My older sister holds a degree in Secondary Education. Additionally, how about those who is currently in the US but is on a tourist visa? Appreciate if you can shed some light. Thanks.
- New Comment: Will this work for day 1 CPT? I have some teaching experience
- New Comment: Where do I apply?
- New Comment: How are you guys this desperate? Surely going back home is better?

Title of the post: How to fuck up my visa interview

Body of the post: As the title states, I want to know how to get rejection for sure. The university I got i20 from requires visa rejection to refund the deposit. I do not wish to do masters as I lost interest as I have been trying for a visa slot

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since last year and I have lost interest. I am satisfied where I currently am but I do need the deposit back. So please tell me some tips on how to get visa rejection for sure.

Edit:

I got rejection. I was honest, told the officer that I do not wish to pursue masters right now and she promptly gave me 214B.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: VO: Good morning.

You: Good morning. The university I got i20 from requires a visa rejection to refund the deposit I paid. I do not wish to do a masters anymore as I have been trying for a visa slot since last year and I have lost interest. I am satisfied where I currently am but I do need the deposit back and to do that I need a visa rejection. Thank you.

Note, this rejection will have an impact future applications to come to the US.

- New Comment: That?s completely unfair! Why would they ask you to show proof of rejection to get a refund? If there are other means to get a refund , explore them. A rejection can create a problem when you intend to visit or change your mind to study.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

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- New Comment: Situation changes, life changes. Don't f up till the extent it will impact your future applications.
- New Comment: Don?t answer a single question the officer asks you
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: May i ask how much did you deposit?
- New Comment: This is a unique question. I can think of a lot of creative, humorous ways you can pull this off, but I like the idea of being honest. You don't want anything on record that says you have immigration intent or that you plan to do anything but study.

It would be against the rules of this sub and professional ethics to tell you to borrow or otherwise obtain someone's rejection slip and just take a picture of it. You certainly should not use an image of one that you find online, as that can be reverse-searched. However, I'm not sure of the ability of the college to see your status in SEVIS.

Does the university have any requirement that you try again?

- New Comment: Request a withdrawal or rejection without prejudice. Also mention you want to stay in your home country. That will work in your favor in case you want to return to the US after a decade
- New Comment: Didn?t know Uni made deposit the fee even before the student is stateside. Go to the interview and if they gave you the visa tell them you ?reject? the visa Hollywood style. ? just having fun not a legal or sane advice.
- New Comment: I don?t think a deposit is worth getting a US visa rejection unless you?re 100% sure you?ll never look back to the US again. After that one rejection getting any visa will be infinitely more difficult and telling a US consulate officer that you?re essentially wasting their time for some deposit is an even bigger red flag and also looks like you?re trying to ?scam? your US university.

My advice would be to cancel your visa interview and take the L on the deposit.

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Do not go to the US embassy to waste their officers time

- New Comment: If your institution takes a deposit that they'd only refund if you can't get a visa, that sounds extremely fishy (almost like a scam - no reputable institution would do that). Even if you take your interview seriously, it is likely that you won't get your visa. So just consider your future visa prospects and take it seriously (so that the US Embassy rejects your visa because of the INSTITUTION not YOU).

- New Comment: Pls update how it went

- New Comment: Well tbh, it's not a great idea. Any refusals are always considered in any future visa applications and if you ever want to visit USA again then it's a pretty bad idea compared to letting go of the "four digit USD" amount.

- New Comment: Don?t you lose more money from booking the visa?

- New Comment: But why would you want to hurt your future chances too ? That would be a big thing

- New Comment: Let us know how it goes! I'm following this post

- New Comment: Troll

- New Comment: The uni?s SEVP dashboard will report visa status.

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Lowest point of my life.

Body of the post: Hi all,

The amount of help this subreddit has given, is unmatched! I have come here to go through posts, ask questions, and have ended up making a few friends too who were in the same situation as me. Thank you for all the help, you guys have been great. But, i quit today.

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Finished my master's degree in industrial design, worked as a product designer for a few years before voluntarily enrolling for a Master's degree in management and made a mistake of traveling back to India to get my visa renewed. Dropbox got refused, appeared for the interview and got rejected, went from city to city, applied for an emergency appointment, hired a counselor to help me prep for the interview, again got rejected. Now my wife and 5 of our dogs are stranded in the US while i am stuck back home. We are at a stage where we are giving up on our dogs whom we have raised since puppies, wrapping up our future in the US, and will be finding a job here in India. Nothing seems real, and i wish all of this was just a dream but reality does hit one hard!

Now if i contemplate my life decisions, it feels like moving to the US was one of the worst decisions I would have taken. Please do not consider this as an attempt to dishearten my fellow F1 folks in the US but recognize how fortunate you may be.

Thank you all!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: What's the reason for visa rejection?
- New Comment: Something's missing in the details here, just enrolling for another masters isn't grounds for a VISA rejection.
- New Comment: Day 1 CPT case ? You can't renew F1 on that obviously.
- New Comment: Why did you leave the US to renew your visa? Visa is only for entry. The I-20 gives you legal status.
- New Comment: OP not telling the whole story....
- New Comment: Why were you enrolling in a second masters?

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- New Comment: There isn't a lot of information here, I'd need the full story, more specifically, the circumstances surrounding the visa refusal, and other possible immigration pathways.

As a general rule with my clients, I disincentivize going back home for visa renewals, as there's zero guarantee that it will be renewed, and it could lead to a situation like OPs.

- New Comment: Hi there.

I always tell people if you could avoid going back home don't go. You're not guaranteed return at all.

- New Comment: I'm so sorry you're going through this

- New Comment: As a international and paw parent myself. I empathize as well. Wishing you good luck.

- New Comment: OP leaving out that he enrolled in a shady day 1 CPT course

- New Comment: Sometimes back, I read that there was an Iranian who got a visa for a community college. lirc, he got his visa from UAE. He knew that the moment he stepped out of the US, he won't be able to return. The guy bit the bullet and stayed in the US with an expired visa until he finished his PhD, married and finally got a greencard and that's when he was able to leave the US after something like 25 years.

- New Comment: I'm sorry that things didn't turn out the way you wanted. The future is long and who knows what options are out there. With your experience, finding work with a business that has a US owner or subsidiary could be a way to get an H-1 visa.

H-1B has dual intent and a lengthy stay in the US would not get a side eye. Many things that OP wrote about definitely gets a side eye?.

- New Comment: So sorry to hear this! I hope god gives you and your family more strength through these difficult times.

I know it is easy to sit behind a screen and tell you that everything is going to be okay. When we come to the US as

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students, we all have very big dreams and no one tells us about what actually happens here. It's not just - go to the US, complete your degree, get a job, make money, be happy. There is so so much more that goes in the background that most of us are not aware of before coming to the states. Life is difficult here for any outsider plus staying away from our families is the most difficult part that a lot of us deal with for the very first time in our lives and at a very young age.

Not every journey needs to be the same and success should not be measured in terms of the where you work/live or how much you make.

Well. with that being said, I wish you and your family the very best. I hope you get through this soon and you never know how life might surprise you positively in the future.

- New Comment: Are you on Day 1 cpt univ for your 2nd masters?

- New Comment: This makes me so sad. Talk to a lawyer about this?

- New Comment: Talk to a lawyer don't give up !

- New Comment: Hey I am sorry to hear that. You visited home to renew your F1 visa?

- New Comment: i would have never travelled outside the US with the expired visa and betting on getting new visa.

Title of the post: F2 got pregnant, need insurance and your urgent help!

Body of the post: I'm currently crying while I'm writing this. I got pregnant while me and my husband are still searching for a good health insurance for me. He's a student and I'm an F2 visa holder.

I'm so depressed right now and I know what you're thinking.. it's us who didn't plan correctly.

Now please I need your help to find a health insurance that could reduce the hospital and doctor's costs. Is it possible at this point?

Going back to my home country is my last option as I don't have any close family there to take care of me.

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Edit: I'm sorry for the misunderstanding that some people assumed that we don't have money at all. I just said in the comments that when I first arrived to the US last year, I didn't join my husband plan with the university because it's too expensive compared to the benefits you get. We were looking for other options. And yes my pregnancy was not a surprise but at the same time we've been married way before coming here to the US (we are in our 30's). Please show some compassion and sympathy in your comments because I'm following this thread desperately trying to find a solution to have a healthy pregnancy journey. And yes going back to my home country is an option but I will definitely prefer to have the baby's father beside me! Please understand that some people were praying for this to happen but the timing is not always perfect.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Where do you live? If you're unemployed and your husband a student you're very likely to qualify for free healthcare. Call around and ask everyone you can.

- New Comment: Wait, I don't understand - why do you not have insurance through the school your spouse attends? If he's a grad student, you can be added as a dependent quite easily and receive subsidized benefits. If he's an undergrad, you can still be added but not be eligible for subsidized benefits. The issue is, you may not be eligible to be added in the middle of the year without a qualifying life event.

So, questions:

1. Is your spouse a grad student? If so, have you checked the graduate staff insurance for dependents?
2. What are the open enrollment dates?
3. If your spouse is a grad student, depending on his relationship with the higher ups, he might be able to request a change in funding (example: TA to RA or RA to a scholarship/fellowship), which could trigger a qualifying life event, allowing you to enroll in the middle of the year.
4. Very last resort - have you checked if you are eligible as a "qualified non-citizen" for Missouri healthnet coverage?

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5. When is your due date? If your due date is a month or two after the open enrollment is in effect, you might be able to bite the bullet and pay for costs out of pocket until your new insurance kicks in. This is an extreme last resort measure.

- New Comment: Atleast ur child will be a US citizen ?????

- New Comment: My wife is currently pregnant and we are both F1. All you need to do is to go to any hospital and ask for financial assistance form, filled and submit all other document proving you are a low income earner and you will get a financial aid.

- New Comment: If you're here on F2 then your husband surely has an insurance right? Did he opt for a family coverage plan?

- New Comment: In Missouri, your options:

MO Health Net: <https://mydss.mo.gov/mhd/pregnancy-faqs>

Or, if you are rejected by that program, the alternative is Show Me Healthy Baby program:

<https://dssmanuals.mo.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/smhb-flyer.pdf>

- New Comment: Most hospitals have financial assistance that provides service for the entire duration of the pregnancy if your income is below a certain level depending on your state. Everything from prenatal check ups to ultrasounds to maternal fetal medicine to 6 weeks check up after birth is covered. Once you deliver, the baby is eligible for medicaid. The hospitals even provide you the baby essentials when taking baby home. Talk to a financial aid counselor at the hospital you choose. All the best to you and your family.

- New Comment: If your husband is a taxpayer, you might be eligible for pregnancy Medicaid. Look it up.

- New Comment: Hi there! I know you are overwhelmed. But you are not alone. This happens all the time.

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Do you mind me asking what state you are in? This will help me recommend insurance

- New Comment: Hi poster. Use the Medicaid in Missouri. Go to the hospital and get it all set up. I use to school in Missouri on F1. Every single person I know used it and are with in their green cards now or citizens now.

- New Comment: Go to the department of health and apply for Medicaid. They can only say no.

Bring proof of your pregnancy.

You might qualify for emergency healthcare.

<https://mydss.mo.gov/mhd/pregnancy-faqs>

It says here you don't have to prove pregnancy beforehand, but eventually you will so let them do the tests to find that you are positive.

- New Comment: You can get low-cost or free prenatal care at your local Planned Parenthood! Talk to their financial advisor to explore your options, you can also find out about other community health centers or family planning clinics.

Also I believe that unless you're receiving benefits that are either:

1. Cash assistance
2. Long-term care/ Institutionalization

You're not considered a public charge - in other words it won't affect your visa/status in the future.

[source](<https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2022/09/08/new-rule-makes-clear-noncitizens-who-receive-health-or-other-benefits-which-they-are-entitled-will-not-suffer-harmful-immigration-consequences.html>). You can ask your partner to consult their international students office further about this.

- New Comment: F1 grad student here albeit no partner with me. Your husband needs to talk to his program advisor and the international student advisor about this. They can find a way to get you in the university health plan. If he gets a

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stipend I assume the uni covers the health insurance. Even if that's not the case get that insurance. Obviously get yourself added to it. If they say this can't be possible immediately ask them what's the other option and have them direct you guys there. If \$\$ is what's stopping you from getting that insurance then ask them for alternative insurances students generally use. Literally have them direct you step by step if that's what it takes.

I understand the looming anxiety and what ifs but you won't ever know if it's possible unless you both try and find out. If the uni has a hospital then go there for your pregnancy tests exams etc. that way when you claim for financial assistance it's easy paperwork wise. Right now you might want to look at community health centers. They provide low cost prenatal care. Healthcare.gov can help you locate one close to you. Some planned parenthood centers can help you as well. Hospitals and other centers also will know insurance options etc. they see so many immigrant patients and probably have someone on their team who is resourceful about this.

Don't waste your calories over worrying too much. You can be confident that you aren't the first F2 dependent who has this situation. I bet the international student office knows what to do here.

- New Comment: I have been in the same situation. I am a PhD F1. My wife got pregnant on F2. My school insurance did not cover her. If we needed coverage for her we had to pay around 10k yearly which is beyond what we can afford.

When she got pregnant through the University hospital we got emergency medicaid which covers only serious emergencies and delivery. They said it has no immigration implications.

Then for the prenatal care they charged us \$950 for all the prenatal stuff. The baby is now 15 months old and have full medicaid. We are doing just fine. Ask around in the city you are in and there will be options for you

- New Comment: A hospital can't deny critical care so the delivery won't be an issue. Once you get the massive bill you can start negotiating with them. They'll likely settle for a payment plan under \$30k. Consider it similar to a car payment and pay it off in 6 years. Problem solved.

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- New Comment: You are probably overwhelmed, and I see a lot of misinformation here, but getting pregnant is not a crime, not even on a visit visa. Like some of the comments have mentioned, don't be afraid of asking questions and reaching out for assistance directly from all the institutes that could help you.

American health care system is messed up, but it also provides lots of financial assistance to lower income people, regardless of their visa status.

Insurance companies can't deny you insurance based on a preexisting health condition or pregnancy.

1) Tell your husband to reach out to his HR and see if they can get you enrolled in the company's insurance (even if the open enrollment is closed, sometimes they can make amends).

2) Check out your state's health care program. Call them directly and gather all the information that you need.

3) Look for insurances on Healthcare market place, they are often cheaper.

Most of the information that you are looking for is a few Google searches away. Know that there's a lot of help available for qualifying families (state, NGOs, social workers, etc) could help you with finding all that). Even if they say they can't help you, ask them to redirect you to resources that could help you, and they will because they know how the system works. Be persuasive and don't give up until you find what you're looking for.

And no, none of this will affect your green card application. Health and immigration are entirely separate departments.

All of this seems like a ton of work, but eventually, you'll just be sending emails and making some calls, and you will find tremendously helpful information during this process.

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Good luck, and I hope it works out for you!

- New Comment: Follow people's advice to call and ask around for people in your situation. Giving birth is super expensive and once you find an insurance make sure you know exactly how much you would be paying.
- New Comment: some large hospitals have financial aid. give them a call and see if you qualify
- New Comment: Obama care !
- New Comment: If you can register for health insurance in the government marketplace, that's going to be your best option because it'll cover the pregnancy. However, it might be too late for that. If you can't, find a community health care center for cheap prenatal care. You can also use emergency medicaid for delivery. Hospitals will take care of you and charge you later; you can pay in installments and you can figure it out later. Your baby can have medicaid. Don't stress, enjoy your pregnancy and your baby. All of these options are available and none will constitute public charge.
- New Comment: Take a breather and add in May. Just 60 days. For these two months pay out of pocket if anything need to be checked out.
- New Comment: don't freak out. Pregnancy is a wonderful thing that happens to your life just a few times. relax and enjoy your time. try explore Blue cross Blue Shield's HMO plan costs around 400\$ month.
- New Comment: First of all: congratulations! This is a happy time, do not forget it.

Second: I understand that you intentionally did not join your husband's insurance, but please double check again with the university's HR about the rules for family of international students. When I was an F-1 student, spouses on F2 visa in my school is mandatory to be included in the student's insurance. They would actually go as far as charging students retroactively for the difference of single vs. family premium, if they found out that an F2 spouse is here in the US and don't have insurance. This means the spouse is technically covered retroactively as well, all the way back to when they first arrived. All they have to do is pay the difference in premium all the way back to when they arrived. This could be the better solution for you, if it's an option.

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If this doesn't work, then try what's being suggested by others.

- New Comment: Work with your school , there is always an option. Insurance outside is going to be very expensive
- New Comment: Call the school insurance department and ask if you can be added to your husband's plan. This is considered a qualifying life event.
- New Comment: Outside of enrollment- a child would qualify as a life changing event where enrollment rules don't apply? I would check this
- New Comment: There are multiple student insurance plans with low cost and it provides very good coverage for pregnancy and new born. Check healthcare.gov, local healthplans in your state, ask your husband to talk to fellow students, I'm sure lot of people have these low cost student plans. Dont panic.
- New Comment: Go talk to your area's maternal hospital and they will try and sign you up for whatever you qualify for. I am in Dallas, TX and I know that Parkland hospital has a team of people whose job it is to help uninsured navigate the insurance system. They do this because they want to get paid.
- New Comment: Get added to his school insurance. That will be best and suit you best.

Will also be cheaper than unknown things.

Good luck

- New Comment: Hello there congratulations. I had two kids when I was a student in F1 and my wife was on F2. We qualified for **CHIP perinatal Texas** and it covered all of her medical and dental visits and after the birth the emergency Medicaid covered all the hospital expenses.

This has not affected her in any way in immigration purposes. My wife went back to India and changed her F2 to F1 and started her grad school without any issues during application and at port of entry. We also qualified for WIC and Snap benefits due to low income and kids being American citizens. My kids were covered under Medicaid and we didn't have pay anything for any of their medical and dental expenses. Not sure how this is going to affect our GC processing but we

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were assured by social workers this does not affect immigration status.

- New Comment: You should check with your states health insurance policies. Even though you are F2 in some states since the baby will be a US citizen it qualifies for state benefits.

- New Comment: My F2 friend got medicare when she was pregnant and her baby still have medicare even after birth. Also my friends medicare still continues for one year after birth.

I believe they did an income test to see if they are eligible for it.

- New Comment: I see in your other comment that your husband is a PhD student. I was a F-1 visa PhD student too and I also brought my wife to the US under F-2 visa. Part of my assistantship, my department also provides health insurance for both me and my wife. We only need to pay \$80/person/month while the remaining amount (around \$400/person/month) is covered by the department. Therefore, please check with your husband?s department to see if you (the F-2 visa holder) can be added to your husband?s plan and you guys only need to pay a small amount more per month. Actually you should have done this when you first arrived to the US (the wife arriving is a qualifying event) though.

- New Comment: I have heard there are certain health-insurance type programs that churches provide. A friend of mine used it for his wife in NC. May be call a few of them around and check with them.

- New Comment: Obamacare. It?s not Medicaid so f1 students can get it but they have subsidized insurance. Go to [healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov), an agent will call you please try to choose a plan that has the lowest deductible possible

- New Comment: We've been through this. Our infant is 2 months old.

What I want to say is don't worry too much.

In the first 8 weeks of pregnancy, (start from your last menstruation date), you only have one appointment to confirm

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pregnancy. They will just do ultrasound.

And you come visit every 4 weeks until 32 weeks. Then 2 weeks visit, until 38 weeks. then weekly visit.

Unless you are under servere condition, you should go see doctor.

If you both are healthy, don't worry, if you come to doctor, the best they can tell you is to eat well, sleep well and try to gain weight. No medicine is needed. Also, medicine should be avoid when you're pregnant.

Beside, the only supplement you will use is Prenatal. I bought one from Costco NatureMade.

With that, when the next insurance window come, sign up and see a doctor.

Don't worry. Let me know if you have any question. We can chat.

- New Comment: School students have student insurance will cover F2 as well including new born baby. Even no insurance, you just told hospitals you don?t have insurance, or no income. Obama care will cover it

- New Comment: I am sure you could add you and new born baby with your husband plan anytime. My wife had the same situation before when we were in graduate school.

- New Comment: Schools have insurance, how are you students without?

- New Comment: If you?re afraid to go on government insurance and you don?t have money what else do you want?

Create a go fund me and pay cash then.

- New Comment: You might be able to get an ISO insurance. That?s what my school used and they offer other plans (for opt for example). It?s worth checking it out

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- New Comment: Don't use medicare or medicaid. Your husband's university should offer health insurance to families, most do.
- New Comment: Come to NYC . Free Medicad during pregnancy, regardless of your status.
- New Comment: Which state are you in?
- New Comment: Your best bet is to go to a low-income clinic with OB services. They will usually have social workers that will see what help may be available to you. Worst case scenario, you will pay your pre-natal care with an income-based sliding scale.

Contrary to what is being advised here, you cannot be on Medicaid. It is not available for non-immigrants. In case of emergency, you may be able to qualify for emergency Medicaid -- however, I would still advice you against signing any Medicaid application particularly if you think you may want a visa renewal or to stay in the US long-term under any category. Actually, accepting public-aid may get you barred from coming back to the US for life.

When the time comes to have the baby you would just go to a hospital. The hospital has to treat you regardless of your ability to pay and insurance status. Again, refuse to sign any application for Medicaid. You will be getting a huge bill from the hospital. That is ok. You then ask of an itemized bill and negotiate the bill down. Then you get on a payment plan and keep doing minimal payments. This will keep you from going into collections. Be mindful that the hospital will try really hard to get you to sign for Emergency Medicaid. Your answer should be NO!

If you decide to stay in the US you will eventually end up paying the bill. Worst case, you end up in bankruptcy and discharge the debt. That would not affect your future immigration status. If you decided to go back to your country, you can decide to stop paying. They may try to get you, but at some point, they will drop it. Again, this would not affect your future visits to the US or potential immigration (it will ruin your credit score -- but you can recover from that).

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If you are lucky enough that the baby may be born next year... you could enroll in insurance during next open enrollment period before you give birth. You should also enroll in your husband's policy once the baby is born (if they allow it -- or at least enroll the baby on it- they definitely allow that).

Unfortunately, there is no insurance that will cover pregnancy in your current condition.

- New Comment: Go to your local health department. They will assist you

- New Comment: People here might not understand your situation. Head to New York and get MetroPlus health. It's free.

You must use a New York address though so just get through that verification. They pay for everything. Good luck

- New Comment: Call your local county health and human services, they are typically in charge of welfare/medical/benefit programs

- New Comment: Just go home. Finish your pregnancy and come back. It would be cheaper and you will have the care of family. You cannot seek assistance from the government as it will be a violation of your visa. Now if you are desperate to ensure your unborn child will be American, the only way is to bite the bullet and spend on an insurance plan.

- New Comment: Where do you live? Have you tried to see if the health department of your state has any family plan? If they do, it is usually for free and you could also take a look to the Medicaid!

- New Comment: Not correct answer but I am guessing you are eligible for Medicaid or state provided medical assistance to low income families?

- New Comment: I think most states give insurance to pregnant women who don't have one for the duration of your pregnancy. Once you go for your first antenatal, the doctors will guide you on how to apply

- New Comment: Everything will work out!

I had a baby here in the United States, in the state of Florida. And I had F1 status.

You can get health insurance and I advise you not to use anything from the government for now, like Obamacare or

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medicaid, so as not to hinder your green card process in the future.

I used florida blue, I loved the support I got. I paid \$500 for participation and \$100 for family (3 people) monthly. I currently use the Oscar plan.

- New Comment: Not sure if it's been said, but you likely qualify for special enrolment on your husbands plan.

- New Comment: best places to know options are student services. Given the non-immigrant status its not go the government programs as it will create potentially create hassel later during GC. But remember this is America. You will be taken care of one way or the other. Look into Christian health clinics in the city if student services are not providing viable options.

Most importantly, you are covered one way or the other.

Dont stress.

- New Comment: I got oscar insurance as F1 and cost me \$5 per month

- New Comment: A delivery nurse told me her hospital was abt to close because of unpaid bills

- New Comment: You are eligible for free health insurance.

Call me 3348955368. If you want help on how to get it.

- New Comment: Hello Mam, Sorry to hear about your situation. Will be praying for you and the baby along with your situation. My dearly friend who is on F1 and wife is on F2 are also in the same boat, his wife got pregnant and they have not got a chance to enroll in the Insurance. Could you please share your current situation, what options were you offered and where do you stand right now ? Could you please help by sharing what you did, that way I can help my friend's family as well. Looking forward to hear back from you soon.

Appreciate it.

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- New Comment: If you're not that far along, why not terminate the pregnancy? You can still have a kid later when you are in a better place financially.
- New Comment: I would say, by taking a look at your comments, since you just got pregnant, don't go and inform about it. Get the health insurance that you need that best fits you taking the other guys' comments into consideration.
- New Comment: I've seen some comments (some were deleted) mocking how someone gets pregnant on F2 visa. No it was not a surprise. Specially when you're in your 30's. We've been trying to have a baby and it's finally worked here. I've also mentioned in my post that going back to give birth in my home country is an option. So it's not like I'm looking for something free or feels illegal to do just to have the US citizenship. I hope people have more compassion and sympathy before writing mean comments here.
- New Comment: You and your husband should return back to home country. It's not the newborn that he was accidental. Go back to home country. Get baby delivered in home country and then come back. Unless you want your kid to get USA citizenship specifically

Title of the post: Scam Alert! Beware of Midwestern IT Inc!

Body of the post: Hey everyone,

I just wanted to share an experience I had recently that left me both frustrated and concerned. As an international student on an F1 visa, finding a job can be incredibly challenging. The job market is tough, and sometimes it feels like we're stuck between a rock and a hard place. But please, I urge you not to resort to unethical practices or fall for scams.

I recently had a few rounds of calls with a company called [Midwestern IT Inc](<https://www.linkedin.com/company/midwestern-it-inc/>). At first, it seemed like a decent opportunity. They didn't ask for any upfront payment (so rare these days), and they were offering a low pay rate. I thought, "Fair enough, at least it's something to get my career started, and they'll help me get interviews." But then things took a bizarre and unethical

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turn.

They wanted to add fake experience to my resume?something I was not comfortable with.

But the weirdest part?

****They didn't want me to do the interviews myself!!!****

Instead, they planned to use AI tools to help me lip-sync while someone from their team spoke for me. They even mentioned using Otter, another AI tool, to provide a live transcript for me to read during the interview. This is just so messed up!

I know the situation is difficult right now, and the pressure to secure a job is immense, but we must not encourage or participate in such dishonest practices. It's not worth risking your integrity or your future for a shortcut.

Remember, there are ethical ways to succeed?even if they take a bit longer.

Stay safe, and keep pushing forward!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Thanks for heads up, we will block them from listing any h1b jobs on our platform.
- New Comment: Kudos on naming and shaming.
- New Comment: Unfortunately these companies exist because a lot of people knowingly partake with them.
- New Comment: Thanks for letting us know about it. It is not right to take advantage of our situations by these guys.

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- New Comment: you should report them to uscis
- New Comment: Sadly this is par for the course for some consultancies. OP good on you for not encouraging this unethical behavior!
- New Comment: Well, things like this will eventually happen. I also know there are companies that can help students get a 100+ on TOEFL since the launch of iBT home edition (without students taking the test). No wonder why some schools do not accept home edition anymore. I would see with the appearance of AI, more companies will eventually shift back to onsite interviews. Interviews should be fair to everyone.
- New Comment: i once turned down a company like this and the hiring manager cursed me out and told me was doing my a favor by even talking to me. they know exactly what they're doing by targeting students on an F-1. it's extremely predatory.
- New Comment: I was recently almost scammed, too, by someone pretending to be a recruiter
- New Comment: Are you just finding this out lol? There are tons of Indian companies like that that exploit desperate and vulnerable students by offering them jobs on CPT and H1 visas. They falsify all your information to get you a "business analyst" project for 6 months and keep moving you around the country depending on the project.

Title of the post: Avoid these ports for coming international student.???

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Source?
- New Comment: I came in through SFO December 2021 and I was asked no questions at all, only I see you are here on a student visa and I said yes and they said may I have your passport, stamp and welcome to America
- New Comment: Never had any issues in Chicago for all the times I came

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- New Comment: San Francisco is honestly a shock.

I've NEVER had any issues there. And I'm from one of these countries you hear about on CNN all the time.

I have heard bad things about Boston though.

- New Comment: i've traveled through Boston Logan and SFO multiple times on an F1 Visa. The first time I came to the U.S., I entered via Boston and it was a breeze. SFO has always been a breeze. There's sometimes long lines at customs but the officers are super nice and lenient!

I also think it is pretty unprofessional of the school to send out such emails and claim one port is easier than the other. Students already pay \$1000s to buy their tickets - this shouldn't add to their anxiety of traveling abroad and starting a new life. :)

- New Comment: I came from boston last year , no issues tbh

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: I came from Italy last year, I entered through SF, they asked me a ton of questions including details of a previous internship. Houston and Fort Lauderdale no problem!

- New Comment: I find it so interesting how every few years the so called "bad ports" change on a dime. This feels like a very weird (and tbh almost unethical?) thing for an ISS to send. How can you suggest that some international students fly to other airports that may be more inconvenient/expensive to them? Also this list doesn't include MIA which is notorious for its custom/border guards for pretty much everyone. Your chances of being questioned at the airport highly depend on nationality, prior trips to the us (if any) and if you have broken any laws and someone told a DSO etc. Most people will get some type of questioning the first time they enter on a f1 visa. I got more questions the first time I entered on my bachelors. Then when I got my masters with a new Sevis number got more questions. Now the customs officers don't even talk to me lol.

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- New Comment: i entered through SFO in november of last year, i was literally in and out. primarily bc it was on thanksgiving thursday but that's also not the first time i come through SFO, never had any issues

- New Comment: Can we stop pretending that this email came from a school's DSO or ISSS? It's more likely from a group chat gone wild. No reputable college administration would send out an email ranking ports of entry like it's a Yelp review. After all, security is a serious business, and the standards should be consistent everywhere, not like comparing the spiciness levels at different taco stands

- New Comment: Heard the same about Chicago from a lawyer. I didn't have any major issues the last 2 times I traveled in 2024. Was questioned quite a bit in April. Who allowed you to work on an F-1 when it's only a student visa?. Huh? The government??? Just gave me shit for a bit and tried to trip me up.

I was pulled aside into a waiting room 3 times last year though. Took my passport and had me wait 2-4 hours. All Chicago and I'm on STEM OPT

- New Comment: Ahh! This reminds me of my first trip to USA through Boston as a port of entry. I blazed through like it was a domestic gate. I was actually shocked and was anxious if I had missed any critical step in the process because I was standing near the taxi bay ready to leave the airport in 20min of landing.

But then later I heard from some others they got held up for question. So I guess I was just lucky. But this is 10year old story. I am sure that situation is only worsened over the decade.

- New Comment: This is actually quite true. SFO has failed to register my entry into the US several times and I often have to chase them to get it sorted.

- New Comment: I will land in chicago but, thankfully im leaving from Abu Dhabi and will go through CBP at Zayed's international Airport.

- New Comment: I don't know about SF and Chicago but they are 100% correct about Boston. The only bad experience I

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had in the past 4 years was in Boston. They also deported dozens of students in a single day a few years back.

- New Comment: Chicago is rightly up there. Was asked to proceed for secondary inspection 3 years ago.

Personally know at least 6 people who had been 'delayed' for various reasons.

Plus a lot of reputable lawyers on linked have also mentioned avoiding Chicago.

- New Comment: It's not the POE it is about questionable schools that you guys got admitted into

- New Comment: They did ask a lot of questions at SFO back in June and my luggage was delayed as well, which I'm not sure whether they inspected it or the airline's fault (stuck at SFO instead of following me to my destination)

- New Comment: Oh no, I am going to Chicago this month on the 14th. What should I expect. I can't change my airports as my university is in Chicago. Any advice?

- New Comment: how is atlanta

- New Comment: I live in Boston and came back from India 10 days ago, I think the lines were long but the officers were chill. It's like basic questions.

- New Comment: How's JFK? (New york)

- New Comment: What about AUH? They do have an US Immigration checks over there and typically not a big line or none.. ?. Ain't it better to go viva AUH? And just take bags and leave the airport when you land?

- New Comment: I came back from vacation a couple of days back and my port of entry was Boston. I didn't really face any issues, just a couple of regular questions and good to go.

- New Comment: Came through Chicago last week for my initial entry into the States. No hassle whatsoever. Took me less than a minute at CBP. I'm an Indian btw.

- New Comment: I'm a PDSO at a school. We have seen these being shared in our channels as being rather problematic this Fall.

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- New Comment: Maybe the college is far from these ports
- New Comment: The Chicago officer was SO rude to me omg. Long ass lines as well but I guess that's everywhere
- New Comment: Would be interesting to hear u/CodeTornado?s thoughts on this.
- New Comment: Seems like this is just because these are the three most popular college destinations in the country, so there is simply just more data coming in from these ports, especially since the school season is right around the corner and folks are starting to come in. Percentage-wise, the share of students interrogated might be the same. Although, there is no numeric data to back this up.
- New Comment: SFO is famous for that. Thank you OP.
- New Comment: I recommend everyone to get global entry if possible. They always pulled me into the room to wait for a double check whenever I went through Chicago, and that stopped very quickly when I got global entry. Also gives TSA pre check and the lines are much shorter
- New Comment: regarding the social media part.. how do we cleanup?
- New Comment: How abt LAX? I will fly from my home country to LAX for transit and then fly to JFK.
- New Comment: or it?s just that so many students are coming in at once that delays will be incurred regardless as those cities have lots of schools ?
- New Comment: Sorry can someone explain to me what this means? Longer lines at the airport or do they actually deny your entry randomly or what? I have never had problems entering and exiting when I have all the necessary documents.
- New Comment: Could this be an issue when working on STEM OPT?
- New Comment: Came in through Chicago, I didn?t have any problems at all
- New Comment: Also IAD
- New Comment: I came in from Portland, Oregon and the officer didn?t even ask me a question he just said I should

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study hard and wished me good luck.

It went by in one minute.

- New Comment: "port-or-entries"? What an odd typo. Where did you even get this?

Came from SFO just a month ago. Just a couple simple questions and they let me go. This post is not for real.

- New Comment: I know this isn't related to this post. I want to know about the bank draft .

many students from my country take bank drafts. I want to know if there will be any problem with immigration if I don't take a bank draft or anything like that. I am only taking some cash and a travel card."

- New Comment: Heard a lot about Boston Airport being too risky (depending on your nationality), afaik the safest is JFK.

Title of the post: Post-Completion OPT Application Timing Advice from an Elder: There is almost no

Body of the post: Background: I've been working with international students for over two decades. Recent changes in group decision making regarding OPT application timing among a large portion of students seems less than helpful to their own OPT applications. My experience and perspective on OPT goes beyond one or two application cycles. Here is my personal advice when considering your OPT application timing options.

Prior to 2023, most students completing study in May would have been lined up to get their OPT applications to USCIS in February. This was the trend for many, many years prior to 2023. Which was the smart thing to do.

Suddenly in 2023, in some mass common decision that can only come from bad advice/information floating around on Reddit or some Whatapp group, many students started choosing to delay their own OPT applications. And not only by a little bit, but changing years of practice of applying in February to instead largely applying in late March and in April.

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Some reasons to consider being well-prepared to make timely and early applicants for OPT with USCIS:

1. USCIS processing time vary widely. The time it took for applicants who applied last week is very likely to be different than the timeline of outcomes for those who apply next week. You cannot predict USCIS timelines. I cannot predict USCIS timelines. Trying to do so is folly. The best way to protect yourself from that is get your application to them as early as they allow. Then, you can sit back and relax instead of spending time stressing out about whether or not your OPT will be approved "on time." USCIS OPT processing times over the last two decades have typically fallen somewhere between two and four months. Sometimes they've been faster than that (lucky times!). Sometimes they've taken longer than that. Three or four months is not a delay by USCIS; it's pretty standard.

2. Things can and do go wrong with applications to USCIS. Your application could be missing something. Documents may not upload appropriately. USCIS may look at your application and want to know more information and pause your application while they send to you an RFE. Your OPT may get approved but then your EAD gets lost in the mail which usually take many weeks if not months sometimes to get replaced (and your employer won't let you start working until they see your EAD as proof of employment authorization). Being well-prepared and applying early gives you more time to deal with those things if they happen. Delaying your own application means reducing your time to deal with such things if they happen.

3. You want to wait to ask your academic advisor and DSO for information/documents for OPT (such as the OPT I-20) at the same time all of the continuing students want to also ask them for summer CPT and summer travel signatures? Sounds like a great way to slow down your own application steps (as well as summer CPT requests for continuing students). Also, it seems likely USCIS might get busier around March and April with H-1B processing.

As noted, USCIS processing times are widely unpredictable. However, there was a very clear pattern both of the last two semesters (this is written in early March 2024). With student choices this year, it seems very likely the same will happen again this semester.

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1. For May 2023 graduates, OPT applicants applying in February and very early March were getting OPT application decisions back in anywhere from one to six weeks from application. Guess what? So far in 2024 the same thing is happening.

2. For May 2023 graduates, OPT applications submitted in late March and April took *months*, not weeks, for review. Often times taking between 3 and 4 months. Then there was much panic as students wanting to start working who decided to delay their own OPT application timing resulted in them not getting their OPT approvals/EADs by the dates they wanted to start working. A lost EAD in the mail? Something with plenty of time to fix when it is lost in March becomes a huge problem when it was issued and lost in July and the student is already building days of OPT unemployment.

There was a very similar pattern for Fall 2023. Well-prepared students who applied in September and early October? Fast OPT decisions. Those who delayed until late October, November, or December? Mostly taking months for OPT application review by USCIS.

Whoever started students choosing to delay their own applications by some Whatsapp or Reddit "advising" deserves a class action lawsuit for spreading such bad advice.

Except for some very individual and unique situations, my advice is then apply early. My personal advice is that the best way to be best prepared as a May graduate is to have your OPT application to USCIS by February of that same year. Didn't get that done this year as a May graduate? Take steps now to get that submitted ASAP. Don't make a decision to delay your own application; delaying is more likely going to create problems for you than taking timely action would.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Great write up and advice . Don't be like me and apply for OPT in July ? (I was planning on leaving

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due to being discouraged from applications and changed mind last minute)

- New Comment: I applied mid feb and got it approved by march 1st. It was normal processing. Now i dont have to worry for significant time

- New Comment: When I was F-1 student, I sent my OPT applications at the earliest day to apply and have had no issues at all. Received my cards pretty quickly and had a big peace of mind going into graduation.

I would highly recommend everyone to do the same. Start preparing your documents beforehand and have them ready & file as soon as you can.

Things can go so wrong so quick. Time is our enemy in immigration unfortunately. So, you should not waste it.

- New Comment: For any DSOs reading this, I would encourage you to reach out to encourage your students to apply early. DSO silence in the face of bad internet advice circulating helps to allow bad advice to get embedded in the student culture.

- New Comment: I am applying this week and graduating on May 13th. I already understood that I'm pretty late considering the things I read in that post. But I start job in late June. My question is that is it possible that to getting approval and the card will take so long that it will exceed my 60 days grace period meaning that I'm staying here illegally while waiting for the opt application answer?

- New Comment: I have applied for initial OPT NP, receive date is march 6th and havent gotten an approval yet. My joining date is june 3rd. Should I file the premium process ? Looking forward to getting comments on this. Thanks !

- New Comment: Yes! I applied last February for an April graduation and it took 3 days to get an approval. Had my EAD within 2 weeks of applying.

- New Comment: I have a question: Should I still apply now for a EAD start date of July 11th? I have yet to receive a job offer. I don't mind for premium processing also.

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- New Comment: I applied today with a start date of 29th May, is it safe enough?
- New Comment: it's hard for people to find jobs given how bad the job market is recently. The job market was also bad in 00? and 08? but there weren't so many international students back then. The only valid reason I can think of is that by applying closer to the end of grace period they are hoping that USCIS review their case later than the end of their grace period and consequently give them a start date later than what originally could have been their latest start date. For example student's grace period ends on 7/11, they apply on 7/10 and USCIS review their case on 8/1. Under this scenario USCIS may give them a start date of 8/1. Then they effectively prolonged their grace period by one month or so. However I think this is a very dangerous game to play, and I 100% agree with you. People shouldn't rely on luck when it comes to applying to OPT.
- New Comment: Hello I have a question! I have my bachelor degree and am on OPT right now. I want to go to nursing school, could I still apply to OPT after nursing school? I know OPT could only be participated twice for bachelor degree and higher.
- New Comment: I submitted my initial OPT application on March 13, 2024 and got an estimated processing time of 2 weeks.
- New Comment: Great post! If USCIS processes my application on a date that is later than the start date I put in my application, what is the probability that they will put the start date on the EAD as the date when they process it, instead of the start date I asked for? Is it 100%?
- New Comment: Hello, I'm seeking advice on applying for F1 OPT. My start date is May 20th, 2024 (recently confirmed offer). Does anyone know the current wait time for receiving an EAD card? Additionally, given my joining date, should I opt for premium processing or the standard option? Thanks in advance.
- New Comment: I keep reading here how people applied early and got it within weeks. I applied almost 5 months in advance in beginning of March. The USCIS website is telling me now that there is an estimated 4 months timeline. Does it come down to luck? Just doesn't seem fair.

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- New Comment: If I have already applied for OPT, but it is taking too long, can I apply for premium processing? Or do I have to now just wait?

Can one only apply for premium processing when submitting I-765?

- New Comment: Thank you. It really is the truth.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Is there a provision to change OPT start date if employer gives an earlier or later start date than what we applied for (after graduation, before 60 days but changing the date).

- New Comment: Asking for a friend!!

He applied for OPT with start date to be Jan 26th 2024. He got the approval notice for EAD on 01/03/2024 with new dates in it, which are Feb 26th 2024 to Feb 25th 2025.

He got the EAD with the Feb dates.

What could be the reason? Any thoughts?

- New Comment: **QUESTION: What if I want the delay?**

I haven't been home for two years so I intentionally put off applying for OPT so I could spend my grace period in Vietnam. Here is the break down:

-Will receive i-20 Mar 21, plan to apply to USCIS **Mar 31**

-"Graduate" **May 18**, asked for a **July 15** start date.

-Plane ticket home May 15, but I'm planning to be back by **June 29,** it would be worth it if I could stay until at least June 17

-Gambling that if it takes them 3 - 4 months to process, average 3.5 months, **2 months and 28 days** (from Mar 31 to

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June 29) would make me "safe" as in my OPT would still be pending and I won't need an EAD to re-enter.

I know this is very risky and foolish, but given the situation, would you recommend to apply to USCIS **in April** to make sure? Might sound delulu but I don't mind much about unemployment days.

- New Comment: I am going to be applying for the f1 visa soon, what's worrying me the most is the interview, I was born in Iraq but I've been living in Jordan for 15 years, how convincing am I expected to be when it comes to questions like "why this university" etc. thank you in advance.

- New Comment: Hey u/GRRWorld, pls advice.

I applied for opt on 7th March 2024. I will graduate on 9th May 2024 and my joining date is 8th July 2024.

I want to go back to my country for a break after graduation and i plan to fly on 15th March 2024.

Based on your experience, should I apply for premium processing or is there a chance to get my EAD card before my flight date?

Also, once i apply for premium processing, does the 30 day clock start from that date or does that clock include the time my application spent in the normal queue so far?

Thanks

- New Comment: what do I do if I got my EAD and OPT starts April 1st, but I didn't pass my last term and need to retake a class?

- New Comment: Mine initially said 2 weeks to process. It changed to 3 months yesterday. I applied on April 5th. Should I opt for PP? My employer wants me to start by May 15th.

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- New Comment: I don't know how people decide to NOT apply early. Our DSO was sending out instruction/reminder emails every week around the time OPT application window starts (90 days before graduation). You simply can't miss it
- New Comment: Hi, my visa got rejected yesterday. Is it because my mom is on J1 visa and my dad and sibling are on J2 visa? the consul keeps on interrupting me after finding out that my mom is a J1 visa holder.
- New Comment: Just want to add that my March 14th receipt date initial OPT application was only just approved on June 6th, which is almost three months. So late February or early March definitely seems like it would be a better time to apply.
- New Comment: Out of curiosity for the people that got their Administrative processing sorted out. How long did it take?
- New Comment: My OPT start date is July 1

I have applied to EAD on 26th April

Given the current situation I will not receive the approval until August, So my question is when does my clock starts. On the approval of OPT or my mentioned start date?

- New Comment: Applied April 10th requesting a start date of July 1st. Then got a job that starts August 1st. As of today I still haven't been approved. Anyone with a receipt date close to mine who has been approved yet? I'm considering asking my employer to sponsor my PP.
- New Comment: I had a graduation date of June 17 so initially applied March 17 but had an error on one of my documents and it was returned and I ended up with a receipt date of April 4, I can't really afford premium processing and my job start date is supposed to be August 5, should I really consider premium processing or is there any way I get it approved on time ?
- New Comment: Hi. My program end date is August 29th. Do I still have time to apply? I'm working on applying right now but I'm having trouble deciding on an OPT start date. I don't have a job lined up unfortunately. Previous employers can't take me for various reasons not related to my performance. Anyway, I'm currently job searching and trying to figure

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out what start date I should choose in my OPT application. What would you recommend? My current thought is to give myself the most amount of time to job search, I'd use the full 60-day grace period and go with October 28 as my OPT start date. Plus it seems like more time is better to make sure there's enough time for my OPT application to be processed, my EAD card made and sent to me.

Thoughts?

- New Comment: Just got my updated i20 with DSO signature. Before applying for EAD, I noticed that in my i20 status shows as - "Requested".

Is this expected can someone please confirm? I am stressed af.

Thanks a lot!!!!

Edit: u/GRRAWorld Can you please confirm!

- New Comment: apply early well ratio I have seen between applied too fast and dont get job fxxked up vs applied too late lost job opportunity even though they got offer letter
applied too late usually gets in trouble

- New Comment: Hi,

I graduate on **December 13, 2024** and I'm planning to apply for my OPT EAD on **Sept 12th, 2024**.

But, I'm already working (on CPT) and wouldn't want to take a break at work after my graduation. So:

1. Do you think I'll receive my OPT EAD card within this time period in normal processing?
2. If not, should I apply for premium processing?
3. Should my preferred start date be December 14th, 2024?

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Greatly appreciate any help!

- New Comment: Hi, I am graduating this August. I have received OPT from my university, and I am waiting to apply for my EAD. I have a question regarding the EAD application: If I apply for the EAD now, can I upgrade it to premium after two weeks? I am giving interviews, but I need to apply for the EAD now. Is there any chance of upgrading to premium after applying for the EAD without premium? I am not sure if I will get a job or not, but in case I do, can I upgrade it to premium?

- New Comment: F2 visa rejection.

I had my F2 visa interview today at the US consulate in Chennai but fortunately I got rejected and I was given 214b.

I kinda stammered and got zoned out when asked about the financial support even though I had all the documents with me.

Could someone please let me know the chances for approval for F2 after a rejection and how many months should I keep buffer before I apply again?

Thanks in advance.

- New Comment: I applied in April both times because I didn't have a job lined up and needed the extra time to job search. Not being able to reapply is a risk but, after a decade in the US immigration system you get used to those lmao

Title of the post: Should I just give up?

Body of the post: I graduated with a master's in May 2023 with less than 2 years of work experience from a reputed college. I'm yet to find a job in the field of data, and there's a 99% chance I'm missing this H1B lottery unless a miracle

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happens overnight. I have been on unpaid volunteer work since then. Should I just give up? Go back and figure it out? I'm just having a major existential crisis and dealing with anxiety 24x7. It feels like I'm useless or the only one here who isn't good enough. I have had experience in a Big 4 firm and an internship too, but the calls have dried up now for full-time positions.

Not to be narcissistic but I really don't think I am bad and have a very good portfolio. I'm just losing it.

Apologies if I've triggered someone's anxiety here

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Took the words right outta my mouth. Graduated Aug 2023 and still searching. Pretty sure I'm gonna be missing the lottery this year unless the miracle thing. Dm if you wanna and maybe we could share some insights.

- New Comment: Don't give up! I'm struggling too, but it'll be okay. Even if it's hard, stick it out as far as you can. And if it doesn't work out, that's okay - at least you can go down swinging, and hold your head high knowing that you gave it your very best shot.

- New Comment: Hey man! Sorry you're going through that all. If I were you, I'd think about the following things. Take everything I say with a grain of salt since I just did undergrad and have been in the industry for 2 years.

1. Find your niche based on your experiences and background and really just go after those roles like a mad man. I know it is daunting to do that given that us internationals have slim chances so we often tend to cast a wider net. However, I had to suffer the downside of that because I spread myself too thin. Jack of all trades but master of none.

2. Since you mentioned you graduated from a reputed college (so did I), it tends to make us feel very needy of only the most reputable and highest paying roles. If you really drop that filter from your job search, you'll find tons of opportunities that you can simply just apply for without minimal effort and you're likely to hear back purely because

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those roles get less applicants and, if they get someone with a masters with a brand name, they'll immediately jump on it.

3. This may be kind of obvious but it wasn't for me until it was too late. Companies (especially in tech) couldn't care less about your grades, major, or college. They want to see practical applications of your knowledge in projects and a strong passion (even if you have to fake it). I got too stuck up with my grades and began tying my qualifications too closely to the college I went to rather than my own personal capabilities. Sometimes tailoring your resume from that mindset helps getting attention from recruiters.

4. VERY IMPORTANT. You are doing volunteer work which you can genuinely use to showcase that you are not in for the money but for the work. Talk highly and proudly about it instead of making it sound like you weren't competent enough to get paid for it.

5. VERY VERY IMPORTANT. Not many of us internationals know this but non-profits can sponsor your H1B WITHOUT A FRICKIN LOTTERY. They can make a case for you (like a green card) for an H1B and you'll get it guaranteed. I have not personally hunted for those opportunities but I know people who've done it.

6. The US is not the end of the world. There's plenty of money and opportunity out there in different countries that you may not know of. Do you know about UK's HPI visa? See if your college is on the list: <https://www.gov.uk/high-potential-individual-visa>

6. Think of a PhD? I know academia can feel suffocating at a point but a PhD is MADE FOR INTERNATIONALS. Citizens couldn't care less about it coz well.. they are citizens and they're not on the H1B/F1 time bomb. They get into the industry and make money so don't really opt for it that much. Talk to professors and they'd be happy to take you in.

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One of my closest friends, super talented, didn't land a job but he went back home and reapplied for a PhD.

7. Don't overwhelm yourself with the thought that you'll end up in a bad spot coz that's just wasting your time and mental energy. Wake up and just do what you think is best to get you a job. Genuinely just block your thoughts and take action (as cringy as that sounds). I was stuck in analysis paralysis for a solid year only to realize I was just holding myself from giving it my best. As soon as I started trying without thinking, I was landing interviews left and right. Honestly tell yourself to fuck your thoughts and do the right thing? little by little.. everyday

DM me if you want to talk more. Hope this was helpful and gave you the courage you needed. Just the fact that you are concerned about it makes you more likely to get what you need. You'd be surprised that many internationals just don't give a shit and go back home. Keep the grind up!

- New Comment: 2024 will be a bloodbath. Without over 5 years of experience in a speciality it will be very difficult to land even entry-level roles. I'll graduate in May and I can understand what you're saying (in CS myself).

Really unlucky to be in this horrid market.

- New Comment: Not sure about data, but the market for auditing/tax is quite strong. Since you have experience working for a big 4, I would suggest reaching out to regional accounting firms. Since you have STEM opt they won't have any issues hiring you.

While you work for an accounting firm you can keep applying for tech jobs! I'll be starting for a big4 next year, if you're around by then I'll be happy to refer you.

- New Comment: I'm actually hiring comp sci. You can dm me your resume. We do h1

- New Comment: Hey buddy! Same here and I know how hard it could be. I feel the same most of the time, but let's not

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give up just yet? I know bunch of people who are joining some consultancy, faking their experience and getting along somehow in this market but we didn't struggle the past whole year just to get something that doesn't even belong to us.

I'm so proud of how far you've put up with this shitty market and haven't given up yet, whatever be the case tomorrow, don't give up just yet! US isn't where the world ends, and honestly I don't want to go back either, not because of the country or the pay, but I will not leave simply because the country thinks I'm not fit to be here. Let's keep pushing and I'm sure we'll get something.

Your efforts will never go in vain and maybe the past few months must've felt like a waste of a year, but maybe take the time to reflect on the positive changes you have made on yourself and the lessons you learnt.

If things eventually don't turn up your way, don't worry, it's just one country. You still have plenty of countries and companies to explore.

If you feel like talking to someone about it, hit me up, and stay strong buddy!

Cheers!

- New Comment: Were you in tech or in the accounting/tax/advisory side of big4?

- New Comment: In the same boat.. Graduated Dec. 23

The market is really bad right now unfortunately :/

May I ask where are you volunteering? Or if anyone could help with a volunteering opportunity? (CS) I have been looking on volunteermatch and searching on google and I still didn't get any replies except 2 calls and they didn't reply back yet!

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- New Comment: Don't give up! The job search can be incredibly challenging, especially in competitive fields like data. Your feelings are valid, but remember, your job situation does not define your worth. With a master's degree and experience in a Big 4 firm, you're well-qualified. Job markets fluctuate, and finding the right opportunity can sometimes take longer than expected. Just continue to leverage your network, and consider expanding your search to include a broader range of roles or locations.

Think of it this way: each no brings you closer to a yes. Your efforts and experiences are valuable, and the right opportunity will come. Keep pushing forward.

- New Comment: Please be aware company taking advantage of our situation. I joined a company which is an indian family owned , very minimal pay and no relocation provided . Already expecting a lot in the first week itself and from what I heard , they can fire and replace anyone anytime since there are a lot of desperate people like us.

I borrowed money and am living on credit card to start my job at different city, hope I at least complete 2 months here to break even.

In the end , better be safe than sorry.

- New Comment: I graduated about 6 months before you did. Found job almost 8 months later. In Data and a dream job. Not the very best company but seeing the market I was still happy. Look for jobs in remote areas. Dont look for sponsorship but rather landing a job should be your priority. Target small companies. Target healthcare. Try to stop you unemployment by getting an offer letter and from someone who runs payroll while you figure things out. You could join consultancy and do their training but their approach earns no results too lately. Just keep refining your portfolio. Hoping when market is good, you get an offer immediately.

- New Comment: a lot of extremely talented people I know have been struggling after being laid off / never finding a job after graduation. I don't know what to tell you but whatever happens don't question your talent or hard work, it has just

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become a very tough market to crack.

going back is not a bad idea.

- New Comment: forget sponsorship , that should not be something to worry about . its a game of luck , ik missing a chance hurts but just focus on bagging something.

- New Comment: I am in the same position as you (legal field) . Hang in there OP

- New Comment: Graduated in may 2020 got job in 2021 Feb and still my company chose to not apply for lottery because of new employee... The lottery should be the least priority ...get the job...do opt and then go from there

- New Comment: I am in the same boat. Graduated May'23, got an offer recently but they wouldn't sponsor and now I can't seem to find any entry level roles at all. I just don't know how long this will continue for and I am confused on what to do.

- New Comment: Hi, I hv received admit for fall 2024 fr a 1.5 yr program from a t10 uni. but now after reading stuff, I am deeply thinking abt not joining fr this intake.. can anyone frm US pls guide me... thanks!

- New Comment: Apply for a PhD Program as a backup.

- New Comment: I have gone thru this long back. Infosys, TCS Cognizant, Wipro, HCL have destroyed the IT job market in US where even American citizens are struggling to find a job. They have hoarded huge chunk of H1 visa which they even don?t use most of the time.

- New Comment: Nope don't give up. PM me lets see what we can do on this

- New Comment: I am in the exact state as you. Coming from world reputed institute with stellar internships and having missed the H1B, it feels proud to see us fighting for it. I feel anxious all the time. Around friends, with family and even strangers. But we gotta hold up.

I strongly believe there?s light at the end of the tunnel.

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Not to sound any cringe or boring, I gotta say try networking. It's not been working for me but I did know of someone who got a contract job(in data science). I'm on the engineering side so it was working great for me, however you can try with staffing institutes for contract based roles(incase you haven't explored).

Also hmu, if you need to talk about your problem. I'm pretty sure I feel all of it!

- New Comment: What's your nationality

Title of the post: Struggling to find a job!

Body of the post: I just want to vent! I have completed my master's, and it has been a couple of months. I have been applying for full-time roles for almost a year now (I chose to graduate as late as possible). I am still not able to find a job, any job. I am literally applying for internships that pay little to nothing, and I am still getting rejected!

Almost over 2,000 applications

I completed my bachelor's from one of the top colleges in India and worked for 2 years in a multinational company in India for a 30 lakh CTC role. But I have been almost unemployed for 5 years now! I took a break for 2 years because of COVID and mental health, then spent one year doing stupid freelance non-existent work, then a master's for 2 years, and still no luck. I feel useless and have piled up a lot of loans and don't know what to do. I don't want to go back to India, but I am unable to find a job, so I don't know what my options are!

EDIT: holy sh!t!!! i completely forgot about this post and I woke up from a nap. Thank you so much for your response, each and every one! i truly appreciate you guys! i will respond to each and every one of you!

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Dude USA is not the only option.

Look at other countries as well. I had 2 friends who were in similar boat in 2018. They left for Europe and Australia one each. Now they are doing great financially and in terms of immigration status.

Know that USA is not the end. There are many options out there but we are used to doing what everyone does.

- New Comment: Graduated top 7 MBA. Same boat. Visa sucks

- New Comment: Been there done that. Keep up the hard work

- New Comment: The job market is real hard these days, try out for contract roles! I graduated in 2021, took 1.5 years to get a job and then within a month got laid off! Kept on applying for jobs till Feb this year, and finally returned back to India! One thing I can tell you is internally I'm at peace now since I know I gave it all! All I would recommend to you is give your best shot!

- New Comment: If you don't mind sharing - How much debt/loan do you have? Is it payable in India... if the interest rate is 12.5% you might have to start paying it soon. Do you have any backup plan?

my 2 cents - assess the total loss and think of a backup in India, by borrowing from friends/family, refinancing etc.

- New Comment: Hang in there! These things take time. Just don't stop the grind is all my 2 cents can say.

- New Comment: Whereever Indians go, they create competition and exhaust that countries resources. Sooner or later every country is gonna become like India.

- New Comment: Do not simply applying. You need to consult some professionals to help you revise your cover letter, resume, and do a recommendation if possible. If you did applied 2000 jobs without a result, then your documents must have some issues, or your interview skills needed to be improved.

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I just graduated from my PhD program and struggled to find a faculty position since last December. My university is not a high ranked and my background in academic is not that strong. No mention I'm an international student either. Lots of universities directly rejected me when they knew I'm not a citizen. And you cannot imagine how competitive to get a faculty position, especially for a tenure track.

I've suffered severe mental illness and kept visiting psychologists for help. When I saw my classmates posted what job offer they received, my situation was getting worse.

I came to my mentor, who taught me how to answer interview questions, how to highlight my spotlight, and he helped me revised my cover letter. With his assistance, I finally saw some hope. I got my first job offer, but that's a temporary position. Then, I received five more 1st round interview and became more experienced with them. I received a full-time job offer with tenure track. I just received the letter from the provost the day after my campus visit.

The economy situation around the world is not good, and many are struggling to find a job. You must know you are not alone. You graduated from a good university, you should look help from some professors who you are familiar with. They know many people and may recommend you for a job.

Good luck!

- New Comment: I applied for 30 and I only found one that doesn't pay. I took it as my lease was due and I really need to move on. Also I need something for the OPT. I figure I'll have to take some adjunct teaching and part time job to get me through this year.

- New Comment: Talk to everyone you know and ask if there is an opening. References work well in this market. Most of the F1s are on the same boat as you and I. Do not just keep applying. Start talking to everyone you know. I have crossed over 3000 probably. I gave a call to my long time friend only after 5 months of trying on my own and he did get

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me an interview.

- New Comment: started applying from november and still nothing. Barely any interviews even. the guy who gave me a referral got laid off and now went back to his home country. It's an absolute shit show. im also reaching my mental limit but gotta keep pushing

- New Comment: Why don't you want to go back to India?

Things have changed in terms of Opportunities in India

- New Comment: They don't want people that a. They have to sponsor b. Will have to leave after their OPT is done.

- New Comment: Have you talked to people you know. Connection is everything?

Being a foreigner in this land is a tough game and only for the most resilient! Dont give up friend, but also give yourself some grace.

- New Comment: What type of job are you looking for? I run an energy efficiency business and am hiring sales engineers. Feel free to dm

- New Comment: Either the economy will pickup big time after elections or there will be a full blown recession. I think you will find it very easy to decide by end of this year.

- New Comment: It's a struggle

- New Comment: What did you study?

- New Comment: What do you have masters in?

- New Comment: Can tell your university

- New Comment: The current job market is more amenable to networking, rather than pure resume submission.

- New Comment: [removed]

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- New Comment: How are you staying in the US for a full year without a job? Howd you get pass the unemployment counter?
- New Comment: Hey. I'd suggest you to fight it up and try multiple avenues. US is very dynamic market, so different than India. In India hardwork used to get us far but here the dynamics weirdly plays a huge role. Keep it up and try globally.
- New Comment: Make a YouTube video about your struggle. A serious suggestion. Post the link here. I will subscribe. So will others, I believe. Start something on your own.
- New Comment: Which consultant did you work for your Master?s ?
- New Comment: Indians want to be in the USA and there is a huge infrastructure of Indian support in high tech or even those remote hotels in the middle of nowhere. Totally get it. Just fly into Quito, Ecuador then take the overland trip through Colombia, then the Darian Gap in Panama, up through Mexico and run through the fence at southern US border. Then get a job changing tires or washing dishes while you apply for jobs. Chinese are doing it. You can do it too, though it will close in the next few months in the US.

Title of the post: I GOT IT

Body of the post: Guys,

I did it.

I got my visa. It's been a JOURNEY but phew. Lasted 30 seconds or less. They just asked me a couple of questions - what will i study (subjects) and how many students get accepted there. And that's all!!!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Same here op!!! I got it today!!!!!!

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- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: I got it today too, good vibes all around ?
- New Comment: What did you answer to "how many students get accepted?" Should the answer be the acceptance rate, the number of students who got accepted for grad school or the number of students who got accepted for your program?
- New Comment: I got it today too !! Congratulations to us ???
- New Comment: Congratulations!!! Where are you headed to?
- New Comment: Big congrats ?
- New Comment: Congratulations ?
- New Comment: Congratulations. Did you get a scholarship from the school?
- New Comment: Congratulations! ?
- New Comment: Congratulations ?
- New Comment: Congratulations
- New Comment: Omg congratulations!! Which university are you headed to btw?
- New Comment: Damn! No questions on financials & immigration intent.
What country are you from?
- New Comment: Which university and what's your Masters in?
- New Comment: Congratulations!

While I am not trying to put down your excitement, just know that this is the easiest part of the journey. I could remember myself being as excited about getting my visa accepted too. Brace yourself for all kinds of difficulty during and after

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education in the US.

- New Comment: Congratulations Mate!

- New Comment: Congratulations!!!

- New Comment: Congratulations! It's not been a journey, the journey is just starting! Good luck.

- New Comment: Can you please give the questions and answer you give please ?

- New Comment: congrats. where are u going to study ?

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: congratulations!! ? i'm so happy for you. i also got it so so easily

- New Comment: Did you have to bring supporting docs other than your I-20, passport, etc? Anything that "ties" you back to your country? Congrats!!

- New Comment: Congratulations!!!

- New Comment: Congratulationsss!!!

Any tips on booking slots? I've been waiting for slots to open up for a while now and there hasn't been a single opening.

- New Comment: Congratulations!!!!

- New Comment: I am not Indian but I got mine on June 3. I am from West Africa. Interestingly, I was interviewed by an Indian and she was really polite, made the whole experience really great. Really excited for Fall term.

- New Comment: Great. Start looking for a Job now

- New Comment: Manifesting this

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Real journey hasn't started yet! All the best

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- New Comment: You can only stay for 30 seconds? /s congrats:D
- New Comment: What kinda visa is this ? Like B1/B2 ?
- New Comment: Does the Op and the others know the unemployment rate now in US? Do you guys know what is the job to number of applications ratio? Did you guys talk to anyone who's currently here to know what's going on here? If yes, and still are opting for Master's I want to know why?
- New Comment: If I were you, I would go to Canada, especially if you're from India or China.

Title of the post: Depressed

Body of the post: Hi guys,

I'm currently a 3 year studying in the US on a F1. I just needed a place to rant since I feel so down. The last years, my internship got rescinded since they found out I was an international students. During the interview process, I told them about my situation, but once I got the offer and found out the start day, I asked them to move it a 1-2 later so I can use my CPT - then a few days later I get the rescinding letter. This year, I got an internship that starts in May 25, my school ends on June 17. I asked them to move it later but they said no. I tried using OPT, but they need me to work full time during May - Sept. Why does this always happen to me and why is the F1 Visa employment so annoying

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I am sorry you are going through this, it's is hard being an international student in this economy. I would say try your best to explain your situation to the company and ask if there's a chance for you to be delayed in your start date. If not it's not too late to get another internship for the summer or maybe a co op if your degree allows it.
- New Comment: I think if it's a good enough internship which can be extended continuously try using pre completion opt instead of cpt.
- New Comment: I am sorry you had to deal with that. I had countless jobs rejected because I was on OPT. Had to be an

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unpaid intern for about 6 months before I got my current full time role, and now applying for STEM OPT. I think I may move back to my home country soon. Not worth the whole stress of being here at the mercy of some manager or a government officer. Unless you have a GC/unrestricted employment authorization, its not really worth it being here.

- New Comment: As a former F1 visa holder, these posts here bring back painful memories. Life on F1 is very scary. I was stressed beyond belief. 6 years went by for nothing. I worked and studied nonstop for nothing. Always at the mercy of others.

I'm sorry you guys have to go through this too. There's nothing I can say that will make it better.

- New Comment: You are in a job market where an employer can be choosy. They don't need to accommodate because they have 100 other people willing to take this position. F1 is not a guarantee of employment. It is an opportunity to study abroad and take that education back to your country.

- New Comment: You can start working on CPT for them as long as you maintain full credits and academic hours, and then transition to OPT once you get your EAD. You're allowed to work 40 hr / week on CPT too during certain quarters. You may just have to register it additionally.

You can check with your international student services to confirm this method.

- New Comment: As someone who went through f1 to opt and eventually green card. I would tell truthfully that unless you are really good or lucky things don't get better. Even after getting h1b or even green card it will still be a struggle.

Even if you get green card by that time you would have lost many opportunities. Considering economy now if I am a student I will simply be happy to go back.

- New Comment: It really doesn't matter in retrospect. Gain the skills needed, prove yourself, continue striving as you are: and you will skyrocket in success. You already had a few offers but were disadvantaged by the system, wear that in pride. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger. Chances are, you are still in your 20s. You have plenty of time. Think

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in terms of what is productive to your success.. will continuing to try, and failing, and trying again, and being valuable.. will that help? Yes! Is feeling depressed conducive to success? Absolutely not. It's okay to feel depressed for a few days, just not for prolonged periods; that mind set will be what truly holds you back, it's not the setback that will. Instead, think of it as a recovery phase. But get right back up stronger than you were pre-depressive-phase (just as a snake peels off its own skin) and you will kill it. Incidentally, it makes for a better story than the generic 'I did a 3-month internship and gained experience and now I'm ready to join your firm?.'

- New Comment: If you need that internship, you can apply pre-completion OPT to start on May 25. If you feel like you can find another job offer, then apply post-completion OPT.

- New Comment: DM me and I will get you an interview for a CPT

- New Comment: 1. did you not know about F1 visa rules before coming to the US?

2. how did you assume your employer would be totally fine with you keeping your visa status a secret until the last moment?

3. this happens to every F1 student and not just you

please, don't hide your visa status only to have your offer rescinded later. you're wasting your own time.

- New Comment: If it makes you feel better - if companies did that they are probably not worth for. I'm an international student as well and I've never heard of anything like that. Even for domestic students most normal companies will accommodate later start date, especially if your school year ends in June

- New Comment: You have an education provided by an American institution of higher learning. Take that education to your home country and put it to good use.

Title of the post: Tech jobs for F-1 students getting harder?

Body of the post: Is it just me or it's getting too hard to find a job in tech as an international student on OPT? I have

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been looking for a job for almost a month. I'm aware that tech job market itself doesn't look that good or a month of looking for a job is probably not long enough yet but at this point, I just don't know if I'm getting rejected because of my visa or it's because my resume is not strong enough. I have 2 years of work experience. I just want a job that can sponsor me. Otherwise, I'll have to go back to school for masters if I want to remain here. How is the situation for you guys who are in tech industry? I would like some tips/advice if it's just happening to me.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 1) Your degree doesn't matter at all.

2) Get a job rather than getting a job in a company that will sponsor visa.

3) Try other ways to apply for a job. Don't apply from LinkedIn or whatever. Email HR, CEO, PM, etc. You can find their email from <https://hunter.io/> this website. Just add their company domain name.

4) Apply even for job that doesn't match with your degree and you think you can crack it. Later, you can easily switch to the department you like -- after you build the trust

5) Apply for a small startup, so that you will have a better chance of getting selected.

6) Internship is a best way to transition into a full time. I did the same even though I had 4+ years of experience

- New Comment: Every f1 student I know who has a job this year either has a return offer or applies to more than 400 places.

So you're right, 1 month is not long enough. Keep applying, you got this.

- New Comment: All jobs for international are getting harder, not only technology.

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- New Comment: Same boat? I've given just one interview and was rejected after the last round.. it's bad and only the best candidates are being picked, very competitive, too competitive even..
- New Comment: Applied to over 1500 roles by now I guess over the last year, got only 2 interviews, both denied sponsorship. (started around October 2023 and it's August now). I would say you need influential connections in the industry to get a shot. Network hard, go to conferences, cold reach out people, get as many referrals as possible. You got this !! There is light at the end of the tunnel bruh.
- New Comment: Try applying directly to companies that sponsor H1B visa. Just go to some website like h1b grader and look up some employers or specific positions and apply directly on the companies' websites
- New Comment: It's hard for US Citizens and Permanent Residents to get a job right now. It adds another layer of difficulty for us sponsored folks to land a job. We are playing this on extreme difficulty while the citizens are playing it on medium-hard.
- New Comment: The market has been bad since 2022 it's not a new thing. 2021 was the year where they hired EVERYONE. But that didn't pan out in terms of profits so there were layoffs. It's very hard and 1 month is not enough time. I had to apply for 8 months to even get 1 interview. Luckily I am a really talented engineer so I cracked the interview process flawlessly. Keep your skills up and never lose passion for technology. When you do get that one opportunity, make sure you are ready
- New Comment: I would highly suggest to also start looking for opportunities back at home in case things don't work out. Always have a backup plan.
- New Comment: Everyday getting some rejections. Was planning to do PhD so my background has no industry experience. Some companies/startups reached out to me but all gone the moment I asked them if they sponsor.

On a similar boat right now, but I think we can only apply, learn new tech, and leetcode. That's what we got ?

- New Comment: [removed]

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- New Comment: Yeah, the tech job market is super tough right now, especially for international students. If you're thinking of going back to school for a Master's, you might want to check out Halp.co. They offer free 1:1 admissions guidance and can help you with the whole study permit process.
- New Comment: My brother's on the same boat. Graduated with a 4 year CS degree with good grades, but now he has less than a month to find a job under OPT.
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: They don't want to deal with us anymore. They getting smarter day by day.
- New Comment: I would suggest applying for asylum. I feel you my fellow Burmese.
- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Only 10 days of OPT unemployment days left! Please help!!

Body of the post: Hi fam.. I have only 10 unemployment days of OPT left! please help me! I have been looking for volunteer work but in vain. I am also not in IT.. my major is supply chain management. I should have acted earlier I know.. but I was relying on this job that I was certain to bag! They told me I was a great fit, and so much other appealing stuff. The final in person interview was after 1 month and it went pretty well. It was one hour long and more conversational. I was even showed my 'future cubicle' where I would be sitting. I was introduced to other team members. I was toured the office. They told me 'dont worry about the offer'. After all that tomfoolery, they rejected me for someone with more work experience.. and this was an entry level role. Since the start they kept saying 'We dont expect experienced candidates for this role' . I was somehow led to believe that experience wasnt needed. (And note that I still had 2 years of experience in the same field.). I am so so soo heartbroken... it just felt cruel at one point. The rejection hurt me more than a breakup! Anyway.. after lying on my bed for 3 days straight and bingeing all high calorie junk, with tear soaked cheeks I have summed up courage to ask the online community for help. What should I do? I am hesitant to go to consultancies that outright lie about your work ex. Thats just not me. I have been in talks with someone who is

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giving offer letters for few hundred dollars. But I dont know if I should go that route. It doesn't feel right. Also Uscis recently blacklisted such consultancies. Anyway.. at this point, what is my best bet ? Any help is highly sought after ???????

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can also work for your university for free or any research positions for free. The OPT time does not have to be paid
- New Comment: Initial OPT can be unpaid as long as its in your field of work and over 20hr/week. Don't go for consultancies, they're most likely fraud and could get you deported and banned from the US for life.

These are the things you can do:

1. Reach out to any friends/family members who are US citizens who own a legitimate small business. You can work an unpaid internship with them. (This is what I did).
2. Reach out to professors asking for unpaid internship opportunity.
3. Reach out to any non-profit organizations for volunteering opportunities.

Overall make sure its a legitimate business and your employer can give you a verification letter.

DO NOT go for consultancies that ask you to pay money for an offer letter. They're likely doing it with a lot of other people too, so USCIS will eventually catch up with it and revoke the visas and deport everyone that's involved because it is fraud.

- New Comment: > They told me 'dont worry about the offer'.

oh, that's really gross. if it helps any, they probably did sincerely want to hire you, but sometimes priorities change during

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the hiring process, or they meet someone after you who is just that much more impressive and you get unlucky... it's bad form of them to tell you not to worry about the offer when you don't have the offer on hand, though. kind of a rookie mistake in hiring.

10 days is not much time... can you reach out to your school/profs/someone you worked with before? you can have several jobs even as long as they meet the threshold.

- New Comment: Reach out to Changing the Present NGo

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Reach out to CrowdDoing on LinkedIn, they have volunteer 20hr projects and will give a letter for OPT.

Let them know it's urgent

- New Comment: All the comments are true. I do not want you to sit tight waiting for an opportunity but also want to give you a heads up that while you cannot upload an offer letter 90 days after your start date, your dso can. I had someone IK was almost 7 months in OPT and did not know that the offer letter needs to be updated (that person didn't have offer letter too). Got an offer letter from a consultancy and updated to dso saying you forgot to mention. The dso now can make changes even after 90 days out. It worked out from that person so just putting in there

- New Comment: I know it's dumb but make sure to create your SEVPortal and update your employer info as soon as your professor accepts the RA. Also, it is better to maintain logs of your weekly work to show it to USCIS in case they asks you.

- New Comment:

<https://www.volunteermatch.org/search?l=New+York%2C+NY%2C+USA&v=true&k=Supply+chain+management>

Look for NGOs to volunteer with in your field and then take offer letter for at least a month and then you can keep on extending.

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- New Comment: Learned things the hard way in my life when the companies I was interviewing for ghosted me by saying, we are gonna get your offer letter ready at the EOD. Never trust anything in corporate till you start.

- New Comment: Go to your best professor and ask for a letter stating you're volunteering.

If they ask you to, do some teaching work or something like that.

Keep that letter till you find something.

Note: this works only for initial OPT and not for STEM extn.

- New Comment: Sorry this happened to you man. Reach out to your university for unpaid/volunteer positions. The international student office at your college will definitely understand and help you, but act soon. Good luck to you!

- New Comment: I have more days than you but I'm in an extremely similar situation. I had a job jerk me around for almost 2 months and then decided I 'didn't fit the needs' of the company and didn't hire me?even though they were aware of my status from the beginning and kept hinting that I fit very closely. Now I'm starting to get into panic mode as my major is so particular (Media major) and the local jobs are drying up. I wish you the best of luck at finding something fast because this job market is horrendous

- New Comment: I am so sorry you had to go thru that, I completely understand where you are coming from, have you tried reaching out to some of your university professors if they want a free volunteer, it costs them nothing to give you an assistant position. A win win situation for both of you.

On an another note, hang in there, I know it is tough but there is light at the end of the tunnel.

- New Comment: Message Kal from Healthiai.org. I think he's looking for some volunteer workers.

- New Comment: Not sure if this organization will be related to supply chain but they do have a couple of open remote

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volunteer roles <https://www.itf-us.org> you can check out their VolunteerMatch page

- New Comment: Message me

- New Comment: are you from India?

- New Comment: Don't forget about staffing agencies!!! They can help you find degree related work and they know what OPT is.

- New Comment: Hey I am also from supply chain management and have only few days of unemployment left. I would love to connect with you to keep up with solutions to this problem and maybe discuss how you are finding job opportunities later for opt stem.

- New Comment: Go for Master's degree, but that would be a long process and cost money too. Since you are up against time, there's not many options for you. Look for some good consultancies that can help you. I agree, you should avoid fraud consultancies. If nothing works, you will have to go back to your country and try coming back again.

Title of the post: Freaking out seeing the job market for F1-OPT

Body of the post: I will be starting my OPT soon. Already applied hundreds of companies and not a single call . I am freaking out. I have wife and kids. My funding will come to an end in december.I have BS in CS and continuing MS in DS.

any suggestion on should I look for jobs related to degree I am earning here or my previous experience depending on BS degree? Although I had applied in both and getting rejected.

No one wants OPT people.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I don't mean to scare you. I really don't. But I would like to mention my experience here. Graduated in May 23 and after 500+ in the dark applications and almost 20+ referred applications and almost 15+ interviews with top companies, I couldn't land a job for the one reason that is me needing visa sponsorship. I realised that later? I used to mention that I needed it and would get ghosted later. I was extremely close to getting into some companies but the moment they knew I needed sponsorship, I would get ghosted. But finally by God's grace I landed an opportunity which agreed to do my H1. But thankfully they only asked the question at the last round and with all hesitation I said yes just waiting to be rejected but I heard the golden words saying that no worries we would like to offer you the position and do your sponsorship as well. All that's well ends well. Never ever give up. You are rarely underqualified. Just need to be looking in the right place at the right time :) all the very best for your career. Wish you only success. Cheers! CS undergrad and MIS masters here.

- New Comment: I would search for h1b sponsorship history of a company before applying to them (there are websites and chrome extensions for that). That really saved me time & effort.

I did 5-7 interviews/week for 4 months and got 1 offer.

You got this my guy

- New Comment: Hiring manager at a fortune 100 company here. Don't want to scare you guys but it's almost impossible to get visa sponsorship right now. Reason is job market sucks, every sector is laying off people and I can get someone who doesn't need visa, have a few years of experience for far cheaper than what I offered just two years ago. It's a supply and demand thing and there is an oversupply of candidates. Additionally, it is pretty tough to get a new headcount approved. Last thing a HM wants to do is to go back to their manager and say 'oh btw, this guy will need visa sponsorship'

One of the ways is to start as a contractor and basically please the manager enough to keep you with a sponsorship. Show value and make the manager think they can't be as efficient without you or losing you will make his job much tougher

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- New Comment: Had the exact same thing happened to me, the only difference is that I have reached my 90-day unemployment deadline. My DSO officer kindly stated that I should leave the country for legal reasons. My gf (under STEM OPT) of four years got a job. We cried for days before I had to leave because we've been living together for those four years. I'm now on the plane alone. This sucks and is literally the lowest point of my life. I'm legit depressed.
- New Comment: volunteer (tutoring), or apply for contract jobs

PhD for backup

- New Comment: 2 useful chrome extensions for OPT job application: Highlight This and AiTou Sponsor Checker. You can highlight the keywords like year of experience, authorization, sponsorship to save time on not applying unmatched jobs. And network is the key, try to dig and connect with the people who might be in the hiring team based on their company and location and position titles. Good luck!
- New Comment: I am May 23 grad and when I was applying for jobs, I was choosing no sponsorship needed option and I clarified my work authorization on my resume so recruiters can see it. Since I was doing STEM degree I don't need a visa sponsorship in the near future and it's better to clarify that. Any employer is likely to reject your application if they think that you are in immediate need of sponsorship. Visa sponsorship questions are usually knock out questions on resume and that might be one of the reasons you are not getting a call back. I've heard it's wrong to choose no sponsorship needed on the resume screening but I have clarified my work authorization status on my resume and have had no problems. My recruiter was fortunately very familiar with OPT process and had no problem during the onboarding. They even told me that I am exempt from FICA taxes as I am on OPT which is saving me quite a decent of money. :)
- New Comment: I'm in the same situation as you. It's tough ? I'm currently trying to expand my network (Going to my friend's church, etc.) in hopes that I can find a job. I have family friends who own a business and will certainly try with them.
- New Comment: Start applying both roles. Software eng and ds. Not to sugarcoat but its tough out there. Increase your

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networking game.

- New Comment: Yeah it's very bad out there...may 23 cs grad here after applying hundreds of applications got 16 call backs more than half of them ghosted the moment i mentioned OPT visa other ghosted in second or third round basically wasting my time.

Hopefully it gets better at least in January 2024

- New Comment: Take a look for bilingual positions.

- New Comment: Hey, a lot of international students will go through this at one point in their studies. \`Stay calm, keep applying and working on your skillsets.

1. Do you have any internships? The easiest way, imo, to get a FT offer is through internships. I had a Fall and Summer internship and both companies gave me an offer letter when I graduated.

2. Apply to non-profits, research and universities: these positions are H1B cap-exempt and will be easier for you to get in (The 4/5 job offers I got were from non-profits)

3. Last Resort: maybe start looking at those shady contract agencies for backup. Or PhD as a backup.

I have a DS in MS and am on STEM OPT now. Lmk, if you have any Qs or want me to review your resume (I don't have any openings). Also you should apply to both DS and CS positions. My friend who was in the same DS program, got a job as a software sales person: so, don't quote me, but the "same field" requirement is not that stringent.

- New Comment: Have you tried to apply to a smaller company ? My current company is predominantly Asian and they sponsored a lot of H1B people. Sure the pay is not attractive but I sure do survive and gain experience.

- New Comment: I would try seeking out headhunters or recruiting companies like Robert Half. They do the work for you but the only thing is that a significant portion of your salary might go to them. Worth a try though.

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- New Comment: Do you think, other than VISA issue, resume could play a role in getting rejected?

Those who got accepted in companies(many congrats to you), could you share me your guideline of resume structure?

Like did you mention your past experience from your country in resume? For IT jobs?

It really feels homely when I see I am not alone here. I took sometime to come and share my situation and you are giving me hope.

I feel rejuvenated and will start applying again.

- New Comment: You'll see people who have applied for many more applications than you online and feel down. It's easy to self-insert yourself into their shoes and feel infected by the negativity. Does the job market suck? Yeah kind of, is it harder for OPT applicants that require sponsorship? Yes.

But you'll get something.

You don't know what variables factor into anybody else's job-searching prospects.

Maybe they went to a terrible school. Maybe they majored in anthropology, maybe their resume is bad, had no personal projects, had no work experience, had no people skills, didn't make attempts at networking.

I saw the other poster, I'm glad he found something. I personally made around 200 applications, got a couple of OAs, and one interview, and ended up converting that into a job that was willing to sponsor.

The job market is recovering, networking with alumni is underrated, you're in one of the most technical majors possible.

I'm sure you'll get something, just pump the numbers up, the leetcode up, and the cold emails to alumni up.

- New Comment: My entire cohort including Indians and other internationals got jobs. Its not about the OPT, the issue is international students blindly pursuing CS/IT degrees without any due diligence. 20mins of research before you left your

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home country would have informed you about the saturation in the US market for your field. You're talking about OPT, wait till you find out how many are struggling for H1Bs.

- New Comment: Network. Attend networking events. It's the fastest way and will get you in the door faster than applying in the dark

- New Comment: There are plenty of opportunities, i work with a reputed consultancy & we do free marketing for the OPT students & find a job on behalf of you. we do have lot of vendors & clients coordinated with us. feel free to DM me. or mail at uday dot charlie 2597 at the rate gmail dot com

- New Comment: Hey, so I graduated this may 2024. And market is so horrible i am not sure what to do. If you see my comment can you please let me know what did you do and how did you find a job?

- New Comment: Agreed with the doom and gloom of the situation, but you have it harder than me.

There are ways to cope with this situation, but I prefer to discuss it over DMs. You'll find what I mean if you look at my profile though.

Good luck to you chap. Yes, regardless of what people say, it's hard right now. Which country/region are you from btw?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I had to open my own business, and I did freelance because 2022 was hell to find a job with OPT. I even have to take two unpaid internships

- New Comment: Went through this, hard times. That's true, job market is tuff but it's getting better now.

Recommendation since you are in DS: Try positions like ML engineer, programmer analyst, data engineer, data analyst, software engineer- ml, analytics engineer.

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And try consultancies who will put you on a contract position.

- New Comment: It's rough out there. Three things that really helped me were informational interviewing (foot in the door), looking at universities & colleges (they're more used to sponsoring people & exempt from the H1B lottery), and moving to a regional area (where they're more desperate for qualified workers). Good luck!

- New Comment: I've got laid off almost 6month ago as a senior software engineer, got a few final rounds but not a single offer so far. It's tough even if you need no visa. Crap!

- New Comment: Pharmacists looking for sponsorship? PM me.

- New Comment: Wishing you all the best OP! Go ahead and rock it man, you got it!

This subreddit had some of the most encouraging stuff I've seen on reddit! Kudos

- New Comment: I'm in the same situation 400 + job applications only couples interview

- New Comment: Job market hasn't been kind to me.

OPT clock is ticking. 50 days left.

Anyone with any hopeful ideas?

Title of the post: Challenges post graduation

Body of the post: I graduated in jan 2023 and now on STEM OPT

I'm still feeling hopeless. I've been applying to around 150 jobs per day at least, but many of them still require US citizenship or green card status. Meanwhile, for full-time positions, they either can't sponsor visas or are seeking other candidates.

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It's been a year, and I'm feeling incredibly stressed, hopeless, and aimless. I'm having trouble sleeping. I made it to the final rounds for two positions, but the responses from the clients were unexpected and disheartening. With Client X, after five rounds, they said they're looking for someone with a better profile. With Client Y, after three rounds, they said my visa status couldn't be accommodated, even though they knew I was on OPT.

I really don't know what goes ahead. I feel struck. I Can't go back & can't predict the future ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Good luck OP. You're in a tough spot considering the tech industry is in a deep recession right now.

Many tech companies here in the valley aren't even entertaining hiring OPT or H-1B workers due to the many Americans that have been laid off already.

Don't feel stuck - just formulate multiple plans based on best and worst case scenarios.

- New Comment: You had almost a year after graduation. Did you work on personal projects to add to your profile and portfolio?

- New Comment: I'm sorry for what you're going through. Are you stem? When will your OPT expire?

- New Comment: Hey ,

First of al how are u surviving w no job.

In the meantime get a temporary job - eg teaching and ,take a break and get back to the application - try cold e-mailing , try to also aply to diverse jobs . I am also in CS , i am taking a temporary teaching job because i couldn't find a relevant job yet. Good luck!

- New Comment: Did you do one of those fake consultancy jobs for your OPT?

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- New Comment: Totally understand your situation, only way out is by creating a network, share your articles in linkedin.
Look at what top voices in your interest area are sharing get ideas. Things should work out eventually
- New Comment: Good luck OP. Can you connect on DM, since I will be moving there this Fall. Want to get some heads up advices. Thank you.
- New Comment: The number of people in this comment section who wish to eagerly go down the consultancy path is astounding. You all are promoting immigration fraud and enabling unethical practices that depend solely on the exploitation of desperate students.

Learn to take it on the chin. You can?t win every single time. Grow by reflecting upon your mistakes and start to own your personal failures.
- New Comment: I'll get downvoted by moral police here but you don't need to tell anyone your visa status until you get hired. When they ask about sponsorship, answer you do not require it. Which is true, if you are planning to work there only for the duration of your OPT. And by the time your OPT ends you will most probably will find another way to stay, if you want (sponsoring employer, marriage, even asylum)
- New Comment: Hi friend, first of all more power to you. Hope things work out for you and you?re able to find a job.

My friend is in a similar boat so I understand your situation. I myself am on OPT currently and finding a job. But how are you able to stay on STEM OPT without a job? Are you running your paystub thru a consultancy and filing taxes from your pocket?

Not trying to demoralise you by asking this but just want to grasp the situation
- New Comment: How are you able to apply for 150 jobs a day? If you?re are tailoring your resume for each and every role and still applying for 150 openings a day, then I want to learn time management and resume tailoring skill from you.

At the current job market your resume should be matching at least 70-80% of the job description.

Reddit Posts

Also after applying, how are you getting the time to prep for interviews, Leetcode, side projects?

But if you're not tailoring then,

15 tailored applications >>>> 150 applications

- New Comment: Did you study for masters or bachelors.

If bachelors, I'll advice to go for your masters and you can also go for PhD if you already have your bachelors degree.

Then spend a good time during your academic to apply for internship and get into a midsize or big company, so as to get new grad later after your graduation.

- New Comment: Hey OP which consultancy I am in the same boat and my opt is about expire?

- New Comment: I don't know what is this thing with international students who are in denial about how hard it is to immigrate.

Like, you know it is very hard, but you ignore the facts and you proceed with enrolling where the hard part is 1) tuition and in general, money and 2) getting a visa. So you clear these hurdles that are essentially a diligence and money problem, then you start thinking you're entitled to immigration which is NOT a money or diligence problem, but it is a problem due to a huge number of international students / unwillingness of many companies to sponsor.

But because diligence and money helped you to overcome the first barrier, you keep irrationally hoping that same qualities will help you overcome the second barrier. If I was someone looking to hire I'd think that applicants like you are not actually smart, but are mimicking being smart by getting a college degree. At least if I got an applicant with some sort of scholarship, I'd be more sympathetic. But someone burning through their family's money hoping to immigrate... no chance.

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- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: what is your field?
- New Comment: Can you send your resume? Fixing resume can help
- New Comment: Which university OP?
- New Comment: Hey! Can I DM you regarding your consultancy? I'm in the same boat
- New Comment: 150 jobs PER DAY? Annualized is more than 50k application? Where do you even find this many jobs...
- New Comment: how did you switch to stem opt despite not have an employer to sponsor you?
- New Comment: How did you get a STEM EAD without an e-verified employer?

Title of the post: im burnt out as an international student

Body of the post: So.. I am having second thoughts about staying in US. I am in a community college to get my associates now and it's my second semester as an international student. I'm really tired, mentally. I don't have any friends, I don't go outside much because there really is nothing to do and I'm not in dorm or anything so I'm just really all alone. 6 months, I feel like rotting. I just been trying to hold it together but I can't anymore. I thought if I studied here my life would've gone for better, but now I'm just not so sure. Should I even continue my studies? My mental health is dragging me down so much that I don't believe that I will be passing this semester. When I talk to my mother about this she only says "stay strong", I've told you, I cried so much now you need to continue your studies, we all need to make sacrifices? I can't even talk to my dad because the second I talk to him he will just say man up and will shout at me then probably say that he spent too much etc. I'm really homesick, is it even worth the trouble? I am studying Graphic Design and I really think I don't need this education, all I need is to boost my portfolio but then again I don't want to be left without a degree. Is it really worth to being this down for 2 years? Should I just take a gap semester and can I as an f1 student take a gap semester? From what I've seen on the internet is that I can take a Leave of Absence kind of stuff

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but I don't know if my school has anything like that. Will I be able to enter US after that if it is a real thing? But, if I can return to my country, I may not even want to turn back. I really don't know, I struggle giving even the smallest decisions and this may effect my whole life. Should I just drop out here and go continue my studies back in my country? I'm sorry for the long annoying text, I really don't have anyone to vent.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Did you try any therapy sessions, please seek, as international student, you have an insurance go to a doctor, this looks more than homesickness

- New Comment: Hang in there buddy! We feel you. Life for internationals in the US is tough. Even tougher as you climb further up with all the visa uncertainty and shit. But these are some stuff that everyone goes thru. Join a club in the clg or visit your religious gatherings. Try to build a strong portfolio. Ppl will see how talented you are and eventually pull towards you. Talk to your parents like everythings good. Your dad is just trying to tell you that you need to be stronger than you sound. Because the other way around means for you to go back to your country. Dont fall for the mental issue trap that most americans are in. Its very hard to come back from that mess. Good luck

- New Comment: My man. I can literally feel what you are going through and I wanna tell you that you should be proud of yourselves that you had this you which kept you there for 6 months. Keep talking to your parents, they are your strength, so please don't break in front of them or over a call, just don't let them know that you are in a bad space because you can't even imagine what they will go through knowing about their child living alone miles away and feeling miserable. They won't let you know how they feel, because that's what they do. They sent you there to be the best version of yourself. Remember that. Now speaking on coming out of this bad space,...I believe you are not the only one going through this, everyone does, but it's more about how you carry yourself in the public. Put a wide smile on your face, think about completing your course and life after that when you'll be making a shit load of money, with which you will be able to give yourself and your parents a life full of comfort. Take up some extra activities like go to the gym, get in shape, watch cooking tutorials and try to treat yourself with some delicious meal, read a few books on self development(I personally highly recommend this one.),listen to songs, go out for a walk and millions of other things you

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can do. It's therapeutic to enjoy your own company. Better if you make some friends and hang out with them, talk about these issues with them and also listen to theirs, because they are also going through the same feelings, but everyone is not same. And I beg you please don't feel low and more importantly don't let your parents know about this, you can DM me to talk, we can also exchange numbers and talk over call about this. Just hang in there, you have it in you and you are gonna come out of this way stronger than you are now.

- New Comment: Hey Buddy

A fellow international student here. I am sure you are qualified enough to make a change in this world. You are skilled enough to apply for the jobs that you like. I know for a fact you will do the best when an opportunity is given to you. You should not lose hope because you can do all of those things I just told you. Patience is a true virtue for every international student. you will do it. If you are suffering from frustration, please DM me I can hear you out.

- New Comment: Hi!! I totally understand what you're going through. I'm not trying to tell you to stay strong because everybody you talk to probably has told you to hang in there, you're lucky to have the opportunity to study oversea, bla bla bla. It's true, but they don't understand the struggle like us. Far from home, no clear future, who guarantees you can get a job, no life savings, no properties, and so much more.

I have been an F1 student since high school and still is, so roughly 10 years and I have no close friends either, just some pals from school but they were born here. When I vent, my family also told me to "stay strong", "hang in there" but all I hope for was "if you're sad, come back"...

But let's face it. My major and your major stands out by having lots of portfolios, or at least 1 that stand out, not just in the US but also back in your home country. In my opinion, unless you have an impressive portfolio or your family is richy rich rich, you should at least finish a Bachelors in the US, or finish it back home. It's harsh, but it's the reality.

So instead of the time stressing yourself out and thinking about a lottt of things (like I did many few years back..), spend your time on something else. Update your portfolio, try to take up on a new design project like posters, buy a camera

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and take random photos and your solo adventure, maybe start a business ideas also? Join an art community and colab? If you need to vent we are here. I have had friends who sign up for hinge to go out on meal dates with no commitment to improve their english skills and to hang out. There are many things that you can take your minds off and continue with your studies while improving your professional skills.

But again, you do you, life is short and you deserve to be happy.

- New Comment: You just need friends and people to interact with on a daily basis. When I came here, I was also homesick and my mental health was also going down. The mistake I did was that I was renting a room at the host family, so no peers to befriend with. Later, I found some students who went to the same school as me, and we rented an apartment together. After that we would hang out and go out a lot, which completely changed myself.

- New Comment: Which state u r in now? If you don't like the Study and at the same time want the F1 status to be secured try to join the ESL course with 2 days of class load. The tuition is super cheap and you can work to self educate yourself. To find friends try to reach your community of 1st. Best of luck buddy.

- New Comment: I was also doing a graphic design major at a community college and felt lost. I love art and is good at it but felt insecure and uncertain about how would I make money, and my mom added to that insecurity. After a year switched to a human physiology and transferred to another university. I can?t say if I regret it or not.

- New Comment: I also did graphic design and illustration as a major on a F1 visa. My home country has terrible prospects for creative work so I knew an American art degree will take me further, and possibly open up more art opportunities. Like you, I felt depressed, lonely and isolated my first couple years. You?re not only dealing with homesickness, but also a new change in life, culture shock, no friends or family, etc. It can be a lot, and Americans find it hard to talk to international students due to a variety of factors.. culture clash, money problems, maybe even accent problems. I understand how you feel, I felt the same.

Try and join student clubs, or make friends with other international students. Immerse yourself in your work, I spent so

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much time at the library. I look back to my college years and it's astounding how much resources they give us. Free advice, network with other artists and teachers, join art shows, work hard on your portfolio, make and learn new things about yourself. Being an art student is a free pass to learn new things from established artists. Once you graduate and become their competition, no one will want to help you. Learn typography, photography, painting anything. All these skills will help your design eye. I even took extra studio classes and sat in on other classes just cos I could. Maximize the time you have there. It's only temporary. When you graduate, then you can decide to stay or leave. But here is a golden opportunity in your hands that comes once in your life.. don't squander it just because of some emotional problems the first few semesters. Everyone is feeling the same.. it's just how you react to it. Do you love art? If so, immerse yourself in your work, that's what you're there for. If not.. find your passion in some kind of art form that will help you specialize. Good luck

- New Comment: if u can afford it financially, do whatever u like.

- New Comment: [Assuming home is safe] Finish your studies in the U.S., if possible; then leave. Insisting on the myths of meritocracy and the "American Dream" would be more foolish. There's no shame in leaving the U.S. Being proud and grateful for having experience living abroad is what matters. Put your wellbeing and dignity first. Life is too short to be on the hustle all the time, alienated (even from our selves), on a perpetual rat race that creates value for others who don't need to work at all.

- New Comment: Sorry to hear that and I feel you bud. International student's life is not that easy especially when there's not many people around or when you are middle of nowhere. And I also somewhat understand your parent's thoughts as well. My advice is, it is YOUR life. Yes you are with your parents and maybe your parents? are paying your tuition (tell me if I'm wrong), it will be your decision to continue or not. But before you fully quit or continue - try everything. Study like maniac and try to achieve the best GPA you've ever had. Go out and meet someone, or join the club, or whatever to meet with ?people.? If you tried everything but nothing helps, then do what you want - going back to your country, transferring to other uni, change your major or something. Don't keep burning yourself if that's the life that you don't want.

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When you have time watch the movie ?3 Idiots.? It?s Indian comedy movie that might give you the lesson. Again, what?s most important is you, your health, your decision, not really your parents? thoughts or what they say. They WILL say something but I guarantee it will be temporary. Find something that you truly want and do that!

- New Comment: If you need anyone to vent to! You can totally dm me- I?ve been in this situation before and the one thing I can say that helps me a lot would be working out or running/going for a walk. I?m happy to help - keep your head up high because you?ve done so much. Moving to a new country by yourself is not easy and you?ve done that ?

- New Comment: Try to make friends.. I know it sounds lame, but loner to loner, just try to force yourself into situations where gatherings occur, like events or parties on campus.. someone is going to try and talk to you if you just try a little and smile. Heck, DM me if you need a friend to talk to. I'm graduating from my masters this May and I'm kind of depressed given that there's no jobs out there for IT rn, We could both use a friend to talk to, why not become friends?

If it all sounds lame, Idc if you guys downvote me.. I'm just trying to help out.

- New Comment: It's just the beginning, you still adjusting to new environment. Revisit this thought after 1 year and you'll joke about it but it's worth to think if this you can't handle how about 5 years from now if you decided to stay? The struggle to find a job as f1 student, the struggle to get pick of h1b, the struggle didn't get pick of h1b and have to go back to school to maintain your status, etc ...

Are you able to handle that? If not, you still in the beginning and not too late to get out from this american bs dream

- New Comment: The first year is the hardest one. I?d recommend you to join clubs, there?s always an international student club in almost every college, you?ll make friends there, join sports clubs too in case you like other type of activities.

- New Comment: Come back.... It seems like you really enjoy being social and unfortunately you won't have that kind of lifestyle in US. Come back before you are locked in to Visa processes, fees, mortgage, loans etc

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- New Comment: Try going to universities. meet ups. When I was in my Masters I didn't go to the university because I didn't have friends. But the more you step out there are more chances of socializing. Being a introvert in a new country isn't gonna help you any way. Push urself to go out and talk to new people everyday. Go hit the gym play some sport you will meet new people there, it's difficult to find your people in a new country because we compare the bonds with the ones we had in our home country but that's not practical. Everyone in US is lonely atleast the majority. Push your limits network.

- New Comment: Have you tried talking to people. It helps to make friends if you try to. Also you're in semester 1 of a community college, if you fail that, give up on higher education.

- New Comment: You're right about you not needing a degree. It wont add much value, esp given you're attending a community college. You're spending in dollars to get a degree that's inferior to degrees in your home country which Im guessing is India. So go back, you're right, build your portfolio and get certifications instead. This is a huge waste of money, time and mostly your well being. If it took coming to America for you to realize this then it was worth it, so go home be happy and make the most of your life. "Be strong" is the most pointless and cliché response to someone in distress, even worse than not saying anything. So put yourself first and pursue your career back home where you're happy.

- New Comment: why not go to Germany instead? I heard lots of Turks live there.

- New Comment: Hello, I am a bit late to reply to you but I will anyway.

I am also an international student in the US. I am currently finishing up my associates degree in a community college, and I will be transferring to a university in the fall.

I was in the same position as you (also in my second semester). I felt like what I was doing was not worth it, and everything seemed boring and meaningless. My family and friends in my home country kept telling me to stay strong, and I ended up taking a break from social media because of that.

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I had one American friend only. We never hung out or anything like that though. I was extremely lonely.

I overthink a lot, but in a good way. One night, I thought about how I could leave this mental state. I ended up giving my school counselor a shot, and I loved it. I ended up seeing them once every week for an hour where I would vent about everything. Counseling is great, however, I only went there to vent, I expected no real advices, but my counselor was great and she ended up giving me some really good advices that I will share with you.

1- Apply for a job at your college: The only way you can work while studying is through your college. There are advisors who would help you in finding one. They were able to find a position for me, and I still work till today. The process took like two months but it was so worth it. I work as a lab tech although I study Psychology but it is a super easy job.

2-Distractions: Try distracting yourself. Develop a hobby, go on walks, take long showers (this really helped me the most to be honest?, work out, read, learn a new language, draw, etc?

3-Take advantage of the free resources at your college: Join clubs in stuff that interests you. I joined a philosophy club and I met some people there. Also, make sure to visit your tutoring center. I ended up being a close friend with one of the tutors. Try to ask if your college has Conversation Hours (it?s for ESL students but anyone can join), the purpose of it is to learn English but you can find some potential friends there. Also, make sure to check out your student email because they send various events that you could join.

4- Speak up!: I am a pretty shy person and I rarely speak to strangers. But you have to remember that unfortunately as foreigners, people will mostly be shy to approach us because they don?t know what to say. I ended up having many friends when I spoke with more students. Mainly try to keep it school related (I usually stay in class when the lecture ends and ask students about some stuff related to the class). One guy was really happy that I talked to him and he

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ended up asking me about my home country, he was extremely interested to talk to someone ?international.?

5- Invest in your hobbies: Personally, I love movies, and I found out that AMC has a subscription for 22\$ that enables you to watch 12 movies a month. If you like working out, invest in a gym. If you like cooking, try to cook more, etc?.

I hope that these advices will help you.

As for your questions. I do not think that you can take a gap semester although you can go to your country in the summer! If you have an F1 stamp on your passport, then it is perfectly fine for you to go. You just need to talk to your DSO so they can sign your I-20 or something like that. I unfortunately can?t leave because I don?t have a stamp (I changed my status in the US.)

I promise you that it gets better. Just remember that this time is a huge investment for your future. Although I have some friends here. I still feel homesick, and I tend to feel lonely some nights (which is why I started to sleep early, it helps!)

Feel free to DM me if you wanna talk more about this.

Have a good one.

Title of the post: Flight School Playing Dirty

Body of the post: Dear Redditors,

I come here to seek advise as my school has demoralized me and has led me to depression, with an ultimatum to leave the country immediately.

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I came on a M-1 Visa (I understand this is a subreddit for F1, but I believe the rules for F1 and M1 are very similar) for Flight School. The owner and I have had our differences, with him threatening me and making me sign a termination letter (his intent was to extract more money from me, which I refused), though he promised to allow me to transfer out to a different school, I then receive an email from the school stating that they've terminated me, for which I asked them why did they as they promised to transfer out.

I checked with SEVIS and was able to confirm that they terminated me but also reinstated me on the same day, which makes transferring schools very complicated, I believe they have done this on purpose for making me ineligible to transfer schools and trap me with them.

I will be transferring to another Flight School which has accepted me, it's been less than 6 months since my course began. I've found this site which seems to accurately state all the knowledge I was able to gather: [\[https://epicflightacademy.com/flight-school-faq/how-do-i-apply-for-uscis-permission-to-transfer-schools/\]](https://epicflightacademy.com/flight-school-faq/how-do-i-apply-for-uscis-permission-to-transfer-schools/)(<https://epicflightacademy.com/flight-school-faq/how-do-i-apply-for-uscis-permission-to-transfer-schools/>)

I would have been able to manage if they had only terminated me, as I could just fill in the I-539 and the new I-20 from the transfer-in school, submit that to USCIS and continued with me course with the new school, but now things are complicated as my school has played extremely dirty with me by putting in a request for reinstating me so that they could "trap me" or ultimately force me to leave the country. There are so many things I would have liked to share but to not make this post long, I have just stuck to the facts. The owner has put me in a lot of anxiety which has led me to major depression, I am thankful to my parents and friends who've been supporting me which has kept me going.

Thank you for reading this far, hoping to hear from all of you!

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I need to sit and think on this one. If I don't respond tonight, please tag me for follow up tomorrow.
- New Comment: I'd like to thank all the dear redditors for upvoting my post, to me it feels like my voice is being heard and there are people wanting to know more about this. Hopefully there'll be a solution to this.
- New Comment: Regardless of what you do, I would report them to USCIS - maybe SEVP. Manipulation of SEVIS/immigration status to extort legitimate students may be a crime but at the least deserves reporting. If enough people come forward they maybe become ineligible to recruit foreign students
- New Comment: Cannot help out, sorry, but gosh that's messed up. Name and shame them once the situation is sorted out, so that other international people do not use that school!
- New Comment: Have you considered talking to an immigration lawyer?

Title of the post: Didn't get picked in my final H1-B lottery

Body of the post: I lost my final H1-B chance for the fiscal year 2024-2025. I am currently on STEM OPT. My F1 visa has expired in November 2023 but my stem opt is valid until July'24.

What are my best options right now? Can I change my status to b1/b2?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Quickest? Find a cap exempt employer willing to sponsor H1B.

No you can't swap to B1/B2 or at least it doesn't help you. Doesn't work that way for F1 like it does with H1B.

- New Comment: Consider getting a masters degree.

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- New Comment: B1/b2 won't get you very far. Probably best to do a day 1 Cpt program so that you can continue to work while maintaining your F1 or if you qualify for the O visa you can do that at any time of the year

- New Comment: Depending on your country of origin...you can look for an employer to directly start your Green Card process..

That was my story...went from F1 to GC..

- New Comment: Go to grad school if you can afford

- New Comment: Canada? My friend received PR within 6 months of application

- New Comment: if you got the money to spare , day1 cpt

- New Comment: Depending on ur degree, other option is to find E2 employer. Then through green card - god knows how many yrs will take.

- New Comment: Join a Day 1 CPT colleges like Trine University or others in USA where u can pay the fees and attend the college once a month and can work from the day 1 itself in US firm. But you can only work for 2 more years until your masters in CPT college is done and then u have to leave the country as you won't get another OPT. Most of my friends have done this and during this 2 years if your company files for your I 140 then you're fine and not to worry about going anywhere.

- New Comment: Does your company sponsor L1 visa?

- New Comment: dont do a risky thing it might kill future chances

- New Comment: Wait a second, you only got like 8 months of OPT? Isn't it like 3 years for STEM? (Including the extension)

- New Comment: I replied to other comments but I never made my own comment so here it is. I hope this helps. I added all the information that I've researched myself the past year while I was looking for options if things don't work out for

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me. Hopefully this is organized enough and helps. If anyone have any comments or information to add onto this or have any corrections please do! The more information the better! It will help others in the same situation.

Options you have:

* **Canada**:

* Use [this](<https://ircc.canada.ca/english/immigrate/skilled/crs-tool.asp>) link to calculate your Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) score. If your score is above 540, then you can apply for Canadian PR and might actually have a chance at getting it within 6 months to a year I believe. I know the wait time for the PR might be longer than 3 months however you can go back home while you wait for the PR. Once you get it you can move to Canada and look for jobs there.

* If your company has an office in Canada, you can ask for them to send you to their Canadian office. I'm not sure how easy it is to get a Canadian work visa but no matter how difficult it is to get it, it won't be on the same level as an H1B LOL. Once you go there you can apply for a PR as soon as you are eligible. Just do some research on it.

* If this ends up being an option, and if you get promoted to a manager position and work there for 2 years and then go back to the US, I believe you qualify for the EB-1 C category of the employment based (EB) greencard category. You will get your greencard very fast (unless you were born in India or China)

* If you get PR and eventually become a Canadian citizen, you can apply for a TN visa and then move to the US for work. As far as I know, you can work in the US indefinitely on the TN visa. However, if you want to get a greencard, you can't get one through the TN visa as there is no pathway to citizenship for this visa and you need to maintain non-immigrant intent. If you want to get a greencard when you're on a TN visa then you have to apply for an H1B visa again and go through the lottery or any dual-intent work visa. The only advantage in this option is that even if you don't get picked in the H1B lottery, you still have your TN visa so you can try again unlike when you're on a STEM OPT when you have a limited amount of tries.

* **O1 visa**:

* If you have the required qualifications and are eligible for this visa, you can apply for it at any time of the year and get

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the visa. The eligibility criteria is very strict though so it's hard to get it but it doesn't hurt to check it out and try if you meet the criteria.

* **Marriage**:

* If you have a US citizen significant other, and both of you want to get married then this is your best option. You can get married and your significant other can apply for a greencard. You'll get it within a few months to a year and then after 2.5 or 3 years you can become a citizen!

* **Masters**:

* If you can afford a masters, you can get one and get another chance of employment and another 3 years of STEM OPT if you do a masters in an eligible major. This way you have another 3 years to try for an H1B

* **Non-Profit (Cap-exempt H1B visa)**:

* This is an option I learned recently. I believe you are eligible for a cap-exempt H1B visa if you work for a non-profit organization like say an accredited university or college. You can bypass the lottery through this way and get the visa faster.

* **Disadvantage**:

* When you switch to a job that is not cap-exempt, you're gonna have to switch to a regular H1B visa and go through the lottery again. <-- this one I'm not fully sure about but that's what I heard.

* Fewer jobs available that qualify for cap-exempt H1B and probably even fewer willing to sponsor

* Salary is likely going to be lower

* Make sure you do more research for this option

* **Worst Case Scenario**:

* The only option you have when everything fails is going back home.

* Some people mentioned getting a greencard from outside the US. This is possible as far as I know. I don't fully know the details so you're gonna have to do some research on your own for this. I do know however that this is impossible for Indians and Chinese so if you were born in one of those two countries just give up and go through the other options I mentioned. If those don't work then going back home is your best option.

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- New Comment: i589 if you have been persecuted by your home country's government
- New Comment: I was in the same situation. I went for day1cpt and my h1b was picked this time.
- New Comment: Go back to your country that's the only real solution you

Title of the post: Feeling Low

Body of the post: I don't know what am I even typing. I'm on my opt without any job, the only option I have is to do volunteer work under a professor but recently I found out that volunteering under a professor is against our university policy. I even thought of joining into those shady consultancies but turns out I couldn't find any jobs related to field of study i.e EE. All the 800 applications that have applied seem to fall into a black hole with nothing in return. All interviewers stopped responding after they came to know I'm an international student. Have a shit ton of expectations from everyone and student loans. Our lease is gonna end within a few weeks, I don't know where to go what to do. I feel so lost, everything is falling apart. I know it's all my fault.

edit: Thanks everyone for the feedback, I don't know it warms me somehow that I'm not alone in this. I found valuable insights and suggestions. I've always remember this quote from Batman - "Night is darkest just before the dawn"

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Volunteer at any NGOs for now buddy. That's legal.
- New Comment: Whatever it is, the odds are always against us. It's not your fault, buddy!
- New Comment: Job market is really bad right now and way worse for International student. Just keep applying for job and do not give up.
- New Comment: It's anything but your fault. Internationals have just been dealt a bad hand, especially with the current

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market? it sucks but keep trying, try alternatives too. Like different countries, an advanced degree with funding.

- New Comment: A lot of people I know are feeling the same way man, maybe you can take a little bit of solace in knowing that you're not the only one going through this. Like one of the guys said, apply as much as you can and hope for the best.

Don't blame yourself, though, the job market being awful is not your fault. You can't control everything around you. All you can do is work on you for now and keep applying.

Also, going back is not so bad. I know a few people who have gone back, and they seem more at peace tbh. The loans are, unfortunately, a headache, but almost everyone has a loan in this day and age to pay off. Sorry I couldn't really help much with your situation. Trust me, I empathize completely cause I am pretty much in the same situation.

- New Comment: Keep on applying brother. Lot of people are in the same boat. Never loose hope. I lost my job right before my Stem was going to start. Go beast mode in terms of applying.

- New Comment: I feel the same way, funds running out, lease about to get over, no leads. Stay strong buddy. Think about the future and when everything will be what you planned, what you dreamt of. Don?t give up now, just keep holding on for that vision?s sake. It?s going to turn around

- New Comment: Go back home.. you will feel much better with family around you.

- New Comment: Try "family owned" or small company business. They may give you a better chance. I got a job thru at a sole owner company. Highly reasonable owner. I interviewed with in in short and t-shirt and got the job

- New Comment: Apart from job search (which you should not lose hope on), look for ways to continue your OPT. When does your OPT expire?

1. Acc to what you said, you may not be able to volunteer with a professor, but check if your university allows RAships. You can be assigned to a department/lab and be paid for it. Check with your DSO, and try asking your professors, department head for help. Even if not your university, try any other local school/uni.

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2. You can look for volunteering work in other companies in the EE field, usually some local NGOs or if you can try your luck ? how about some local electrical shops? Anything related to your field, to keep you on your OPT will do!

3. This may be a long shot, but you can try looking at [self-employment on F1-OPT](<https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/s/L7cr8YRSUW>). You have to pay to register a company, get some business licenses (although I am not well versed with this, it's more of a thing about money and getting all your legal docs ready). Might want to consider a lawyer and asking your DSO. [Note: this only works for OPT and not STEM]

Keep at it. You got this!

- New Comment: If you have skills in hardware design or FPGA, try Meta, Google and any HFT. Go to LinkedIn, get referrals for these companies or contact recruiters, take follow ups every day unless you get a test/interview and keep grinding.

- New Comment: My manager said the company is facing budget issues.

- New Comment: What branch of EE you are focusing on ? I'm in OH and tons of company is in need of EE for design/ automation/ control

- New Comment: Don't give up. Give your all until the last minute. It is so important to keep making the right moves even when you feel like you're losing. Keep applying for roles. Also go on volunteer match and find your fields volunteering opportunities on there and apply relentlessly.

- New Comment: hey- Long farmer -My recommendation Just hang in there. make a practical choice. i.e. forget the field of major and find a job through consultancy. market is tough and no point in sitting on sidelines waiting for something to happen. If you join consultancy and some job in the field appears you can always MIA. keep your options open. your number1 problem is status(f1/H1) and then money. with consultancy you will solve that. I been there and dont wish the same on my enemy. Just some free advice. I hope you dont mind. Not trying to sell you anything at the end of the day.

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Good luck!

- New Comment: have you tried applying to employment agencies?

- New Comment: What is EE?

- New Comment: It sounds like you're going through an incredibly tough time, and it's understandable to feel overwhelmed and discouraged given your situation. However, it's important to remember that you're not alone in facing these challenges, and there are resources out there that can help you find opportunities, even as an international student. Here's some advice and a few resources you might find helpful:

****1. Expand Your Network.****

****2. Tailor Your Applications.****

3. **Utilize Specialized Job Portals:**

* ****MyVisaJobs.com****: This site can provide information on employers who have historically sponsored visas.

* ****OPTnation.com****: A platform with numerous OPT and CPT job listings.

* ****UnitedOPT.com****: Another helpful resource for finding OPT jobs.

* ****VisaTalent.com****: A marketplace specifically aimed at connecting IT candidates with consulting firms looking for talent.

4. **Consult Your University's Career Services.**

Remember, each no brings you closer to a yes. It's crucial to keep pushing forward and exploring different avenues.

Your skills and education are valuable, and there is a position out there where you can thrive.

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- New Comment: I was you almost a year ago. While I was working at my brothers store (yeah I dont start plz), it was enough for my expenses. The only thing that helps was applying and blindly applying. If you are planning to get a job only in your field, then its even tougher/impossible in this market. Take whatever you get. Dont waste time. Start learning whatever software the consultancy asks you to. Before joining then make sure they never had a red flag and that they were able to provide jobs to a few of your known ones. For now even those consultancies than provided jobs to multiple friends within 2-3 weeks (3 years back) are not able to provide job even after 4-5 months. Thats hw bad it is. On weekends work PT to cover expenses. Weekdays, apply and learn and do as consultancy says. Also reach out to seniors. Most seniors open their own consulting firms and get projects which they outsource to others. Try to survive and you will thrive. Sending best wishes your way!!

- New Comment: Its not your fault..Dont be too tough on yourself..Allah is the best planner, he know the best

- New Comment: Hi,

How about asking your academic advisor to find an unpaid internship for you under other professors from other institutions? Usually, research labs need interns, and PIs are ready to take interns.

In addition, email professors through their websites. Big labs are always hiring. However, they do not always post jobs on the university job page.

- New Comment: If this is bad. (sympathizes with everyone in this situation), wait till Stephen Miller gets on board next year.

- New Comment: Hey! Don?t lose hope. I?m sorry you?re experiencing this.

- New Comment: I thought enrolling in a consultancy is sure shot way of getting a job ? I?ve heard lag hi jata hai job

- New Comment: try to find a company that is from your country. they tend to select people who speak their language. but be aware wage will be low as well as work environment might not be ideal.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: Talk to God through this Bible quotation Isaiah 30:21.
- New Comment: OPT stands for Optional Practical Training. It's optional, you don't have to do it if you don't want to.

Title of the post: F-1 TERMINATED

Body of the post: Hey, it's my first time posting here, I received a letter yesterday saying that my F1 had been terminated because of poor attendance and that I have to leave the country immediately, is there anything that I can do in this situation? I really don't want to leave the country but I also don't want to stay illegally, I'm in New York in case you ask, thank you guys.

UPDATE: Hey, first of all I want to say thank you to everybody, I was very overwhelmed and scared since this has never happened to me before, today I was able to speak with my dso, explained all the situation and I actually went to school today, and signed a paper that basically said that they give me a second chance, but I have to attend every single day, so that's what I'm going to do, I came here because I really wanted to and I'm going to do everything I can to make the most of this second opportunity, as to everyone that tried to help or gave their opinion or similar situations they've been through, I really appreciate, I had never shared anything online, not even in an anonymous way, and I'm happy to see that there's people that genuinely want to help others, and as for the people that said that I was leaving some things behind, I just didn't want to go very deep explaining every single detail because I value my privacy and I thought that what I said was enough in order for someone to offer help or ideas, thank you so much and I hope that everyone is doing well.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: what's the backstory? any special reason to miss out on classes, or you lazy lazy?
- New Comment: No insurance on F1 visa? How? This post is too vague, you need to give us the full story.

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- New Comment: Talk to your iso and get a lawyer, you have 5 months

Also go to your fucking class. You are here to study not be a lazy bum

As for distance, find accommodation near your university or find a university near your place of living

- New Comment: This guy doesn't seem legit.

- New Comment: I am sorry about your situation, but your reason sound like a lame excuse. And Sadly you have to accept what happened and try to reinstate. All the best

- New Comment: Talk to your ISO

- New Comment: Condition of F-1 is that you will attend classes as a full time international student. You have not done that. Try talking to the DSO and the international student office. If F-1 has been revoked, they may have tried to talk you before they did this and given warnings.

- New Comment: Did they terminate your visa or SEVIS?

Firstly, that's an academic violation that you shouldn't have done. Now, for the solution part , talk to your academic advisor and ask them the reinstatement process. Mostly, this should resolve your case if they are ready to listen to you. If not and your SEVIS has been terminated, you should leave in the next 12 to 14 days if you want to enter again in the future.

After applying for reinstatement, ask them the legal steps thoroughly, and they can recommend if you can stay until the reinstatement decision comes back.

If your SEVIS was terminated, you can reach out to me via inbox. I can help!

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Don't panic.

- New Comment: You should leave the country as to not jeopardize your status. You can try to find a school that will help you apply for reinstatement but many do not and you don't have a strong case.

Best to leave, get a new initial i20 from a different school and re enter for a new program. Make sure that you do your research to find a program that suits your needs as attendance is really important

- New Comment: Story seems off in lot of places. Some things are being hidden.

- New Comment: I think this guy is lying. Class attendance never cause a sevis termination.

- New Comment: I've been in school 5 years on F1 visa now and have never heard of this. Last semester, I didn't attend a single class after the first week of classes because my classes didn't have any grades for attendance. That being said, I still finished all the assignments and gave all the exams which were take home by the way. So, this does seem bizarre ngl.

- New Comment: If your college allows for reinstatement, you could apply for that but it would be up to the school if they allow it. You could find a school that will allow you to transfer on a terminated record and help you fine reinstatement. Or you could go to a new school, leave the US and do a new entry.

- New Comment: If you are having issues, you need to contact your DSO as early as possible and keep them in the loop. If you do not communicate with us, we cannot help you.

That being said, you have a poor excuse and it seems like you did to care to attend class. You will need to speak with your DSO right away about your options and the possibility of reinstatement.

- New Comment: How much class did you miss??

- New Comment: Talk to your DSO to issue a new I-20. Then leave the country by land and then comeback to active your new I-20.

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- New Comment: What's your attendance record that got your F-1 terminated? 20%? 30%?
- New Comment: Are you working illegally and missing classes? In normal circumstance with people who don't break rule, this should not have happened
- New Comment: You do not appear to be a legitimate student. Please return to your home country, get your life in order, then re-apply when you decide you're mature enough to attend class. Zero F's given.
- New Comment: If your sevis terminated then u can not reinstate it until u leave country and come back again!
Dont know how much legit is this post?
- New Comment: Hey, first of all I want to say thank you to everybody, I was very overwhelmed and scared since this has never happened to me before, today I was able to speak with my dso, explained all the situation and I actually went to school today, and signed a paper that basically said that they give me a second chance, but I have to attend every single day, so that's what I'm going to do, I came here because I really wanted to and I'm going to do everything I can to make the most of this second opportunity, as to everyone that tried to help or gave their opinion or similar situations they've been through, I really appreciate, I had never shared anything online, not even in an anonymous way, and I'm happy to see that there's people that genuinely want to help others, and as for the people that said that I was leaving some things behind, I just didn't want to go very deep explaining every single detail because I value my privacy and I thought that what I said was enough in order for someone to offer help or ideas, thank you so much and I hope that everyone is doing well.
- New Comment: Yes. You have 5 months to find a lawyer and ask for a reinstatement
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: Consider getting metrohealth Plus, its free for newyorkers. Then use that to get some doctor papers to back up your claim.
- New Comment: [removed]

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- New Comment: Change university asap and transfer sevis
- New Comment: Weather doesn't make you sick. Germs- viruses and bacteria do. Put on warm clothes and wash your hands.
- New Comment: I just saw this post and your reason for not attending college. I am on F-1 myself and I think we are from the same country.

You have very shitty excuses for not attending lectures. You came all the way from your country to seek education. You chose this college. Finding a responsible way to commute, taking care of your health is something you should be accountable for. It is your job to find an accommodation which makes it easier to commute to university. As for falling sick, plenty of people coming here from hot countries. Sorry to say but this was coming.

- New Comment: this sounds like an awful situation and it's good that the update is a positive one but if you are able to attend 100% now then it is going to look like you weren't taking whatever happened earlier seriously.
- New Comment: If you are indian go there good opportunities. Nothing is there in US. Have fun

Title of the post: To the people that returned to their home country?

Body of the post: To the people that returned to their home country due to not getting a job or H1B, what was it like? Are you working? Studying? How are you coping with the change? What are your plans?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Took a gap year, did an internship and I'm off to the UK for my Master's in September.
- New Comment: Went back and worked. Came back after a year

Edit: Came on a new F1 visa doing masters (my first program was bachelors)

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- New Comment: Are you thinking of going back?

- New Comment: This happened to me 20 years ago when I couldn't convert my F1 to H1 due to the quota running out. It was quite a shock initially, but it felt liberating to be able to apply for any job without a visa dictating what I could do. I eventually came back to the US a decade later through a company transfer, on my own terms. One door shuts, and another one opens. Go with the flow.

- New Comment: I moved back and used my work connection to get a job in the US company - I started interviewing before moving out. I am much happier than when I was working in the US. I can travel around the world while working. I wouldn't come to the US unless I can move on a GC.

- New Comment: What do you mean cope with the change? You're going back to your home country not a random place. The country you grew up in, what is there to cope? People treat not getting their work visa like getting cancer. It's not that deep, just go back if you don't get a visa.

Edit: just saw that you've been here since 12. That changes the calculus a bit. I was mainly referring to people who are only here for 2-4 years for their ba or Ma and moan about having to go back to the place they spent the majority of their lives in

- New Comment: The biggest disadvantage of being sent home to your home country, is that your UBI allowance will be based on the country you live in (or are a citizen of).

Wealthier nations will be able to implement AI/AI-driven robotics technologies much more broadly faster and quicker than poorer ones.

Thus UBI will be significantly different on a country vs country basis.

Let's say 90% of our workforce depends on UBI in a decade, I'd guess it'd take multiple decades for UBI country

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differences to converge.

Title of the post: What to do if you arrive US for masters for the first time but forgot to bring your I20

Body of the post: Title. My cousin is up in the plane right now and will land in new york in approx 16hrs. Dumbass forgot his entire immigration file back home. What can be done? Thanks.

Update: he was able to enter with ease. he showed them the i20 on phone and the officer asked why didn't he have a physical copy.. and let him know to have physical copy on hand.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: IF they are kind he can use a soft/digital copy and they can admit him temporarily with an I-515 but they do not have to and would be entirely in their right to send him back on the next flight.
- New Comment: not to sound harsh but he'd need to go back home. you can't enter without your i20 that's the whole basis of your visa
- New Comment: He doesn't even have the digital version?

The EQUIVALENT of your question is. "My cousin for got his visa, can he get in the US?"

- New Comment: One time I was entering the US (by land) after visiting Mexico for a few hours (I live 1 hr away from the border). I didn't have my physical/digital I-20 with me. They just took me to that interrogation room and asked me things about my school and where I lived. They confirmed I was F-1 on their system.

I did have my Visa/Passport with me and this was by land, not air.

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- New Comment: OP, Please update what happens when he lands.

- New Comment: Nothing to worry about, If he has a digital version of i20, he is good go and I assume he will have it since it would be shared over email.

I am pretty confident they allow soft copy because the same thing happened with me. I misplaced it at the airport, and the officer allowed me.

- New Comment: Check out this info:

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/travel/form-i-515a-overview>

We have all been the dumbass one time or another. Best of luck to the cousin!

- New Comment: LITERALLY HOW ? they ask for my i-20 for 3 times before boarding the plane in Turkey? this is crazy ???

- New Comment: All of these should have digital copies, right? I would beg the officer to accept digital documents or ask if they can provide printing facilities.

- New Comment: He can email or call the school and they can email him an i-20 with electronic signature.

If he buys internet on the plane and you can contact him, he can do that and print the i20 in airport

- New Comment: I recently flew to the US and saw someone in a similar situation. Here are your options based on that encounter:

If it's a digitally signed I20, and if you have a layover, just get a printout at the airport. Ask the airline help desk that it's urgent and they probably will just give it to you for free. Else, search for such a facility at the airport.

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Try entering the states by showing a digital copy which I think should be accepted, if it was issued digitally to begin with.

Some people I know weren't asked to show anything at all, just the passport with the VISA and they were free to go, so it might be fine after all.

- New Comment: It depends on the officer. He can show them a digital copy. That's what I did. The officer mentioned I should have the physical files, but I explained they were buried in my backpack with other documents, and that showing the digital version on my phone was more convenient. He let me through.

Worst case, he could find a place to print them out.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: I saw someone using digital copy at JFK.

- New Comment: This happened to my wife. They let her in but she has to send a copy once she came to the university

- New Comment: I left mine in my home country my freshman year. All I had was the admission letter. They took me into secondary questioning for about 4 hours. They called the school and asked me questions to make sure I wasn't lying. I was then let through but I had 30 days to prove that I had a valid I-20 otherwise I had to go back home. My dad fedexed it to me , DSo mailed it off and everything was fine after that.

- New Comment: Just print it in the airport and sign it. Anyway i20s are always sent through email to the candidate so it should not be a prob to just download and sign it at the airport

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: The airline would have checked whether he has the correct documentation to enter the U.S, as they can be fined a lot of money otherwise (upto around \$5000). I think for U.S bound flights, they have an online database maintained by CBP where they can query someone's eligibility to board during check-in, and even after check-in CBP can flag customers and alert the airline. If he was allowed through these procedures, it is very less likely he would be

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refused entry simply because he forgot his i20/ds160 unless the travel documents he presented during check-in are not genuine as everything is linked to his passport/visa.

- New Comment: Update????

- New Comment: Did the airline not check their visa?

- New Comment: They should let him in with a digital i20

- New Comment: I recently arrived in the USA. They didn't ask me much?just for my passport. Nothing else. My port of entry was Atlanta. I hope your brother has a similar experience.

- New Comment: I think a copy is fine. My wife missed her original i20 at home, she made a copy of it on her way to the airport and signed it. She was held for 2 hours for verification by the immigration at IAH.

- New Comment: The last time I entered US on F1 they didn't even ask for I20 (or any document apart from passport). They did ask the 2 times before that at the same airport so not sure if it's a system update and they don't need it anymore or just the officer there.

- New Comment: If he has digital copies, he should try and get a printing facility to print the hard copies just before he gets to immigration.

- New Comment: Lmaooo this is hilarious but they only checked my passport when I came in at Washington-Dulles, they were very strict with passport only requirement so I had to remove my ticket/i20 and other documents from my passport. They can pull his i20 on their system anyways. Hopefully he has a similar experience ?

- New Comment: This happened to a friend of mine. The school mailed the I-20 to the airport and she had to wait at the airport for a day or two. This was years ago today probably a picture should be fine. Another option is to ask the airline or someone to take the package to him to NY (just brainstorming) let me know what happens in the end

- New Comment: I believe he can have the DSO email him the I-20 and print it at the airport, along with other documents (somehow, if it's even possible). If he remembers the SEVIS number, that could be helpful, but he will have to persuade

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the immigrant officer and explain his situation clearly, which can be difficult if there is a language barrier. Chances are he will be asked for a second inspection. It's probably not the worst thing to happen, but it's not ideal. But if he remains calm, and communicates with the immigration team, they will likely allow him through immigration.

- New Comment: There are printers in the airport lol

- New Comment: Only thing he needs is his passport and i20 tbh , i20 is electronic anyway tell him to print it out (color print out) and sign it if possible in the airport/nearby the airport

- New Comment: for me I had a digitally signed i-20 which i got through email. but from what i remember, they didn't check for my i-20 at the airport, at Indian immigration center they just say visa, at US customs they only took my photo and I was good to go

- New Comment: Stay calm and explain your situation to the immigration officer. Keep electronic copies ready.

Happens to the best of us. Don?t panic.

- New Comment: It depends. I was never asked for anything besides my passport when I arrived. But I arrived in Atlanta, it might be different.

- New Comment: Get someone to scan the had copy for him and send to his email

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Maybe he can find a printer at the airport?

Title of the post: Accidentally worked more than 20hours/week on campus

Body of the post: I have received paychecks for 40.25 hours biweekly instead of my 40 hour biweekly limit twice. It

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happened because of clocking out a few minutes late on some shifts and they paid me extra for those minutes. I am getting really worried since it is a violation of my F-1 Visa Limitations. Has any current F1 Student faced the same thing before? Is it something I should be worried about? I will make sure I never cross my 20 hour limit again, but I need to know if there's anything I can/should do about the paychecks I have already received.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It will be up to the DSO whether or not to take any SEVIS termination action. Some people here seem to think it's an HR topic; it's not. It's an immigration status topic. The US government says you can't work more than 20 hours per week on-campus (except during breaks).

Many DSOs would not take any SEVIS termination action for such a small (in time over worked) status violation. Some DSOs may not see any level of wiggle room in the regulations and may terminate a SEVIS record for even a small amount of time worked over the F-1 limits. So, the SEVIS part is the decision of the DSO at this point.

Your F-1 status is though with the US government, not the school/DSO. Your SEVIS record is not your F-1 status. You can violate your F-1 status without a DSO terminating your SEVIS record.

If a DSO ignores an infraction, it doesn't mean it technically didn't happen. Ultimately, if the US government somehow gets record that you worked over the limit, it's their decision about what that means for your F-1 status with them.

Again, for so few minutes over the limit, it is very _unlikely_ it will be a serious problem for you now or in the future. But the people of Reddit don't ultimately make that decision. Nor does HR.

Short answer: F-1 students, don't work over 20 hours on-campus in any single week except appropriate university breaks.

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- New Comment: Time to pack your bags buddy. Jk should be fine, they'll probably send you a warning email about terminating your employment. Nothing you can do now just don't repeat it.

- New Comment: not to say you're at fault but your school's HR is super shitty. they should have manually adjusted your timesheet if that exceeded 20 hrs

- New Comment: I used to work 18 hours a week to avoid this issue . Who is that brilliant guy who has scheduled you exactly 40 hours !!!! ?

- New Comment: The HR will send a warning email. Also it is wise to work only 19 hours a week. I don't think it is a problem.

- New Comment: I'm pretty sure that 0.25 hrs won't make a difference at all. Now if you were working significantly longer than 40hrs, I would be worried but USCIS isn't going to get worked up over 15 minutes. Variations happen and they understand.

- New Comment: Bruh! ??

- New Comment: Understand that it's really up to the school to implement rules concerning the F1 visa. Some schools are lax and some schools are uptight with it. Many schools I find to be lax somewhat. You gotta understand that many US schools need international students because of the double tuition rate that international students pay vs the tuition of native Americans. Your school needs you because of the tuition that you pay so they might overlook minor infractions here and there. I remember international students working 40hours weekly and some off campus and today they are ALL US citizens. None of that affected them one bit. I wouldn't be worried about it.

- New Comment: This is a real incident that we witnessed a few weeks ago at a huge state school in Texas:

A student who worked on-campus had his visa revoked for a very small amount of extra-time of work. He had to leave the country immediately and was advised to apply for the visa again.

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Safe to say this shocked us immensely, but this was only the first incident we heard of this nature. Hope things work out for you!

- New Comment: Don't talk to DSO about it. Just let it be, my friend who went to DSO and asked about it got his SEVIS terminated and had to go back to his country.

- New Comment: Thats okay no problem

The minor time difference wont matter. When I was doing on campus one month it exceeded 2hrs.

- New Comment: Finally a post I can write on! I went through this during my grad school 2 years ago when I was on F-1 visa. They send you an email stating that what you did was a violation and then they will schedule a meeting with you and an official to investigate what exactly happened and why you worked more than 20 hours. If they are satisfied with your answer, they will drop it. In your case you can clearly explain to them about how time is recorded when you log in and log out of the building. They should be ok with this explanation cause it's barely above 40 and doesn't show any malicious intent. Chill. Explain the truth, you should be fine but you will have to go through this process and they also contact your supervisor to confirm your story. Just FYI. Good luck!

- New Comment: You're fine. The most they'll do is warn you.

- New Comment: I think its okay, is it hourly paid position rather than GA/ TA? Isn't there FTE 25% or 50% ?

- New Comment: Purely technically speaking, number of hours worked is NOT reported on any official government documents like W2 (IRS), you have literally nothing to worry about, just don't do it again. People are delusional and nitpicky here, they seem to be new to this stuff (expected as f1visa sub has students in it).

- New Comment: lmaooo the internet is a mega drama queen, literally nothing will happen. not HR, not DSO, not USCIS, you're fine just don't make a habit of it

- New Comment: Hope this is not a troll.

Reddit Posts

Though this should not cause any issue recommend not to cross that 20 hour week to avoid this stress in future

- New Comment: It happened to me once when I exceeded by 30 mins, i informed my manager. My manager said she would speak to HR as it's only 30 mins extra and she will take care of that. Luckily no one emailed or never received a violation notice after that. So probably manager took care of that.

- New Comment: It happened to me. My supervisor just told me to look after my time and if I was going to over the 20hrs/week to let them know so I could leave earlier one day.

- New Comment: Report it to your DSO, explain what and why it happened and most likely u shud be okay, but make sure you keep your hours below 20 if you can so you can have this wiggle room.

- New Comment: You will be fine.

Have done this so many times myself. I used to forget to logout

- New Comment: I remember my DSO said something about an average, like 25 one week and 10 another was fine. But I could be remembering it wrong, I just know that's sometimes they would let it slide if I averaged the allowed 20. I went all the way to STEM so I guess it was fine. But it's not like o would routinely do it, as long as I was under 40 per pay period they never really cared. I wouldn't even get an alert. Once I went over forty and I swear it's like I walked on plane with a bomb. Safe to say I never did that ever again, even if it was accidental

- New Comment: I have no idea if it's true, but my guess is the DSO system is very archaic. Its not like they have a database of student's weekly work hours, updated every week.

I'll take a good guess and say they have no idea what goes on until someone let them know, and I'll take the same guess for ICE agents, they are not actively investigating F1s, they will start an investigation based on evidence though.

So HR probably doesn't communicate anything to international services since they dont have the duty to report or track you, you're most likely fine!

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Immigration does not monitor your tax records as well, however, if you change your status they will look into it.

Most agencies in the US dont talk to each other on a regular basis, it only happens when something changes, change of status, background check, DMV registration..

I applied for my SSN and DL last year and received a letter from Selective Service saying I needed to register, if you dont know what that is, it?s for the military - I am not even eligible lol and they have no idea.

The registration to SSA basically created a record of me in their system (as person who lives in the US), then DVM did a background check which triggered the letter. Just an example that things are less complicated than it looks.

I?m not encouraging this behavior, but it was not on purpose, one thing I would do though is delete this post, this post is associated with your ip, I wouldn?t take any chances of creating evidence on myself.

- New Comment: If you do get notice of it, just go in person to the relevant office and say oh I made a mistake entering the time, it's actually 19.25, not 20.25

Title of the post: Non-STEM graduate here, landed an amazing job but didn't mention my visa status

Body of the post:

So I got a job and I?m already worried about losing it. This is a tough market, and I was nearly diagnosed with clinical depression from not having a job and losing my current rental (I am on a flex lease and my landlord decided to line up new tenants without informing me).

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After some very hard weeks, I finally received a very generous job offer for my dream role with a global company that has a very recent history of sponsorship. The HR manager moved at lightning speed to complete all interviews and start the onboarding because they want me to join in less than a week.

At no point during the interviews was my visa status discussed, nor did I bring it up. I never applied for the position; in fact, I only reached out to senior leaders who liked my profile and decided to move forward with me. They did know I'm from India and worked there for some time.

I've been terribly anxious ever since I got my job offer. Just today, I shared IDs with the HR generalist for my I-9 processing, and being a non-STEM graduate, it really stresses me out. I've heard of people having their offers rescinded because of their visa status, and there's so much at stake for me: a) I'll be losing my current rental with nowhere to go, and b) I'm supposed to relocate a thousand miles for this position.

So far, the HR team has been extremely accommodating and quick to reply. She even asked for my I-797C information and whether I'm eligible for Cap-Gap as part of the I-9 processing. This gave me a good feeling that they are okay with my temporary work status.

I would love to be sponsored, but I can also enroll in a distance learning program (cough cough Day 1 CPT) after my EAD expires so at least I can give myself three years in the States. I think getting a job and artificially increasing my work authorisation in the ways I think I might have to do to, is my redemption after I knew I was coming to the US with a ton of regrets, but it was too late. It's also about manipulating my odds and circumstances so I don't feel inferior to STEM students who clearly chose better than I did. Maybe it's my way of giving myself a fair chance and an increased duration of visa just like STEM students.

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Yes, I was very naive in choosing a non-STEM program, and only after coming here did I realize what a big mistake it was.

Sorry for rambling. My main worry is about this job slipping away due to my visa status. I'm so scared to bring it up and don't want to. I've been turned away from so many jobs because of being an international student that I chose self-preservation and hid this detail.

So, do you think it's a good sign that HR asked for the extra information regarding Cap-Gap? Will my I-9 be cleared? When can I finally relax? I guess I've been worried about losing this job before it even starts.

Maybe HR doesn't fully understand what this means, maybe they do. I don't know. Maybe she's just trying to fill out the form since she said she needs this information to process my I-9.

FYI: If the company decides to sponsor me and my H-1B gets picked, I will be eligible for Cap Gap

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'm wondering how it's even possible for visa question to NEVER come up during job interviews. I've heard from my friends about something similar happening to them but I've never experienced it myself. You must be lucky

- New Comment: They can only ask if you are authorized to work in the US and then if you will require sponsorship. It's a fine line for HR since unless you answer YES to the 2nd question, they legally can't ask anything more. Employers are required to ensure that the candidate is able to work, which brings about the I-9 verification. But they are also prohibited from asking additional information based on discrimination laws. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to ensure you have proper immigration status for work. As for the Day1 CPT, understand that it's very risky. The government has been cracking down on these a lot lately. If you are caught, you risk losing your legal status, deportation and a ban from the

Reddit Posts

US of up to 3 years. While I understand what you're going through, please make sure you consider everything thoroughly before acting on it. Ah, one last option - if you are able to work for them at least a little while and they have a Blanket-L registration, ask if they are willing to sponsor it for you. this does require you to work a minimum of 1 year for one of the company's branches abroad, but if your position qualifies for it, it is a good learning path and a good way to return to the US without having to deal with the H1B lottery. I hope everything works out for you!!!

- New Comment: Honestly I'd wait to say something until after being employed. I did the same thing where I waited to actually start and then started discussing my VISA requirements with regards to OPT. Lo and behold three years later and I'm still on H1B. I'm

Pretty sure they would have revoked my employment had I started discussing things like that with them before actually starting work

- New Comment: TLDR ?

- New Comment: Wow. That sounds like a lot.

- New Comment: They are not allowed to discriminate during I-9 verification, HR is only allowed to check that you are currently authorized to work! So if you've made it this far, you are probably okay at least for the 1 year OPT you have.

- New Comment: Just wondering what major were you?

My gf is an f1 non stem major so we know it's going to be hard to find anything for opt

- New Comment: It ain't your fault you didn't study anything STEM. You should study what YOU want to do in life, not get a degree in something you don't even like just to get 2 more years in the States.

I'd work extremely hard on this new job, make sure you're standing out and also making numbers for the company (in your own way). Then start discussing your visa and opt status. If they say that they can't sponsor you, start looking for a job that will. At least now you'll have successful work experience and will up the chances for another company to

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sponsor you.

- New Comment: Not sure when your OPT start date was but if you have a year ahead, that is good. The concern i have is they asked you for the I-797 which is a receipt for H-1B filing. Sounds like they were getting a bit ahead of themselves. That being said, the GOOD thing you shared is that they are a global company. That means, and i hope all of you read this, that you need to be "open" and ready to move....even abroad....if that is where the company needs you.

When they do ask you about the STEM extension, be honest and say that you are not eligible BUT that you are willing to go where the company needs you. Make it about their needs, and not your desire to stay in the US. In the future, you could potentially negotiate coming back to the US under L-1 status. For now, keep going and give them the docs that they need. Good luck and stay positive!

- New Comment: I had an offer rescinded due to my visa this year. There's really nothing you can do to prevent it, if the company doesn't want to hire you or doesn't want to sponsor you - they won't. So stop being anxious, if it doesn't work out for you - then it's not in the cards, move on with your life and try something else.

- New Comment: Hey OP, worrying won't do much here. If they didn't ask for it during your interviews then it's perfectly fine that you did not bring it up. All you should do now is to work with the company and provide all necessary paperworks because doing otherwise will put you in greater risk.

They asked you about cap-gap could be part of the standard procedure and that's it. If worries you can just straight up ask away about your concerns to the company.

Title of the post: Students on F1 who recently graduated

Body of the post: Hey. So I graduated recently with a Master's in the US. I've been facing this problem where I do get interviews and screening interviews every now and then but literally over 80% of these call backs have been a failure because they were looking for someone on H1B or GC/US citizen. What's the situation with you all? Thanks.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: May?24 masters grad,

1000+ apps,

5 overall interviews (4 HM, and 1 Final round) till date (only because I have Amazon on my resume),

0 offers yet;

Sponsorship is definitely a tricky situation but I always be vocal about it and answer yes to that question everywhere I apply and I do 25+ apps each day even today.

Keep at it. It?s just a numbers game at the end of the day and we too shall find something soon!

- New Comment: you gotta do the grind and reach 1k applies

- New Comment: Same here brother. I am graduating in April 2025 and searching for fall internship and co op it's really tough.

Reach out to recruiters that can work.

- New Comment: Graduated in May, got a job by April. Major things I want you guys to know coz resume changing , cold emails etc etc. THEY DO WORK. DO NOT LOSE HOPE. There are opportunities to grab guys, most of these F1 kids are not even putting an effort to learn stuff. Don?t worry you guys are way ahead. Importantly be it any workshops, meeting on Unis, summits, aws ones ,snowflake ones attend them connect and constantly keep talking to everyone. Pydata meetings are also very very helpful to connect with startup investors and setting up new companies. Go connect. Applications are secondary, take your LinkedIn premium spam message managers , simple search would work. Suppose the company is VISA, search managers and all, cold email them ask them to mail the Hiring managers directly instead of referring. That helped me land a few interviews. NETWORK YOUR ASS OFF.its the key, people don?t just blind apply it?s not gonna work, almost 2 lakh F1 students are fighting for non existing ones, please feel free to DM I can help with what I can. I was in the boat got lucky to come out, hope you guys too get a job!!!!

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- New Comment: Last year, I graduated with a PhD in Electrical engineering, I have 30+ first authored/co authored papers with 300+ citations. I had to apply for 200+ positions to get first few calls.
- New Comment: I recommend targetting startups. They got better conversion rates especially if you cold email them
- New Comment: Similar situation, did a loop interview in late may at AWS but failed. Last month, I received few phone calls but did not moved forward due to H1b sponsorship needed in future. On 28 th June I did phone interview with favorable feedback but now in limbo, still no response from them yet. I am already over 1000+ applications.

And I have a question, my EAD has still not been approved yet(applied on 17th May) but what do you guys planning if you don't receive any offer by the time you receive the EAD Card?

- New Comment: Are you guys tailoring your resume as per each job ?
- New Comment: From your question, it looks like you have a great resume which gets you interviews but the issue has to do with your work authorization status. I would make use of h1bgrader.com to see if the company is open to sponsor, in order to spend more time focusing on the good leads rather than applying to all companies and getting dropped because of GC. Most companies out there don?t want to sponsor but a lot of companies are open to sponsor as well.
Good Luck!

- New Comment: Anybody applied unpaid internships on opt ead?
- New Comment: 6 Applications this month, 3 interviews scheduled. I?ll keep you guys updated
- New Comment: That's to be expected. If you can look into working in other countries. Otherwise you can look for certain contracting firms that like to employ f1 grads but the pay is way below average if you have tech background
- New Comment: From experience, well on a bachelor?s, you gotta keep applying. 100 apps a day. Research companies in your field that are comfortable with hiring f1 students/ that sponsor. But also keep in mind you are running out of time, apply for companies that don?t sponsor so you get your foot in the door, but when you get it, don?t stop applying if your goal is to get sponsorship. I too had so many screens and final stages of interviews that at some point I

Reddit Posts

was about to give up. But don't stop, it'll work out

- New Comment: Graduated in May 1k applications so far. 6 interviews and 1 even to the last round only for them to tell me sorry we can't sponsor we're looking for another candidate

- New Comment: Question Regarding EAD and Opt Start dates!!

I applied for OPT on 17th May with a start date of 1 July. My OPT is even approved on the USCIS portal. What can I expect the Start date on EAD could be 1 July, or date when they approve OPT or something else?

- New Comment: Does anyone know what could be the start date will be on OPT?

I put my start date as 1 July but my OPT is not even approved yet.

Title of the post: Gay on F1 visa?

Body of the post: Hello y'all. I'm graduating in May 2024 and am a CS major here in California. I reside in San Francisco and, despite my resume apparently being very good, I doubt I'll be able to stay in the States due to me being international and the CS job economy being horrible rn.

Is there anything I can do? I don't want to go back to my home country because it's homophobic, which is why I came to America in the first place. Is there resources for someone in my situation? Is there anything I can do?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Unfortunately, F-1 status is truly a non-immigrant status. It does not by itself provide any benefit of being able to stay in the US beyond the end of F-1 study/practical training ending. In fact, you have to convince the US government you will not plan to stay in the US after your study ends to be eligible for an F-1 visa/F-1 status entry.

Your options beyond F-1 OPT would include these:

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1) Apply for and attend another degree program in F-1 status

2) Get an employer to sponsor you for a new US status by the end of your F-1 OPT

3) Marry a US citizen

4) If your country is dangerous for gay people, research applying for asylum.

- New Comment: You're gay and Palestinian, probably want to talk to an asylum lawyer. You seem to have a strong case.

- New Comment: I guess it depends on your country. But a friend in a similar situation requested asylum and eventually got her green card. She is from Malaysia which has a Muslim leaning government.

- New Comment: The LGBT asylum project is a nonprofit located in SF that offers free legal services to help people apply for asylum based on their sexual orientation.

If I was you, I'd reach out to them immediately. If they can't help, they have a network of other LGBT immigration attorneys they can refer you to.

- New Comment: Talk to an LGBT asylum lawyer. Oasis Legal Services down the street from me does this or will refer you to someone. <https://www.oasislegalservices.org/>

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: ASYLUM!!! If you're not planning on going back to ur country :)

- New Comment: you could marry me. I'm unattractive and have nothing else to offer you though...

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no you say? well it was worth a shot :)

- New Comment: Look into Out in Tech. They have plenty of resources and do in person meetups to aid with networking.
- New Comment: Get married or Asylum.
- New Comment: Marriage, NIW or asylum.
- New Comment: Yes, study hard, get OPT and then a job. Work hard and get lucky to get h1b sponsorship and eventually apply for PERM. Like everyone else.

​

Now if you're from a warzone you probably have a good shot at asylum or tps (depending on nationality)

- New Comment: There are plenty of jobs out there for CS. You just have to be willing to relocate And take a position you wouldn't normally want to take.
- New Comment: In reality, there is no government prosecution as we get our funding from the west. I wish you the best honestly.
- New Comment: On the plus side, Biden has halted deportations to Palestine for the next 18 months
- New Comment: Get married or move back.
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: I think you're being negative. Yes, it's hard to get a job but not impossible. Your focus now should be getting ANY postgraduate opportunity, whether an internship, fellowship, or full time role on OPT. Even at your current college...just to give yourself time to search seriously for a full time role.

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Apply for OPT

Job hunt until you find something

Get job in tech

Get H1B & greencard sponsorship.

- New Comment: Try venturing outside California. You might have better job opportunities.

- New Comment: OP have you applied to Meta? They seem to be hiring rn.

- New Comment: Findhelp.org, many government or non profits that can help people. Try these and find what kind do help you need along with job opportunities.

- New Comment: Talk to a consultancy - check on LinkedIn and you'll find many

- New Comment: With an F1 in STEM, consider starting a Delaware corp and self-employing (even as a freelancer agency) on OPT - of course, please discuss this with your school officer. I had a college classmate who self-employed himself in a founder occupation relevant to his degree. Given that a STEM OPT is 3 years, you could buy yourself some time.

- New Comment: 1st choice, seek asylum as a gay person.

2nd choice, marry a US citizen.

Employer sponsored visas are getting harder to get and it's a hustle. Good luck!

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Could you go to a contracting firm? I know they are not always the best but they can sponsor your work visa and then companies that contract from them don't have to worry about sponsoring your visa and you can get a

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job easier

Title of the post: 90 days unemployment coming up soon and no job :(

Body of the post: My 90 day unemployment period for initial OPT is reaching and I am still desperately searching for any job/internship to show for it. Since last week I have been turning to non profits but few of them responded. My college and other colleges around me also do not have vacancies in their labs to let me be involved in.

I saw some people mention rnd4impact and applied to it too but they have not even give me a response (I called them too and they told me to text my contact info to alert them to check on it but still no follow up or anything). The only one that reached out was a non profit called Zenativity Inc. which has fees involved (\$600 per month) but as much as I want to go for it, the high price and the lack of reviews is making me second consider them.

Anyone else going through this currently and have ideas of what to do, or other orgs to check out?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 1. Ask any of your friends/alumni that have a startup so you can get an unpaid internship (this is what I did)

2. Idk if there's a community of F-1 students from your country somewhere. For example, I'm Vietnamese and we have an active Facebook group for job referrals for F-1 students in the US.

- New Comment: This is very sad to know.

Whats your major?

- New Comment: You can be self-employed on OPT. Start a business related to your major. File an LLC and get the EIN. It's easy.

- New Comment: You can try volunteer match they have a lot of volunteering positions open

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- New Comment: Check out angellist and builtinnyc for jobs in startups, tech, and vc related.

Messaging new and existing connections on linkedin to question about their experiences could also be a good idea. Ask if there's any job referrals at the end of the conversation

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Did you graduate in May?

- New Comment: How long have been you looking for job? How many positions have you applied since you started? Have those led to any interview? Have you previous work experience, projects, etc? I ask those questions since that could help to figure out why things may not going the desired way.

- New Comment: What is your major? I suggest interning unpaid for startups!

- New Comment: i was exactly in your place before, so i know how frustrating and agonizing it feels. hang in there. have you considered volunteer?

- New Comment: Reach out to startups and deliver cold messages saying you'd do it unpaid but NGOs definitely respond try to go for tier 2 NGOs

- New Comment: Not the worst to just leave. Being unemployed almost anywhere in the world is less expensive than being unemployed in the US.

- New Comment: I think you can volunteer with your adviser to work for them even tho free but you'd be employed? At least until you land a job

- New Comment: Talk to your school international advisor and check if you have any options or they have some insight of what can you do.

- New Comment: Check out Simplify Copilot OP! It helps making applying super easily, as well as matches you to jobs as you apply. Since you are in 90-days, you need to make sure you are applying to every opportunity possible, and this

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will help you do that.

There's also a few free nice features such as highlighting missing keywords from job descriptions and more which can help improve your callback rate.

- New Comment: Can you share your major and industry related experience? I have some friends doing start up and looking for internship (not necessarily non-paid)

- New Comment: If you speak another language, you could find bilingual required positions easily, and their hiring process is super fast. In my case, it took me ONLY 3 DAYS from applying to get an offer letter. It's amazing.

- New Comment: How many days have left on your 90 day period ? I am planning to hire one or two analysts in data analytics in near future.

- New Comment: Try libraries - your opt does not need you to get paid - to stop your clock as long as they sign your I20 and can get the doc - you can stay in the country,

- New Comment: What about Phd.

- New Comment: Try local religious institutions and non-profits.

- New Comment: i couldnt get a job after my undergrad, i went back home relaxed for 6-7 months and then came back to do a masters degree and started getting a lot of interviews after completing it and got a job. So maybe getting another degree might help ur chances next time.

- New Comment: IIRC volunteering counts so i recommend doing that to get more time.

- New Comment: Do you have a handshake account? If yes, I suggest searching for non-paid/volunteer opportunities there, that's where I found my volunteer job to stop the clock.

- New Comment: Immigration is almost getting impossible for origin of China and India. Just its too many people want to come US. Seems like OP already went back, but if you look for another chance, try Canada.

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- New Comment: Hello, are you still looking for a job? I happen to know a non-profit and I am in direct contact with them.

Do you mind private message me your background to see if we have any roles for you?

Title of the post: DUI affects on F1

Body of the post: Asking for a friend. They got a DUI and shortly after received an email stating their F1 Visa was revoked. What are the effects of the DUI on the F1 status? Are they still able to attend school? Friend is still waiting on the court date and has not yet been convicted and will be trying to lessen the charge to reckless driving.

Update: she spoke with the DSO she usually corresponds with and he confirmed her I-20 is valid. Whichever DSO she spoke to yesterday didn't know what they were talking about. For those of you with actual advice and experiences, THANK YOU for sharing!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: F1 visa or any other visa for that matter (H1B or L1 or EB1) are revoked instantly for DUI. You can have an assault charge and get away with your visa not being revoked but have it revoked for DUI. That's just the rules. Drinking and driving is dangerous. Driving is not a luxury. It's a necessity here. You drink n drive, you kill someone. Not welcome here.

To add, the revoked F1 visa doesn't make their status invalid. They just can't use their visa for re entry into the US. As long as they hold a valid I20, they might still be able to get their degree and apply for OPT, which may or may not be approved depending on the aggravating factors you mentioned. In summary, they can be here for now. Once they leave, they won't be issued another visa in the future if they end up convicted or based on facts of the case. A deferred judgement is still a conviction for immigration (offered for most first offenders). A DUI is a CIMT and is not considered a petty offense according to INA 212A. This makes them inadmissible for any and all future immigration cases.

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Only a petty offense CIMT (ex. Petty theft) can be expunged and receive a waiver. DUI is not a petty offense and even having it expunged won't matter for immigration as this has to be always disclosed. Not having a public criminal record doesn't mean you are free from the consequences. Never lie to immigration.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I got a DUI under an F1 visa. I comply with all the mandatory court dispositions and DMV as well. My visa was never revoked and I was able to move from F1 to H1B and my EB2 was approved as well.

Things to consider. Even though your visa could not be revoked you better not go out of the country as that'll be a red flag if you come back, you may or may not be revoked. You are going to have issues if whenever you stamp A new visa like an H1B. And be prepared to disclose that on any job application. I had to stay in the country for about 5 years but never had major issues.

Get a good lawyer, get a plea deal

With the DA or maybe even get that dismissed if you can. Learn from that mistake (I for sure did).

- New Comment: I worked on a similar case, and they got their visa this January. No need for an immigration lawyer, let her get in one of the rehab programs, or track.

- New Comment: Personally knew someone in this situation. Luckily the cops did not tell the school and he hired a lawyer etc and got his charge removed. However, he did spend a night in jail to be able to remove the charge due to the lawyer finding a loophole in the system. He even went back home to renew his visa and was still able to get it renewed.

- New Comment: If it hasn't already, their F1 visa will be revoked by the Embassy or Consulate that issued the visa, regardless of conviction.

- New Comment: Hi there, a visa is permission to travel to the port of entry and seek admission, and then when admitted

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CBP grants one status in the US. Students and exchange visitors (F, M, J) are normally admitted D/S (or duration of status), which means as long as you follow the rules/maintain your status, you are lawfully present. Once admitted and granted status, the visa (in most cases) no longer matters. For example, a person can be issued a single-entry three month student visa, travel to the US and be admitted as a F1 for D/S, and study for years lawfully, even though the visa was used up the moment they arrived. All that is to say that the visa being revoked does not impact her status in the US. If the DUI involved something more serious like an accident involving manslaughter or another serious crime, she could be put into deportation proceedings.

Not to minimize the seriousness of her DUI, but for a routine DUI it will have no impact on her status, If she departs the US since the visa was revoked she will need a new visa to return. In most cases for a DUI, the student would reapply and as long as the officer believes they remain a legit student and qualified for the visa, the officer will send them to the panel physician to assess whether they have an addiction (alcohol) that makes them ineligible for a visa under US law. If the doctor assesses they do not, then they can be issued a new student visa.

It sounds from your post and the comment below that she understands the seriousness of this event, which is good, and very lucky this learning experience wasn't more serious. I'm glad she gets it, and is getting better DSO advice, and wish you and her well!

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: None of these people know what they're talking about. I personally got a dui on an f1 visa, pled guilty and it had no impact on my visa. Maybe I was lucky but common sense would tell you a standard dui should not be a deportable offence..

- New Comment: F1 status is probably intact but your friend is fucked and will likely never set foot in the US again once she leaves. Add this to the very long list of reasons never to drink and get behind the wheel of a car.

- New Comment: I think you will be deported. During my first day and orientation, our DSO told us a story where a

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student was arrested for DUI. He got a warrant while at home and then detained. Shortly after he was deported.

Hence, DUI is a big no no. I wonder why some F1 thinks that they can freely live in this country knowing that the visa is a non immigrant intent. A good reminder to self is we are not from here. Temporary.

- New Comment: Ask your friend to contact the DSO. They will be able to guide more accurately.

- New Comment: My friend was arrested for DUI 2 years ago. Lawyer got the case dismissed. Checked the FBI report online for criminal background and didn't find any arrest record. Got my OPT extended. Do not travel outside of USA. Do not disclose it to DSO they do not need to know.

- New Comment: Imao what a stupid fucker

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: DUI has lot of consequences. Next time (asking for a friend???) travel to home country visa might not be issued, problem of GC, some times f1, or h1 visa revocation notice mailed to DL Address?if status got revoked how come friend can attend college ???? Lot of DUI temp visa stories onboard already

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Criminals should not be allowed to remain in this country. Maybe someone should tip ICE and have her deported. I have absolutely zero tolerance for people who drink and drive

Title of the post: The job market

Body of the post: Really frustrated with the current situation. I graduate tomorrow and I have no offers in hand. No interviews lines up either. I have been applying since November?!?! Barely got a few interviews (none that went well).

Im gonna start my ead close to the 60 day post grad mark. But i need to earn to live?!? I have been having mental breakdowns everyday. Super hard to stay positive. The tech space has been awful. Getting hopeless every single day?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: As someone who was in the same exact position, let me tell you that everything you're feeling is valid. It's definitely stressful and hectic, not to mention the looming uncertainty and anxiety that just ruins your day. Sad thing is that it only goes away slowly once the job offer is in hand, the good thing is that you will definitely land something, don't lose hope. Until it's your last hour in the U.S, keep applying as it's a volume game unfortunately for international students. Search every company and role in the E-verify database, as well as utilize those email blasts from different job sites. I used to sometimes get up at 4am randomly and just start applying, pumped out at least 10 apps a day. Hell, I even applied to Hawaii at one point lol. The truth of the matter is you never know when you're gonna get that job, and the best you can do is keep going and applying. Ofc, not saying apply to any and everything that says "technology" in it, but keep all options open and don't hesitate. AND DONT FEEL BAD ABOUT A REJECTION, remember that all odds are stacked against you as an international student so don't take a rejection to heart! You will make it through in time.

- New Comment: What University and program?

- New Comment: I feel you, I'm going thru the same since a few months. This is going to be a bit direct. Here are some tips I'd like to share with you:

? reach out to your professors and ask for a volunteer position. Ask for a small teams meeting and discuss your situation. Do this as soon as you can before your EAD start date. Usually takes time for HR to process internally.

? do not spiral. Prioritize your health. Seriously, this is very important. Have a proper routine because this is going to take a while and a system helps you keep stable. Do not overload yourself with too many applications in one day. Apply max 20 jobs per day. Maximize on quality. Write that cover letter, attach the portfolio, certifications and publications. Make sure you actually qualify for the minimum job requirements - degree, years of experience and skills.

? since you have gotten interviews already, you're doing something right. Figure out what is that you did that landed you interviews and do that more. If you wanna go extra, reach out to these recruiters and ask them what made your

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application stand out to them, hopefully have a call too.

? prioritize which job titles you want. Don?t waste your time applying to anything and everything. Don?t use LinkedIn easyApply feature unless it?s a position that you really like. This just gives you the illusion that you?ve applied to many jobs but in fact they usually keep reposting. Apply directly thru company website.

? have a professional from LinkedIn read and critique your resume. Ideally, this person has to be in a company and position you?d like to be in. Ask for a call when they accept your request for resume review. Don?t use InMail feature. Nobody responds, but definitely send personalized connections requests to people relevant to your field. A lot of people are willing to have a chat. One thing - try to make your resume ATS friendly, easy to read, but also unique. Have wider margins, only relevant content and skills.

? make a list of companies you actually want to work for. Have an easy access links to their careers website. Go to the H1B database website and see if they have sponsored visas in 2023-2024. If I come across a new company, I just Google ?company name + H1B? and quickly check thru the first 3 links. Check the company career page every week for new positions. Don?t even bother with companies that don?t sponsor, whether you need sponsorship or not. It?s a dance you don?t have time for.

? go to job fairs and network on LinkedIn. Job fairs - ask recruiters for business cards and send a LinkedIn request by end of day. For LinkedIn- try to connect with employees (not just recruiters) in the company and ask about company culture. Usually people are more responsive 2 pm onwards. Keep 3 special days in a week to connect with people on LinkedIn so you don?t overload yourself. The main focus here is to build rapport, have a chance to talk to employees of the company and hopefully get a referral.

? this may or may not work. Instead of matching keywords to job description using ChatGPT, I chose the job titles that I

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want and made resume docx for each of them. This takes a little practice since you will need to read a few job descriptions completely and get a feel for what types of wordings/skills these job titles usually require. Usually let's say you're aiming for 6 job titles, then you 6 editable word files and 6 finalized resume PDFs. Have a website highlighter extension handy and add the missing keywords. If everything crucial is present, then use the uncustimized PDF.

? more than anything, it's about your mindset and belief. Of course the market is bad right now. But don't lose faith, keep telling yourself that you will find a job in the moments of doubt and keep pushing thru. This became much more easier for me once I started talking to people on LinkedIn. Just merely talking to humans made me feel less alone.

You got this ?

- New Comment: What University?

- New Comment: I am getting interviews, but getting rejected after multiple rounds, I really am not understanding where I am going wrong. Also if anyone is in the cfd/fea domain, which companies are you guys targeting ?

- New Comment: Don't lose hope, you will get through this phase. Focus on improving your interviewing skills (this might be the main reason as you did have several interviews that didn't go well as you said), applying with tailored resumes, and always networking! None of us like it but at some point in life, we have to sell ourselves aggressively through cold emails, cold calls, asking for referrals everywhere. Be bold.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: You aren't unique in not being able to find a job. How were you expecting to get help on this forum with a directionless rant like this? The tech space isn't getting better anytime soon. Maybe you should bail out and look for opportunities outside the US. That's where all the tech jobs are going anyway haha

- New Comment: It is hell out here man, even with one year of US experience i am finding 0 viable opportunities

- New Comment: Have you thought about relocating?

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- New Comment: Since you mentioned mental breakdown. Back then in summer 2020 i was the same situation. Covid and lockdown, noone was hiring. I can never forget that summer? nights lying on bed sleepless- for weeks. If I got lucky maybe I'd fall asleep at 9 or 10 am, or it was going to be a full day of zero sleep.

People at home couldn't understand why i was being stressed out. ?You're living the American dream. Some of us haven't even taken a step outside of Asia?.

And my ex-BF would be mad at me for sleeping till 4pm and not cooking for him. Lol. Man i fell asleep at 10am, you should have been concerned about my health and cooked for me.

Just know you are not alone ok.

- New Comment: I was you about a year back. Graduated and had a promising offer when everything collapsed. I was getting 1 interview every month. Good thing was I almost always ended til the last round. Fast forward now, its been 8 months since I joined this company. That was after 8 months of being unemployed, embarrassed and ashamed. I was 28 when I did my master and never had a real job in the past. Career shift from medical to data/IT. Been promoted twice in the first 6 months. I can talk all day. But tough times teach us to be patient, to value something that you once craved, to work hard and harder. In the end, remember its not the end of the world. Things are going to fall in place when it has to, but you need to skillup and keep pushing. Ik its tough, ihv had days I was alone in my house while roomies were visiting families, looking out of the window staring at nothing for a few minutes until I realize Id go crazy if I did that further more. But dont waste your time doing nothing.

Good wishes

- New Comment: I have an LLC, my company specifies in DeFi/Web3 dev, dm me

- New Comment: Time for you to start looking at jobs back home. I would rather be realistic than wishful thinking.

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Wish you all the best.

- New Comment: Apply everywhere. Check out company's job portal websites. And network like crazy

Title of the post: Just tired

Body of the post: Hi everyone.

I'm an international student graduating with a B.S. in CompSci this December and I have no job lined up. Looks like I'm going back home.

My time at college here in the US has been a mess. In sophomore year, I had to go back home during COVID since it was cheaper to take virtual classes without paying for housing. I spent the whole year studying with a 12-hour difference. I remember having to sit for one class at 2am-3am and then wait to attend another at 6am-9am. I was pretty tired but I managed to pull through with my gpa still somewhat intact. Plus, also completed a Google summer program at the time called SPS.

Once junior year started, I came back to the US. The transition back was hard. I don't know what it was but COVID screwed me up. I couldn't focus during class and I started falling behind. I got really depressed and started to skip classes. I was spending most days in bed just battling suicidal thoughts. I never really felt good enough for CS and I was constantly doubting myself. I was failing myself and my family who were supporting me. But I sought out help from mental health services on campus and attended therapy regularly. I started to get better and worked on fixing my grades.

In senior year, I decided to do an independent study analyzing COVID data. My advisor helped me to apply and I got to attend a conference (NCUR) to present my work this spring. I also applied for and got to intern this summer at a U.S.

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Department of Energy lab as well. I worked on a research project that I'm currently still working on and planning on publishing with my mentor from there.

But now comes the end. I've applied to 200 jobs currently (data analyst, software engineer) at companies, institutions and research labs at universities. I've gotten nothing. I'm not expecting to get a six-figure salary, just a job even if it's in the middle of Nebraska or something.

I didn't attend a prestigious school nor did I do any amazing projects. My department has offered me no help (for international students especially) in terms of career prospects. I had to seek out my internship on my own.

I've been through one thing after another. I'm exhausted. I'm sure others have been through much worse than I have. I just wanted to come to America so I could find a life here and escape my homophobic country. I feel defeated for getting nothing.

I've been accepted for a master's at my current school but I'm waiting to get a Graduate Assistant position so I can get free tuition. However, that's gonna have to be deferred to the Fall. Also applying for a PhD program at another uni. I've been talking to the PI/Faculty for that as well. If I get in, it will also be in the Fall.

I'm sorry for complaining, I hate doing that. I just needed to rant. I'll just work on projects and LeetCode while I'm at home.

Rant over.

UPDATE:

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I've decided to apply for OPT now to continue my job search. I'll talk with my international office advisor to plan out my next course of action.

I've had my resume reviewed by my previous mentor I had from my Google summer program and my current mentor from my internship. They both said it's good. I used the "Jake's Resume" template recommended by everyone on the CS subreddit.

Currently, I've been applying to more jobs that are more closely aligned with my skills and research experience from my internship.

It seems my plan now is:

- Apply for OPT, apply to jobs, see if I can get an opportunity
- No job, admitted to PhD, go home and work until time to return for PhD
- No job, not admitted to PhD, go home and work until time to return for master's

I'll keep on trying. Wish me luck.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >Looks like I'm going back home.

Is that what you want to do? Just apply for OPT and continue the job search. If you are worried about finding a job then delay the OPT start to February.

>I've applied to 200 jobs currently (data analyst, software engineer) at companies, institutions and research labs at universities. I've gotten nothing.

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Review your resume. Ask on some of the related subreddits here to get feedback. Find a recruiter to help you. Either your resume is poor or you are not applying to the right jobs.

- New Comment: I am graduating with a master's in bioinformatics from a good university, in December and don't have a job lined up either. The anxiety is there at the back of my head. When I see friends going for interviews, I feel extra stupid. I have gotten only a few. I even got a recruiter call for a hospital I would have loved to join but he ghosted me afterwards. I hate how it feels, but I am still slogging.

- New Comment: I hear people applying to several hundred jobs to get results. So keep trying.

Also, did you know you can just message random employees at a company to ask for referrals? It works more often than not in tech.

Something like this: hi <name>, I'm applying for this job <link to job> at your company. Attached is my resume. Could you refer me please?

do that for every company. For each company send the above message to multiple people because most people aren't active on LinkedIn.

You're not bothering them. They would understand.

- New Comment: So sad to see so many fellow international students going through this (been on F1 since 2015). I

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found my job back in 2021 and i know i was lucky as that was a good year economically. Looks like you already got referral for google, im currently at google (non-tech role) and i can tell you that google is hesitant to hire F1 students atm due to immigration environment (they paused on greencard sponsorship for current employees and getting H1B has become so much harder). If you found another role at google, you'd like to apply, lmk and ill see if i can give a referral

- New Comment: hi! I don't know you but just wanna give you a hug- you have done such an amazing job alr and plz take a small break just for your mental health. I worked for an agency in New York called DHD consulting but they're a korean firm(basically a headhunting company), they also have non Korean jobs so if you speak Korean it will be a big plus. Try contacting one of their recruiters and send your resume to them! I know this isn't really helping but rly hope this's something

- New Comment: You have limited time in the US, work hard and make the most of it. Regardless of how things turn out, youll know you gave it your best, and this is all any one can do in life.

Also, I have had 2 internships and 2 return offers here, and had applied in excess of 500 jobs on both occasions.

- New Comment: You've been through some rough times, and I think many people have similar stories, so you shouldn't get down on yourself for facing challenges.

For what it's worth, I think it's admirable that you sought treatment and worked to improve your mental health and get back on track with school. I hope you're able to find a graduate school and/or job that meets your needs. Good luck!

- New Comment: From what I understand, as long as what you are doing relates to your degree, you can do 20hr a week volunteer work to keep yourself in OPT status (Not for STEM OPT tho- those requires you to have a paid position). If you have good relationship with your professors or maybe even the lab that you wish to go to as PhD, ask if you could help out as a volunteer research assistant. It will give you some experience and keep you in status until you find something more solid. Good luck!

- New Comment: I don't have much to offer in the way of advice, but working in higher education during the pandemic

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was awful. It was terrible to see how the situation played out for so many students. I think the effect of the pandemic on students' educational careers will stay with me forever. You're not alone and I'm sorry for the way things went down.

A quick thought - I know you mentioned your department not helping in the job search, but what about your university's career services department? They might even have access to Handshake, which is a great network to find jobs.

- New Comment: I graduated both undergrad and grad school with no job lined up and ended up finding one just in time. I'm still here. It's super lonely and stressful and it sucks to be worried about this stuff when everyone around you is excited for their future, it does NOT work out for everyone as long as they try or whatever, but like, sometimes it does work out. If you have it in you to keep trying, try. It's not over until it's over.

- New Comment: Don't just apply jobs. Make as many connections to recruiters. Leave messages to recruiters(Search how to find on LinkedIn). Add a note if they can refer to their colleagues if they are looking for something that matches your skillset in a resume. Reach out to each of them after 1 2 weeks if they don't reply. #GoodLuck

- New Comment: I stumbled on your post quite by accident and I must say it has brought me to tears. I have had a good life and been very fortunate to live in what is often a very challenging country. Despite my age and having been in a much different career than the one you're attempting to enter, my experience has taught me to recognize talent and guts when I see it. And, wow, you have both. No matter how difficult your life, you have persevered. The education and life experience that you have gained can never be lost or taken from you. In reading your post never did I see a sad commentary on what life has handed you, but instead, I saw hope, determination, and above all bravery. You have failed no others, but only proven the emotional and physical strength you possess. I truly wish I could offer you a job, but alas I cannot. But, I have no doubt that someone else, somewhere, will see what I see and realize what the gem of an asset you would bring to their company or institution. Thank you for allowing me to hear only part of what I believe will be a very lengthy career finding everything you want and deserve. If it were not for fate leading me to your story, would I have realized how fortunate we are in this country to have people like you participating in the dream that keeps moving us in a positive direction. I wish you and all others in a similar position to you my very best. Have faith, always

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for you never know what is around the proverbial corner.

- New Comment: That's suck. However, I just want to let you know that the situation that you are in right now is temporary and things will get better.

I know a lot of people in the comments have encouraged you to keep applying for jobs and plan B and stuffs. However, don't forget to take care of yourself such as eat well, sleep well, exercise, and go outside and hangout with friends.

Also, I heard that you can volunteer to stop your unemployment clock while looking for jobs on OPT. Maybe ask your college to see if there is any job that you can do that is related to your major.

Best of luck because sometime you need to get that offer :D

Cheers

- New Comment: Wishing you the best OP. ??

- New Comment: Hey OP! Hope everything works out for you.

I recently went through the job hunt after being laid off for ~3+ months on h1b. I was on F1 earlier, if you want someone to walkthrough your resume, just discuss your career/ jobs, feel free to DM me.

- New Comment: Honestly, your credentials are just amazing. Every international student in my cohort couldn't land an internship this year. I heard that internship experience is the ticket to a job and you got it. Honestly, I think it's just a

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matter of time before you land something.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Go to zip recruiter and look for apprentice and entry level jobs

- New Comment: Just to stay in VISA, joining a PhD program is a bad decision.

- New Comment: What's your 1st language? I'm a BS/MS mechanical engineering major who graduated this May and currently under OPT, I highly recommend you to look for bilingual company/positions.

- New Comment: Move to Canada

Title of the post: Bought and sold stock today. Learned that I can't day trade.

Body of the post: Hello guys.

Currently on OPT. I bought a stock. Then it shot up, so I sold it before I lose something. I learned later that this wasn't OK for OPT F1. I only did it once and earned 500\$. I heard that the matter is still disputed, but doing it once should be fine as a hobby. I have never done this before, usually I only trade into INDEX funds.

Is there anything I need to be careful about? Is there anything I can even do?

Thank you

Edit: Thank you very much guys. It's a big weight off my shoulder. Bless you all :)

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This won't be an issue. Just don't make more than 4 trades per week.
- New Comment: Not legal advice. As far as I know unless you have done trading like that consistently that would count as work. But but buying stock and selling it every once in a while isn't work. It is just passive income. I assuming you don't buy and sell everyday, then that is day trading.
- New Comment: One or two transactions like this won't be an issue. If you do this consistently in a manner that makes it look like you day trade in place of having a job (think 10-20 trades a day over a long period) then it will be an issue.
- New Comment: Not much to worry. You would be flagged as a Pattern Day Trader when you make 4 or more day trades in a 5 day period.
- New Comment: it's RDDT isn't it
- New Comment: unrelated but can u teach me how to stock???
- New Comment: Talk to a CPA. You're fine. I've done a ton of this on F1. As long as you aren't doing it enough to call it ?business?. What's the worst that going to happen? IRS will ask for \$150 tax on the \$500. Pay it
- New Comment: No need to worry, I day trade too sometimes and I'm on F1 STEM OPT. Just make sure you limit to 3 day trades per 5 days.
- New Comment: That's day trading so you technically violated F1 policy. But practically, no one cares for a single trade unless you made millions from it, just don't do that again.

Title of the post: How the hell did you get an OPT job?

Body of the post: Any motivational experiences to share? This seems near impossible.

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Seems like the only option is a huge company, besides those most companies won't hire OPT
- New Comment: Open an account in Handshake. They have filter for people like us, you can choose that option and hopefully find companies that hire with OPT or even with work visa.
- New Comment: I am trying to start my own business entity to stay self-employed for this year
- New Comment: Not sure if this counts? I graduated during the peak pandemic in 2020 and I was interviewing in Feb itself and every single company cancelled their interviews immediately in March and it was really difficult to even get a call back.

I was treating my job search as a full time job and would be on the laptop from 9am to 9pm with only bathroom and food breaks. I applied to any job that looked relevant. Made 100 different versions of my resumé to target the job I am applying to. I think I applied close to 1500 jobs. I interviewed at 10 companies, sometimes all the way to the last round. I self-evaluated myself after each interview to improve any shortcomings I had during the interview process.

I got 2 offers, one was in academia and one was a small company with a headcount of less than 15 people and a huge paycut from what I would have made otherwise. I started my job right on my OPT start date, and once I stabilized, I moved on to a much better company with a good salary.

- New Comment: First find volunteer work to stop the clock, related to your field. Then look for a job that will hire, (when asked if you need sponsorship say no) because you are planning on going to college for masters/phd after 3 years (only if you are STEM). Then get the job, get the experience at least 6 months. Start looking for jobs that will sponsor and write that on your resume that you need sponsorship. Block your HR from seeing you on LinkedIn so they don't know you are fishing for other jobs. Bigger cities and companies are better for stability in this job market. They are willing to train and e-verify for later.

- New Comment: Personally, I didn't bring up my status at all until the first day of the job for I-9 verification with HR. Even then I didn't really say anything, I just gave them the relevant documents to verify I'm eligible to work. HR only

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cares that you have valid employment authorization, doesn't matter the expiration date on your card. So I'm not even sure my direct supervisor ever knew that I was on opt as they don't do the I-9 verification themselves. I found it impossible to get interviews if you disclose your status from the start. Best way is to get an internship during the summer before senior year (again, don't mention your status unless directly asked) and then hope for a return offer.

- New Comment: Try applying for a job in state gov! They don't offer work visas past OPT but that's a start. You could go back for another degree after and OPT again :)

- New Comment: Go back to school and get a nursing degree, I got about 9 job offers before graduating with visa sponsorship

- New Comment: apply for a job at a private non profit organization lol don't tell them you're an international student on the application unless it asks you or absolutely necessary bc tbh it's just irrelevant information. if you do need to tell them about your visa status then make sure it's clear to them that you don't need them to sponsor/pay for any of the EAD/OPT apps

- New Comment: Any backups ?

- New Comment: If finding a job on OPT is hard, try finding one that is willing to sponsor you for an H1B visa. It's been almost impossible

- New Comment: My first OPT job was at an academic lab for next to nothing BUT I knew I'd get the right experience there (also I had an advantage of being a local candidate in a remote location, the PI had some bad experience with people out of state not showing up after all).

My second job was at a company with normal pay and willingness to sponsor h1b and green card. This was taking place during covid overhiring in my field. Right now things are different with all the layoffs going on, it's impossible to get an interview when you need h1b transfer.

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Please note this is my experience in biotech sector which is a very particular. I'd advice you to figure out how things are in your desired field and if the market is really bad, you might want to consider staying around academia a little longer.

- New Comment: Can?t deal with rejects rn

- New Comment: Some professors have research that would need help, maybe knocking on their doors and ask would be a good start.

You can also apply for volunteer jobs to ?stop the clock? to buy some more time to keep applying for paying jobs.

Those are 2 ways that I could think of that might be helpful. Good luck!

- New Comment: I'm trying too. It's hard out here.

- New Comment: I got it through cold applying on indeed. Ofcourse I applied more than 1000 applications , just got couple of interviews setup and got the offer. But they aren?t sponsoring. So I am still looking for one who sponsors. Didn?t asked for sponsorship as they have clearly mentioned they don?t sponsor but I was close to my 90 day timeline so I joined the company for time being.

- New Comment: Try construction/mining industry. They hiring like crazy

- New Comment: I landed a summer internship before senior year by going to a career fair. They offered me a full time position starting after my graduation.

- New Comment: Most companies do not hire people on OPT.

- New Comment: Hey, I got a role at university after a year of struggling to get interviews. It's possible.

Edit: I graduated last year and got a job just before my post-completion OPT expiration.

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- New Comment: I got a temp job

- New Comment: To prepare for my post graduate OPT, I got as much work experience while I was in school. I went to as many networking events and career fairs to expose myself to the industry. I was able to get a full time salaried position right after graduation because I had a lot of work experience.

When I was job hunting (after I graduated), I applied to hundreds of job postings and I only got two interviews. My advice is to work on improving your resume, formatting matters a lot! Utilize your resources at your college/university and get your resume reviewed

- New Comment: Couple of people who majored in IT at my university got hired at the local hospital system. I've also heard of people getting hired by Amtrak. I personally would never have thought of even applying at these places. So unless they explicitly mention that they won't, assume that every company will sponsor and apply.

- New Comment: find people from your country who are in higher positions in companies that hire international students. networking with them really helps your chances because they were in your shoes once and they want to help.

- New Comment: Job market bad for everyone tbh

- New Comment: started my own business and created my own

- New Comment: I uploaded my resume on Handshake and a recruiter contacted me.

- New Comment: I graduated in 2021 winter with a bachelors in engineering science. Applied to hundreds of jobs in and outside of the smallish NY city im in. Got like 2 or 3 offers after months of applying, took one in telecom/optics that wasnt the best pay but was close to my friends and partner. Got laid off unexpectedly, got another job for with a local manufacturing company. I had zero internship experience. Tbh i think its just a good time to be in ?hard? stem (as opposed to software or data, i dont mean hard v easy).

Just dont write off mid sized/small companies who havent sponsored before or have only done other a handful of times, if you charm them enough they?ll be willing.

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Also, put off disclosing OPT until you're in the last round of interviews, if possible. It's harder to write off someone you've met and like than to write off a random name on a screen. Obviously, do not lie if asked

- New Comment: all it takes is one good interview. if you're a good enough fit, you will be hired regardless of your OPT situation.

- New Comment: Honestly, I thought the same until I landed a job on OPT and even with a sponsorship in hand!! Don't lose hope. My advice is go for small to medium size companies. All the MNC's are not willing to sponsor and laying off huge number of people. Stay focused and you will get it. All the best!!

- New Comment: civil engineering is hiring like crazy, especially construction management (yes, it's STEM. you're a field engineer)

Title of the post: How do people get so lucky and find jobs that actually sponsor them?

Body of the post: Every time I've come across a job posting, ofc first of all they don't want to sponsor but recently noticed smth more weird: they will hire noncitizens but they're not willing to sponsor. Like, what does that even mean??

I've come across so many job postings like that and gotten interviews with jobs like that (no offer) and it's so disappointing because my friends have jobs with supportive employers who are willing to file their H1B. Yes I have a job now but my employer refused to file for me. I'm grateful that I even have a job in this market but this h1b thing is making me really stressed as I only have 2 more tries and must switch employers soon.

If anyone has any advice on how to find a job like that let me know. Currently I have around a year of experience as SWE.

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: It is challenging, but if you're willing to put yourself in uncomfortable and tough situations there is always a way.

In my case, I took up a co-op position while I was finishing up school and worked there on OPT with no mention of sponsorships.

Eventually got let go after promises of a full

time role, moved from California to South Carolina on a 3 week notice for a contractor role (not Indian, in case you're wondering) to keep my OPT status. I worked there for a bit, and eventually after 3 months of looking (1500+ job applications all over the US) while I worked there found a role to sponsor me with 2 attempts left at the lottery. I moved cross states again. I got very fortunate and won the lottery the first time.

It's not easy, it's not ideal, but there's a path but the lottery step is unfortunately still all luck.

- New Comment: I think people with Green Cards fall into that category.

- New Comment: I got a job after my graduation and was laid off just before I had to file my Stem extension. Now I am applying to jobs that are not ready to sponsor H1b. It's a brutal job market. We should hang in there.

- New Comment: My employer has no issue with sponsoring me. My boss was upfront since the first interview. He asked where I grew up and I told him so he automatically knew. My company is 29 years old and 4 full-time employees big and they want to keep people for as long as they can (if you're competent of course). He was a guest speaker in my class once. I hit rock bottom and had no shame in reaching out to LITERALLY everyone I knew so I reached out and got a job with him with an agreement to sponsor. I think I lined up with what he was looking for and just clicked. I'm a consultant.

- New Comment: It's A LOT of rejections, very little to do with luck more to do with the field/ industry you are in. I work in tech and I have a technical background.

- New Comment: In my very fortunate case, I went to a research lab at a university. I was basically a research assistant,

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but the professors I worked for were very non-traditional and treated their labs more like tech startups than traditional academic research labs. So we had full time junior and senior analysts, full time engineers and data scientists, full time clinical coordinators, full time database administrators, and other kinds of jobs that actually paid only a little less than market rate.

What's important in this story is that large universities 1) are cap-exempt for H1B, so don't have to go through the lottery; 2) are already large wealthy institutions with teams of lawyers and HR specialists available to oversee recruitment paperwork; 3) are already invested in the international community because they have to deal with F1 on a daily basis for all of the international students, but also J1, H1B, EB1, etc for post docs and professors. They approach international hiring with genuine experience and understanding and are incentivised to see every case to succession.

The combination of these lucky conditions is that I went from a title of 'junior programmer' in-house and 'research assistant' on immigration records, to 'senior analyst' in-house with 'bioinformatician' on immigration records. That promotion was strategically named as part of the whole 'position in a specialised field related to your academic qualifications' requirement for H1B.

My recommendation to people nowadays is to find a research lab in a uni, and hope you get as lucky as I did.

- New Comment: Took me a PhD and a niche field related to industry research

- New Comment: I made use of connections and community. I'm lucky enough that I'm sponsored by my current company but still looking at more options. I feel lucky there are people in my community (Filipino) who are always willing to help.

- New Comment: I majored in nursing. They literally put well sponsor your green card in the job posting.

- New Comment: Informational interviewing & leveraging your networks. Or, find another way, e.g. O-1, which allows an agent to sponsor you.

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- New Comment: It's luck! It's not hard work or whatever, it's luck!

I got married and that's also ?luck?

- New Comment: For me it was a convention i went too, I plead my case and i went their VERY passionate! And they made a promise and they put it in my contract and all. I was very desperate tho, I told them how hard im willing to work and they say dont bend over backwards for companies. If they tell me jump im asking how high sorry. I thinking of MY future

- New Comment: Try to get into startups or low paid jobs!

Those employers will do anything for you

Just sharing this thing from experience

- New Comment: they will hire noncitizens but they're not willing to sponsor. Like, what does that even mean??

Simple, they want only those with existing work authorization.

A Greencard or an EAD.

Before my greencard, I had an EAD based on my L2 visa.

An example of a non citizen with work authorization, nothing for employers to do.

It costs money and time to sponsor someone.

- New Comment: >they will hire noncitizens but they're not willing to sponsor. Like, what does that even mean??

It can mean that they are willing to hire people who want to work from other countries through B2B contract.

Or maybe expect you to self sponsor EB2 NIW or get a GC through marriage.

- New Comment: I know it's never been easy, but keep in mind that perspectives/anecdotes/advice from 1-5 years ago may not apply because the job market is significantly tighter now. Unless your friends just recently got their jobs, it's not

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really comparable.

- New Comment: Literally every job board I used has some sort of filters. I only applied to job that will sponsor to begin with. Also I always get that clear in the first interview/phone call, if you don't sponsor then let us not waste our time.
- New Comment: I have 2 employers. First one, I asked if they could sponsor me after I join. They said wait 1 year. I waited. I told another employer the other one is doing it for me. They started filing right away. So I have 2 going on.
- New Comment: I hear you; been there done that. US immigration can be stressful. Have you considered Canada? Like have you tested critically why USA is such a big deal? Salary and growth opportunities are often given as reasons. But what do they mean in your case specifically for you? Canada is an easier route if you want the North American geography
- New Comment: I am a CS major starting my program this Fall, is switching to BSN nursing(i dont mind the studying part) going to offer me better opportunities after completion? Is the GC process any easier (i am not from India or China)?

Title of the post: F1 Visa with Interview Waiver Experience in India

Body of the post: I think I was among the first ones to apply for a F1 visa with an interview waiver this year. I struggled to find any resources like interview experiences or anyone to clear some doubts I had about the process, especially about financial documents. I went to the dropbox appointment with all these questions still unanswered, but luckily it was a very straightforward process so there were no glitches.

If you qualify for an interview waiver (mentioned how to check eligibility at the bottom of the post), these are the documents that you need to carry with you:

1. Passport with old US Visa
2. 2 US VISA compliant passport size pictures

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3. i20
4. Appointment Letter
5. DS160

NO FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS WERE ASKED.

I carried the SEVIS Fee receipt with me but I was not asked to submit this document. I asked twice if it was required but I got a straight ?NO?.

So that was it on the documents front. Now to the experience:

I had my document drop-off scheduled at 10:15 AM at Hyderabad VAC. It?s located right next to the Rasoolpura Metro Station. Outside the OFC you have a lot of facilities like printing shops, lockers, restaurant, photo studio etc. For the document drop-off here you need to make sure you are not carrying any electronic items with you. Usually you will have one or the other gadgets like mobile phone, smartwatch etc with you. So just use the locker facility. I don?t remember how much they charge but it was nominal (100-200 only). It?s worth the pain of not having to travel to the VAC without your phone.

Show your appointment letter at the entrance, stand in line, enter the facility, submit the documents, exit the facility with a stamp on the appointment letter. DONE.

After almost 7-8 business days, I received a mail that my passport was ready for pick-up. I had given the Chennai location as my passport pickup point. This particular point is NOT the American Embassy in Chennai. It?s an VAC in Chennai. Take a copy of your Indian Govt ID (Aadhaar or Driving Licence) and wait in queue. Collect your passport when your turn comes. DONE.

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NOTE: there is no restriction on electronic gadgets when you go to collect your passport from the Chennai VAC. At max the security personnel will ask you to switch off your devices. There are many facilities like locker, printing and photo studio near the VAC.

HOW TO CHECK IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE:

1. make an account on the [\[https://cgifederal.secure.force.com/?country=India&language=English\]](https://cgifederal.secure.force.com/?country=India&language=English)(<https://cgifederal.secure.force.com/?country=India&language=English>)
2. Give bogus details till you reach the following screen: [\[https://imgur.com/a/sTQo6Nx\]](https://imgur.com/a/sTQo6Nx)(<https://imgur.com/a/sTQo6Nx>)
3. Answer the questions that follow. If you receive the following screen, then you are eligible. Else you are not: [\[https://imgur.com/a/Q8Cipko\]](https://imgur.com/a/Q8Cipko)(<https://imgur.com/a/Q8Cipko>)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This was so helpful thank you! Was hyderabad listed as your VAC location and the location on your DS-160? I have my biometrics appointment in Hyderabad but have the Mumbai consulate listed on my ASC, not sure if that's a problem
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Thank you so much for sharing your experience! Very helpful!
- New Comment: Hey, did you have an F1 or B1/B2 type visa before? Was it valid when you were applying for F1?

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Which college are you going to?

Looks like a few are getting called for an interview after dropping off the documents, do you know anything about this?

- New Comment: great post! quick question, any idea after how many days they are asking us for additional docs ? and donwe need to schedule an interview appointment again after that ?

- New Comment: All the information was helpful. But I have few more question if anyone could help me with it.

My F1 visa is expired and I was filling up the form to get the interview date. The application page suggested I was qualified for an interview waiver. The page mentions required document/process for drop box : 1) Payment

2) Appointment letter

3) Documents: Passport, photo and I-797 form.

I am F1 student and I don't qualify for the I797 form. Did anyone got the same list of documents before you pay the money for an interview waiver process? I am not trying to pay money because of the 1797 form mentioned on the portal.

Please let me know your thoughts. Any information would be helpful.

- New Comment: <https://bit.ly/F1InterviewWaiver> \-> I have embedded the links to the location on maps here

- New Comment: Are you on OPT? I just submitted my documents yesterday for Dropbox and am a bit concerned since OPT is kind of a transition period between your graduation and getting H1B.

- New Comment: [deleted]

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- New Comment: You're an angel!

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Do we have to go the VAC specified in the appointment letter? The portal does not seem to allow us to book a drop off slot for the locations where embassy is not present (eg: bangalore, cochin). Is it ok to go to the VAC in these other locations even though the appointment letter specifies a different place (more specifically, the consulate where we booked the appointment)?

- New Comment: How long did the whole thing take you? As in the appointment ?

- New Comment: Hi, Thank you for writing such a detailed post. I was issued a B1/B2 visa in 2010 for a month. I am applying for an F1 visa and am eligible for a Visa Interview waiver. Should I go ahead with an interview waiver or schedule an interview? I have heard that many visas are getting rejected.

- New Comment: I just got my visa interview waiver slot booked for 9th June

But will they ask for my biometrics or not?

Because my previous visa was issued when I was 13

- New Comment: Hi, i too am eligible for Dropbox option because I got an HR visa in 2019. But the problem is both my parents stay in the US. Will this affect my chances of getting an F1 visa?.

- New Comment: Hi there! Not sure if u still check this thread? but it's been about 7-8 business days since I dropped off my documents and I haven't heard back about my visa. Any idea what to expect/what to do ?

- New Comment: Has anyone here gone to one of the paid drop-off locations and not the scheduled VAC as per there appointment letter? Does it work fine?

- New Comment: How did you pay Rs 650 for passport delivery. I have booked my dropbox appointment for F1 renewal but have only paid for the visa fees yet. There wasn't any option to pay for the delivery fees. Thanks in advance!

- New Comment: Should've read your post sooner, helpful, thanks!

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QQ: How much buffer time do you think is safe to keep between the OFC appointment and the date we're flying? I'm getting some slots but think it might be close

- New Comment: Helpful,thanks

- New Comment: I have a valid f1visa till 2024,but I will be leaving my current programme due to funding issues to go back home and reapply to different schools for fall 2023. Do you think I will be eligible for waiver next year?

- New Comment: Thanks, this is helpful.

- New Comment: Hey, dont know if youre still checking this thread but - did you receive an email for passport pick up from ?ustraveldocs? or some other handle?

- New Comment: Hey thank you! I just posted mine today. I was wondering, does the interview waiver only provides short-term visa? Meaning only visa for 16-24 months or can you receive a F1 that also has a 4 years validity?

Saw something along those lines on the embassy website so I wasn't sure anymore.

- New Comment: Hi!

When you do the document drop off, are you allowed to drop off more documents that the specificslly required ones? For instance, I want to include some proof of ties to my home country (India) and a letter explaining my intent, since I won't have a chance to explain in the interview, due to my waiver.

- New Comment: This is really helpful. But I have a question regarding the country of residence. I am a Nepali Citizen with an F2 visa currently and I am applying for F1 from India.

Will I still qualify for Interview Waiver as I am not an Indian Citizen but applying in India.

Though I got my F2 also stamped from India.

- New Comment: hey op! /mbk1804

the imgur links seem to not work for me. Is it ok if you DM them?

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- New Comment: Hey, nice to hear that your app was approved. Did they ask for your original passport for your visa renewal? I have a new passport and photocopies of the visa on my old passport, wondering if I can talk my way into making it work
- New Comment: Thanks for this super helpful info! Did they ask you to provide a reason for renewal?
- New Comment: Thanks a lot for your post. Really helpful.
- New Comment: Does the previous visa need to be active at the time of application or can it be expired as well?
- New Comment: Hey this is helpful, I just done with my dropbox appointment 5 days back. What was your VISA approval timeline? and which was your initial VISA?

Title of the post: Moving to the US - was it worth it?

Body of the post: Hi all. I moved here about 10 years ago and the following has been my timeline since:

- 1) 5 years of undergrad including about a year of internships/coop
- 2) 3 years of OPT work
- 3) 1.5 years of grad school
- 4) Almost a year job searching since

Having spent so much time and money here, and now with just about 4 months left to find a job, I've been questioning whether my life here has been worthwhile.

If I had spent all that time building experience in my home country, I might have been in a better position to move to Canada, somewhere in Europe, etc. Ultimately, I'm left feeling like it hasn't been worth it because I always wanted to live here long-term, and until this year, I didn't have the capacity to understand how difficult that would be.

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My first job search was relatively easy and I figured if I got a master's degree in computer science, I'd have an even easier time at least finding a job. That definitely wasn't the case and it's been a huge wake up call. I've barely been interviewed and have had countless rejections over sponsorship requirements. At this point I'd be happy to just get a bit of work experience before heading home.

I've been dating my partner (US citizen) for almost 6 years now and we've been talking about marriage as a way for me to stay, but neither of us feel ready to be married so it doesn't feel right. Neither of us want to get married just to keep me here.

This past year has been a struggle for me. I'd love to hear from anyone:

What has your journey been like, and has it been worth it?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment:

It's been a beautiful journey for me with respect to immigration. I came in 2018 on an F1 visa attending grad school, my internship in 2019 turned into a co-op and that was 37\$/hr. Student debt disappeared very quickly.

Then I graduated right in the middle of the pandemic after converting to full time. Got the H1B on the first try, work for a fully remote tech company that allowed me to travel over 4 months in 2022 to stay with my family in my home country.

I avoided 4 layoffs just by upskilling to a point where my team will be negatively impacted if I leave but I'm still looking for other opportunities nonetheless.

Life's good.

Reddit Posts

I made sure I upskilled and networked like crazy.

- New Comment: I moved here as a kid (dependent) and wasn't sure of the immigration rules. Completed middle school, high school, and then midway college learned about the rules and switched to F1 while being in the country. Didn't have any internships but luckily found a job where I worked for a year on my OPT. Whole team got laid off soon just before my app could be submitted for H1b. Right now I'm working for another company but still actively looking for jobs as my stem opt has been approved. I have two years currently. Then I may look for masters options but hopefully I can find a company willing to sponsor me. My 'home' country is foreign to me as my family is here so I'm not sure what the future holds but it is scary.

- New Comment: What a journey! It's definitely a tough life as an F1 student. I don't understand when people say not ready to marry after dating the person for years and years. I am just trying to understand the 'Why'?

- New Comment: This is a bit daunting to read as someone applying to come there for an MS in 2024.

- New Comment: Hi, I'm in the same boat. My OPT will end soon so I'll be starting grad school for MSCS this January 2024. I'm scared as hell. If you were to go back in time, what would you have done differently to increase your chances in getting a job post-grad?

- New Comment: Only thing i wish I did early is invest back home as soon as I got my job. Now that I started doing so and I have one attempt left on H1B. I feel more okay with whichever way it swings.

Just find a way to invest home and you won't be bothered about the lottery.

- New Comment: Saving this to read later. I am in the same boat, but I feel like I am giving up little by little. Will be graduating next year, and I don't feel like trying to find a job here. I have been on this roller coaster for almost 6 years and I am burned out for sure.

I am saving as much as I can, and then I will see what I can do with this money. But my mental health is trash now.

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- New Comment: Where will you go after your 4 months are up? Japan? Will your partner follow you? Will they be able to find work there? Can they get a visa there? Are you planning on a long distance relationship? Are you feeling okay about these options?

I'd say it takes about 1-2 months to pack up, ship things, settle your affairs and leave the country for good. So you have maybe 2-3 months to look for a job until you're occupied with leaving.

You've been together for 6 years. Some couples have divorced in a shorter amount of time. If you're not religious or traditional, marriage is just a piece of paper for the government. But yes, a split would be a little complicated.

My friend quietly got married at the courthouse so that she could stay in the country in case she got laid off during the 2007-9 recession. They had a wedding later. They are still married today. Of course, they have problems but who doesn't?

You might want to reconsider. Just my two cents. ????

- New Comment: I have been doing therapy every week, and I also take my medications. But it is still a lot. At this point, I feel like little by little I am giving up on living in the USA. And it is fine, I am just accepting that life is full of cycles that eventually will end one day.

I really thinking about going back to my country, staying with my family, and adopting a puppy. That is what comforts me. I am always thinking about the puppy, and how cute it will be. lol

- New Comment: I'm only here for the education, which is the only good thing here. Why anyone would want to live or work here is beyond me. The level of homelessness, mental illness, crime, theft is staggering.

- New Comment: Doesn't graduating give you additional 3 years of OPT?

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- New Comment: Came here in 2014, did my AA at community college, then bachelor at a university, internship in 2019, OPT in 2020. Returned in 2021 for my masters. Now doing my OPT in 2023. Got married to my best friend (he's a US citizen) in July. The decision right now is between either doing a change of status or we go back to my home country. It is a tough decision and I'm still conflicted on the steps to take to stay here. As I love my current job on OPT, and there are more opportunities here. I do not regret it at all, but just wish the jobs could be higher paid jobs to help me pay off my student loans.

- New Comment: I am sorry you are in a quite stressful situation. I have been and still am a similar situation as you. I am now working as engineer using my STEM OPT while working on a petition that my mother (U.S Citizen) filed for me 7 years ago; fortunately, it has made some good progress lately but nowhere near to finish line yet.

It is great to hear that you have a gf that support your. However, I do understand how you don't feel right about getting married because of just wanting to keep you in the US. My friend was in the same boat as you and his marriage ended terribly because his ex-wife always thought that he owe her. I'm sure everybody and every relationship is different but I understand it is a big risk to take.

Even though, I am in a good position of having a steady job, gaining experience, and making some progress on my petition, I couldn't help myself to quite often think about how different my life would turn out to be if I didn't pursue this route. However, it is a determined plan, I am already deep in more than half way of it and I have to see it through.

There are a lot of pros and cons that I've put on the scale but since I decided to stay commit with my route and to focus on the pros (even when it is hard to ignore the cons) mostly because of my immediate family are all in the US and specially getting extended (I have a 20 months old nephew).

I hope you could find a solution for your situation soon. In the meantime, don't forget to enjoy your life and spend quality time with people you love.

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If you wanted to talk more about it, feel free to dm me.

- New Comment: I have gone through the entire process; undergraduate studies (STEM major), cpt, master (also STEM), opt including extension, GC and hoping soon citizenship. It all depends in your desire to become a US Citizen or not. US has given so many opportunities of growth and stability. I came from a third world country and I strongly believe the US has given me so much.

I do not mind the wait so at the end of the day, it is a personal choice. I love this country :)

PS: It can be discouraging sometimes but stay strong. Always look all the possible ways to stay if that's what you want.

- New Comment: Why not apply for the EB2 NIW? You can also take IELTS and apply for the Canada Express entry pathway, if you're below 30, you have a higher chance. These are options you can explore.

As for getting a job, you can explore job agencies or volunteering opportunities to gain experience if you think that's what's lacking. If you have good relationship with your professors, you can also volunteer to work with them. Get your resume checked by professionals and maybe apply for other positions slightly related to your course of study. Volunteering is allowed for OPT, only STEM OPT needs a full time employment.

I believe there are many opportunities yet to be explored. I don't know what country you're from, the DV lottery may also be an option for you.

I can't really give a direct answer without more details.

I'm also on OPT, now looking for a job with an organization that's willing to sponsor. My current employer don't sponsor. I came to the US in 2018 for grad school and spent 3 years because I had to change my program midway to a more lucrative one. I had 3 offers that got withdrawn because of my visa status. For my current job, i got it through an agency and I didn't tell them anything about my OPT/visa status till I needed to submit my STEM OPT application. Life

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isn't great but there is progress and that's a win and it's worthwhile.

Stay strong and continue to be in status till you're ready to get married. At least, you have that option.

- New Comment: I came here in 2011 , I've had ups and downs. Got h1b on the first try , went through 3 layoffs in 12 years of working on h1b . The first two times I got job offers on time luckily but it was extremely stressful and nerve wracking. The third time happened and I had already met my Wonderful boyfriend (my husband now) who was born here and married me , to keep me here. I got my GC and now I am 34 and life is good after a lot of hustle . Even though I went through many ups and downs I am happy now I came to the US, it has given me a worldly view of things , the freedom to live the way I want , accessibility to things I never thought I would enjoy . I have a good tech job and my husband is in finance , not sure if life will be the same forever but we lead a stable life as of now.

- New Comment: Oh boy oh boy! I have quite the story for you. Almost the same story. But I have crossed the hump and am in a much more stable position now.

I am from a third world country. Def had big dreams and effort to reward ration there was imbalanced. Hence I aimed for the Greatest country in the world. Lol. The USA.

I landed in the US after years of planning and preparation. The education was phenomenal. Lived in all the major cities, NYC, Boston, Seattle, Chicago, SF. I was loving my younger days and having full fun but then as a norm, I got into an age where I had to plan my life. That's when it hit me. US life is go fast, go hard, and balls to the walls approach. MY cousin is a US citizen and she had to take maternity leave and oh my god, that whole experience was so frustrating for her. The leave, being away from work, the disconnect with colleagues. She was a career driven woman but she also wanted to be a mom and oh boy, the company on paper accommodated her but in reality she was completely overlooked. For raise, for important decisions, bonuses. The same happens to men who take career gaps. If you are fortunate enough to work for a company who will retain you for 3 months you are gone, the company will more likely learn to work around you and in the next layoffs your name might be on top. A lot of these are subjective offcourse, but

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everyone faces similar problems if not the same. Basically you will be punished if you are not going with the flow.

I somehow got the mindset that money is everything while I was in US. I became laser focused on making money because my lifestyle was expensive. So the apparent choice was the middle east as I don't have any taxes. I didn't get lucky with the H1 lottery but I wasn't hurt. I anyway had this plan going on.

Now I was making big bucks in Dubai and not paying any taxes. But again the same thing. Expensive lifestyle. I was not happy with a decent car. I needed a luxury one. Higher spending. Save a decent chunk but not happy in general because here it was like you are on your own. No social safety net. No work life balance. Work work work. Married to work basically.

Finally I wanted to change this. I felt like I learnt more about myself and I wanted to be in a place where work is not everything. I wanted to develop simpler hobbies. I wanted to focus on my passions. Don't get me wrong. I am passionate about my work. I love my work. But us and Dubai made me feel work is everything but this is bad! Any person should have multiple passions and also keep exploring new things. Because if you have only 1 and it's not going well your days are depression and slow and you will not be that productive. (even the best employees have tough times now and then). It's always good to have multiple things to rely on. Like gyming or hiking. A physical passion or hobbies is a boon on times of stressful work life.

So finally I moved to the EU. I know I might make it look easy or simple but trust me a lot of time has gone into planning, prepping. And a lot of reflecting and therapy sessions to really figure out the growth strategy for myself.

The EU has been great. People are generally smart. Cities are clean. Government work is quick. A lot of grunt work is simplified. Food is so delicious and without chemicals. You get unlimited paid sick leave (up to 2 years in a single instance so technically you could come back to work for a couple months and then take 2 more years off lol. But no one

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abuses this). My HR told me if I feel ill for as simple as mental fatigue, take a couple days off, I don't need to submit any doctors letter). Basically EU is sustainable even after so many socialist policies is because people don't abuse benefits. They don't have to.

Again, all of this might change in the next decade or so. But no one can predict it. USA can become the best country. Or some 3rd world country is best place to be. For all I know I might move there. What matters to me is I am doing the best I can. I am doing things that matter to me. I am solving the problems I have instead of prolonging them.

If I am honest, not getting h1 should be a wake-up call to really look inward and figure out what you want from life. Having h1 and getting paid bat shit crazy sometimes numbs you to your real self.

All the best buddy.

- New Comment: Did you attend a "reach" school? Does attending a "reach" school help in getting a job as an international student?

- New Comment: Can you be unemployed for a year on OPT? I thought you had to find a job within 3 months before you have to leave?

Title of the post: Feeling depressed - lost all my confidence

Body of the post: I recently graduated, and I am feeling depressed because of the job market right now. I had no experience in India, as I came to the US after my undergraduate studies. I lost all my confidence because of the current situation. I do not have the same passion as when I applied for my master's and received scholarships to every university I applied. I don't have the energy to do anything anymore. My parents are supportive and asking me to return home and try jobs there. But my confidence took a huge toll, and I am scared I won't even get a job back in my country.

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Also, I'm just ranting here because I can't find anywhere else to discuss my situation.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hang in there friend.

- New Comment: I'm assuming you're on your initial OPT, so the first thing you need is momentum. Find some work, anything, non profit or with one of your professors, and keep at it. Stops your unemployment clock, gives you things to fill your resume, and more often than not one thing leads to another. It doesn't have to be a full time job that offers sponsorship, just get started somewhere. Good luck.

- New Comment: Start looking for jobs back home while you look for work in the US. Always be prepared for the worst case of not getting a job in the US.

- New Comment: I was you in 2023. Its a tough battle. Apply for roles in remote locations far from major cities. It took me 8 months to find a job in 2023. The market is worse now and will even turn horrible next year for international non immigrants. Remember, its nt the end of the world. Life goes on, you learn to adapt and live. Im sure 4-5 years down the road you will have nothing to regret.

- New Comment: I understand your pain because I have a bachelor from the U.S. in the end of 2022, and had to applied to so many jobs at the beginning of 2023 before I found a low paying lab job for my post-completion OPT. I can't say luck is not one of the factor that gave me this job, because many people with more working experience than me and with masters degree are finding it hard enough, let alone me who only has a bachelor with ZERO working experience.

Understanding you aside, I want to give an advice that might hurt, but it comes from my heart: fear and ego is making you not objective right now. There are millions of jobs, both in the U.S. and in your country, surely you will land one of them if you keep applying and keep improving the resume and cover letter. Apply at least 3 jobs a day and ask for feedbacks from the companies that rejected you, and you will get accepted soon. Keep going.

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You are feeling a lot more pain than necessary because you used to have an image of who you are and who wanted to be in your head based on your past accomplishments, and you can't connect that to the situation that you're in now. You are in denial. You are not living in the present: which is the only reality that exists.

Who you are now is still who you are back then. You are the person who "succeeded" in the past AND also the person who is having difficulties right now. You are capable of experiencing both "success" and "failures". Again, you ARE the one who "experience" success and failure, but you are NOT the success or failure. Stop identifying who you are with the outcomes (ie success or failure), because they aren't real. If you identify yourself as a "successful person" that means you will never fail, which is impossible for a human being, and likewise you can't identify yourself as a "failure" because you didn't fail all the time. You have succeeded before and will be able to do it again. That's just the nature of probability.

View yourself in the present as someone not identified with anything, and just focus on what you want and what you can do NOW to inch a little close to what you want.

My heart reach out to you and contact me anytime you want to vent or need help, I will try if I can .

- New Comment: You have come too far to give up. It is just a phase and it will pass.

- New Comment: A fellow graduate here, in the same boat.

Hang in there buddy. Keep trying. Assuming you were in a STEM program, you've got 3 years of OPT. If you're scared of your clock running out, try joining an NGO or university ISS/research labs to keep your OPT running while you apply on the sidelines.

Returning back to your country is always an option. Let that be a cushion for now, a backup. If you're research oriented,

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PhD is not a bad option. You can also tell recruiters you don't need sponsorship.

- New Comment: Yep most of us were in the same boat as you. With an OPT, you can do unpaid work as well for a few months. It's all about believing in yourself. I was laid off in Dec 2023 and the market was really bad this year. I interviewed with multiple companies, all rejected but just kept going. Trust the process. My current compensation is 2.5x what I was earning at the startup. You never know. It might be your time in the 1-2 months. Just keep going. Good Luck!

Kudos to your parents for supporting you as well.

- New Comment: I get it. I'm in the same location. I've disassociated emotions when applying to jobs. I used to feel happy when my profile fit the JD; made me feel hopeful. Now I've stopped doing that. I don't let myself feel hopeful and just keep applying and writing cover letters with the same attention to detail but without the emotions. It's a grind, yes. I've found this way I'm not stressing myself out further as it's a long innings game. I keep in mind that going back to India is always an option, even if it's not the first choice.

- New Comment: Good luck. Tbh it's depressing. I'm in the same boat rn.

- New Comment: After my opt and didn't get picked. I went back. The job market for my profession was doing better right now than before.

- New Comment: Hang in there. I'm going to the same situation. I graduated last year and I still haven't found a job. the situation back in India is also the same. that's what I heard. so I am just applying and doing my best because when the time is right you are definitely going to get a job. if you need to talk to anyone just DM me.

- New Comment: I know you have numerous people advising on how to get job. I hope my advice is little helpful for your confidence. Setup small goals for yourself like studying for 1 hour, connecting with 5 people, giving 2-3 mock interviews a week.

Your goal/motive should not be to effectively plan for entire day. PLAN ONLY THE HALF DAY for all the things you need

Reddit Posts

to do for career and these will be your must TO-DO. This way you won't burn yourself out (Major reason of your feeling).

Then depending on what you want to do more of FOR THAT DAY from the above task, do it.

Right now, your goal should be small and achievable and should take at most half day.

Can't stress this enough. GO WORKOUT!!! even if you have interview next day. If you can't lift weights, run. If you can't run, walk. But you HAVE to be in gym for min 15 MINUTES, not your house or road. (Even if money is hard, it's not more valuable than your sanity)

Meditate for 5 minute, eat home cook food, take your VITAMINS.

Remember!!! Of all the available time in a day, half day for career, quarter for your sanity, and quarter for what you feel like doing.

Have small, easily achievable goals

- New Comment: You've come a long way, kiddo. Be proud of yourself?it's all part of the journey. Things might be rough now, but they'll fall into place eventually. Just keep doing your thing, even if it's just one small step at a time.

And remember what our boy John Cena said, "Never give up." Or just keep it chill with "Aal Izz Well." You got this.

Go eat some biryani and restart ?

- New Comment: Hey bud. DM if you need any general insights or a profile review

- New Comment: Just go back to India. Nothing's wrong with that.

- New Comment: There are plenty of jobs available in different industries for people with tech background. As a backup

Reddit Posts

start applying for a tech job in Construction companies for example. You can definitely find Hiring Managers on LinkedIn.

- New Comment: I'm you man. Can't find a job since last year December lol~ but it changed a lot and a new path opened for me ?? kinda lucky but the same time unlucky haha

- New Comment: Keep trying buddy, you got this

- New Comment: Hello there!

First of all, take care of your physical and mental health.

I am in the same boat. I graduated in August 2023. I have been looking for a full-time job since then while working as a research engineer at my University. Unfortunately, my current position is temporary, and my OPT EAD expires at the end of this month. I have booked tickets back home. Of course, this is not an ideal scenario for me. However, I have just come to terms with it to some extent.

I suggest contacting friends with jobs and asking them if they have any contacts they used and are willing to share with you and/or if they are willing to refer you. While you are here and have time, focus on jobs here. Also, reach out to recruiters at different Consultancies for contract positions.

Going for Ph.D. is also an option like many said. However, keep in mind that it is a different beast altogether.

- New Comment: I am on the exact space right now. But I don't want to go back to my country even though my parents want me to. I feel so useless. I can't find a good job and hurts my soul that I might have to settle for an incredibly mediocre job just to satisfy OPT requirements somehow.

- New Comment: Dont give up. International student, just graduated with my master's in January. I was working as an intern since last year and I'm starting a full time this September. My advice : be open to any opportunities, be a go getter, say yes to opportunities ! Dont be close minded by staying in your field! Contact people and ask to learn more

Reddit Posts

about their experience and current work! Network! Follow up with people! Cold emails. Network with Indian communities.

If you have to move to a bigger city, go for it. Its the jungle out there, everyone is looking for a job (international students and not) so what are you doing differently to differentiate yourself on the market ?

- New Comment: Most of my friends who graduated recently found jobs for 60-70k \$ in philadelphia.

Do apply and connect with people and you will definitely get something soon but keep trying.

Don't comeback without working for atleast 2 years. Pay your loans there itself else you will be depressed as its hard to pay fees from indian salaries!

- New Comment: Go back to your home country. Take some time off and start applying for jobs and payoff loans if any.

- New Comment: Also you can try PHD, if you like research work, it will be fully funded and try and get a RA

Title of the post: Should I just give up? OPT full-time opportunities

Body of the post: I graduated in May (MSDS) and I've been applying to full time positions for about 6 months now and I've only received a handful of callbacks and even those rejected me because of sponsorship. I have worked as a Data Engineer for 3 years back in India before my masters and thought I'd be able to at least crack similar roles but honestly nothing seems to work. Apart from applying on LinkedIn, I also try and reach out to recruiters and HMs but even that seems useless. I'll be volunteering soon to stop my unemployment clock but sometimes I feel like heading back to India and starting over. Would really like to hear advice from others in the same boat. Rant over

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I think if you don't have any financial constraints, then going back and starting over makes sense.

- New Comment: Same boat. Keep going. All it takes is one job.

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- New Comment: which university did you go to? what is your Year of Experience?
- New Comment: Same here, but I believe it's gonna happen eventually
- New Comment: The first job coming out of graduation here is the single most difficult thing & the current economic & political climate doesn't make it easier.

When I first started applying after finishing my masters it took me 6 months to get an entry level job. 900 applications, (indeed, glassdoor & linkedin) 30 call backs, 5 interviews, 2 final rounds and 1 job. From that point on after I was looking for a different job 3 years later the scales had shifted. 15 applications, 10 callbacks, 7 interviews and 2 jobs in the following 5 years. A lot of things change after you get your first job, your confidence, your communication style and a much clearer vision of the type of role you would like.

Giving up and going back is always an option but why think about giving up when you can try and succeed. Even if you fail you can always look back and proudly tell yourself that hey atleast you tried.

In terms of pure advice I would say, generalize the role you are seeking for your first job. Don't narrow it down too much, that's for the 2nd and 3rd job. Apply on job portals, LinkedIn alone is not sufficient imo. Be open to taking contract to hire roles, that's how I got my first job. I proved to them in 3 months I was a good hire and they converted me to full time.

- New Comment: Set a time frame for yourself. For example, if you cannot find a suitable job after 6 months, then give up and return. Or you may stuck into a weird situation: it's painful to give up bc you've spent so much money and effort, but keeping struggling leads to more pain.
- New Comment: You give up when you're dead
- New Comment: Try references.. This month has been the worst. Not even a single interview I had. Keep pushing. I

Reddit Posts

also heard Data Governance certification was helpful in getting a job from someone.

- New Comment: Took me 6 months on OPT to get my 1st job in US. I had stopped my clock by volunteering at university under a faculty. In that 6 months, I applied for jobs and did learning and got certs. Hope this helps you.
- New Comment: First things first- stop your OPT clock ASAP. Every day is precious. ANY volunteer position that is even remotely relevant to STEM would suffice, as long as you can justify. I would recommend reaching out to smaller start ups at this point. I started working as a freelance contractor. Few months later I told my company about OPT/20 hours a week/e-verification and they were willing to help me throughout. Then my role transitioned to part time. The market is slowing recovering, but will a little bit more time I think.
- New Comment: How long can you stay there without a job before you have to come back to india?
- New Comment: I graduated in December and only just found a job. Keep looking don't give up just yet. Get a volunteering position at a non profit since that is allowed to stop your unemployment clock.
- New Comment: One fatal mistake that most F1 students do wrong during interview is to mentioned ?sponsorship?. DO NOT mention it at all until you have received an offer. It is something that you will need to negotiate with HR after you have been working for a while and proved your worth. When asked (and only if they asked) say that you are eligible for 1 year OPT and 2 additional years STEM OPT.
- New Comment: Which uni? How much time left for you?
- New Comment: In the same boat! Keep going. You just need to hit that one interview - that one assessment, that one job. You got this!
- New Comment: Currently, it is the situation for everybody. The only thing you can do is never give up and keep applying. You will definitely make it one day. Atb!
- New Comment: I can totally relate to your situation. Lets just hope for the best and stay positive keep applying
- New Comment: Don't give up. Do you mind sharing your resume in DM?

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- New Comment: Did you do any internship during your masters?
- New Comment: Data Science roles have been saturated since some time. My friend got his job after one year. He had joined a consultancy in the mean time. He got a good position after a year. It was tough for him.
- New Comment: Join a consultant

Title of the post: Anyone went back after getting their MS?

Body of the post: I just got my MS in Computer Science and looking at all my options. There's blatant exploitation targeted at international students (staffing agencies, small US companies trying to take advantage etc) in the job search space.

I would rather be in my home country (India), with my family, and get a decent pay check proportional to the Indian cost of living. I'm still actively trying to use my 3 years of OPT (not really looking at sponsorship atm, I don't really see the point with current tech market scenario and navigating the US work visa is proving to be an unworthy hassle). I'm currently putting aside 6 months to see if I can find an opportunity, get the US work experience for 2-3 years and go back (or go back after 6 months if I don't find anything)

I'm looking for insights and past experiences from people who left the US right after getting their MS or after OPT, do you regret it? What struggles did you face after going back?

Your answers are highly appreciated! Thank you for taking the time to read.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Congratulations on MS Degree
- New Comment: Op I'm gonna go back if I can't find a job in a month. I got laid off in November from a super popular

Reddit Posts

startup in the logistics space and I know my worth. Currently I'm consulting for a super early seed stage startup but I know my worth and none of the employers here see it. I'm gonna go back to my hometown (Hyderabad) and start my own company :)

- New Comment: I understand your perspective and what you're saying has a valid point but not everyone has this privilege to choose WLB and go home. People with loan cannot go back to their home country till the time they payoff the loan.

- New Comment: Let's see: I'll be graduating soon, so I understand your situation. With that said, I would like to rebuke some of your points as I feel those are unwarranted, specifically because they were employed against just the US.

> There's blatant exploitation targeted at international students (staffing agencies, small US companies trying to take advantage etc) in the job search space

The Indian IT market is full of exploitation, and that's for their own nationals. A lot of staffing firms in the US ARE FAR BETTER than what one would find in India. Do you think you'd be happier doing a mindless job in TCS in India, or get paid a lot of more to be sitting in the US doing the same job? I'd choose the latter.

> get a decent pay check proportional to the Indian cost of living.

And there's the rub: unless you have the experience + connections, it's not very easy to get such a job + WLB in India. I know a bunch of people will come at me ("but bro look at me with a 50L take-home salary haha you're such a loser"); feel free to do so, but also take a good look around yourself at the average IT worker in India.

How many YOE do you have?

> do you regret it? What struggles did you face after going back?

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I'll certainly regret it. There's no way for me to get a good job in the career I want in India, especially at this stage. I'd much rather stick it out here. With that said, your situation might be different, in which case, good luck.

- New Comment: How do you get 6 months to get a job after graduation? Isn't it 90 days or leave policy for opt?
- New Comment: Honestly working for no-name companies for 3 years isn't even that helpful for your career growth, if you can find a good company in your home country
- New Comment: A friend of mine had to leave last year, after 7 months of search. This is MS in IS. He did get a job back in India, but he's still searching for a better one.

I would say with 3 years of opt you can make a great buck. You should target it somehow

- New Comment: Why did you go to study in the US if you don't want to work in the US. Could have saved a lot of money.

I'm assuming your family can handle that financially, in which case it is okay to return and get a job in India.

Congrats ?

- New Comment: I did my ms in applied math and will go back in three months if I cannot find any. Well, I think it's not really worth it to have "no matter what" mindset. The job market is tough, and if things don't go in the direction I wanted, that's okay. That's part of the journey.

Not the end of the world. Just try to continuously learn in the meantime. Plenty of ways to make money outside of work as well. I'm realizing that in this day and age, being adaptive is the most important part. I mean, if you studied CS, that should be more relevant. I'm not wasting any more of time. My goal is to be competent in what I do. If I don't make bucks now and lose status in the US that's okay

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- New Comment: Yeah this is my thinking too. I came to the US to get into a really good tech job, but at the moment the market for fresh grads is so god awful that I just don't see the point in staying. I didn't come here for any other aspect, but I'm still sticking it out for a bit to try so that I go back with mindset of atleast I tried, but tbh, if I can't get into tech here(which is the only thing that really matters to me) then the lifestyle here is just not worth it for me. If I can find a tech job that really interests me in India, where I already know the culture and grew up, then that would be pretty ideal.

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I do however am curious as to how the tech market in other countries is, but only because I'm sure that once I go back to India I won't leave

- New Comment: I have also thought about this but back when I was in India doing my undergrad, all of my professors strongly discouraged doing a masters because during the interview the company might ask you 'you have a US graduate degree, why do you want to work in India and more importantly we don't need someone with a higher degree (especially a foreign one) and pay them twice what we would pay someone with a bachelors.' They said it would be more difficult to get a job if you decide to do higher studies, companies think that you might leave them if you end up getting a job abroad. This is probably not true and there might have been a reason behind them saying that (higher numbers on how many students got jobs during college placements idk). I mean I did end up getting a Masters in the US and also will stay here till I'm authorized to work but this is just one thing that always comes to my mind when I think about going back to India after my OPT is done.

Just my two cents lol

- New Comment: If the U.S. isn't viable why not apply elsewhere (Canada, Singapore, Germany, pretty much anywhere trying to grow their tech sector and address skilled labour shortages, etc.)

- New Comment: What you said is all true.

Reddit Posts

But what you need is adapt survival spirit. World is not your home, it's very ruthless especially when you need. Keep the hope and see what you need to do. Look out of box. You should be fine

- New Comment: Well good luck with that. I think we need leadership in India to make people realize that coming to US or any western country is BS. Costs money, time, life, peace, end up with depression and loneliness and what not. I'd say try your best for 3 years and have 3 year experience and a good bank account before moving to India. I have similar plans if I get laid off from my job that is paying me good right now.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I will be graduating in December. I was planning to apply for jobs in India starting from Summer onwards. Because the market is super screwed up here. I don't see any point in wasting time.

But do you think it's easy for us to find jobs in India? Even market is really bad in India.

Have you considered applying to Canada or Europe?

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: F-1 Student depression

Body of the post: I don't really know where to start this off. I know I had limited funding and did not want to go to my home country to study due to political and social dangers, therefore I picked to go to the US to study after a miracle of me getting accepted. I loved the university I was attending, even though my first semester I got to a bare 3.23 GPA in my undergraduate study. Even though there was a lot of pain, limited options for food, limited cash in hand to even buy dominos, I got through it and I am happy for myself.

It wasn't the rent, the no food and no on campus job that bothered me. Nothing bothered me. I knew I would've gotten a scholarship too that would make the payment of my tuition a bit easier. It wasn't even my GPA. The only thing that did bother me was my family. Some of my family have studied and graduated, filed for H1B and green card, and have been

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living here since. It was that which bothered me. Everyone said I lost my opportunity to have a 4.0 gpa. It hurts more when they compare me with themselves.

I can fully consider and understand their situation was tougher than mine in living and studying. I really wish I did better.

Now I have transferred to a community college and regret it, knowing I may have missed out on my chance of receiving a scholarship, any scholarship. I feel so worn out, feeling ashamed of not working hard enough and just complaining about the tough life.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: A friend is a 4.0, he practically spent his whole college life just studying studying studying. He got scholarships, he got this, he got that. But, now not a single day passes by without him saying he regrets that he didn't make any memories in college, he regrets spending his whole time studying. He never learnt to socialize and speak with people, and is now stuck in a dead-end job more or less not getting promoted.

He keeps complaining that people find him boring because to him life now is nothing except studying. The GPA also matters a lot less in the real world than most people think.

Life is different for everyone, the second you start comparing is the second you lose peace. Just relax, take a deep breath, and evaluate what's important to you.

- New Comment: Listen to me. Cut your family off. Have limited or no contacts with them. They are comparing to make themselves feel better.

On the gpa side, 4.0 gpa doesn't matter unless you plan for higher education like phd. I know people with 4.0 looking

Reddit Posts

for job for last 1.5 years.

Cut toxic people off from your life but it doesn't mean that they are wrong. They could be right too.

- New Comment: OP, I hope my story motivates you.

I got a 3.40 in my undergraduate GPA, but that didn't stop me from getting enrolled in a fully funded PhD program.

Some of my STEM classes were 2.7-3.0 (it was a rough quarter). I've completed my doctorate, currently got a job with nice benefits, and on my way to apply for GC. You got this OP.

- New Comment: Hey, friend. Word of advice:

I completely understand that there are cultural implications at play that I, as an American, don't understand. I imagine the pressure on you from your family is immense.

That said...

You are in America now. Adapt, adopt and assimilate, starting with the mindset that your family, while you may love them dearly, does not own you and you can forge your own way forward in life. You don't have to be bound to their expectations or ideals. Live "the American dream" and make your life what you want it to be, while still loving and respecting them.

You've got this.

- New Comment: Hey don't feel that way, I meet people with just the minimum GPA (or less) but they reached their

Reddit Posts

goal, life is not about scores, is about decisions and motivation. A community college is not too bad, take it as a new opportunity to start again, and most importantly do not compare your current situation with others!!! Good luck!

- New Comment: Hey, I understand what where you're coming from but you gotta block out the negativity. You got to experience these years fully because trust me you'll regret wasting this time. I was in the same boat, constantly critiqued and given examples of people here who has achieved so much more than i did. Did my undergraduate from here and i do regret not making enough memories and constantly being worried about people and the future.

- New Comment: You could pour your heart and soul into that 4.0 and graduate summa fucking cum laude and you'd still have the same 90 days as the rest of the F1 graduates to pickup on the experience and networking you missed out on in the past 4 years fixating on your GPA, and get a job under OPT before they send you back.

Network and build experience. Having a clear idea of what you want to do will help you realize what matters and what doesn't.

If what you want after you graduate is pursue higher education, stack up on experience that will make sure you get in somewhere. Plan ahead for application fees, standardized testing (thankfully having completed a degree from a US institution will waive TOEFL requirements). Give it your best shot but also have backup for if/when plans fail. That's what you need to be thinking about.

- New Comment: Simply pick up from where you realized. It's never late till you are alive. Just start planning with whatever resources you have at hand and use it to max! Community college is not a bad place to start, but you can always enroll in another course later in life. No job is dead end, it's our ability to make sense of it is. Everyone here is there to help. Since you now realized, this is your first step 'to be self-awareness'.

- New Comment: Hey, the same situation happened to me. I just wanted to share experience on what happened after.

I ended up graduating with a 3.5gpa at my community college and now on the highest scholarship my current university

Reddit Posts

can give.

Would only be spending 2 years in my current university and because it is only a few years, I would be graduating with a high gpa. Currently with a 3.9gpa (would be graduating next year).

Currently interning in one of the FAANG companies which would enable me to keep sponsoring myself till I graduate. And because I won't have to work so much I would be able to finally pass with a 4.0gpa.

My only advice is to put you all in every situation you find yourself. It doesn't matter the gpa just keep doing your personal best and everything would work out for you at the end.

- New Comment: Good grades don't define your future. It can make things easier but I think your relatives are wrong. I have an mba, a master, and I work in a large company as immigrant, with a gpa 4. My brother got not good grades in the states and he has a citizenship that he got by himself. Grades are important but even important is who you are with others and the people gets your appreciation. My brother was always with a nice personality that people naturally like him - and he is not a much social person. Your personality can open many opportunities, in some cases much more than the ones of someone with a 4.5 gpa for sure. Just make sure you work good at college, be nice and interact with your professors classmates, and people even to find a job. You will have success for sure. And don't pay attention to those relatives

- New Comment: Brother, I have spent a large chunk of my life comparing myself to others and it was hell, i one day got up, asked myself, who am i? Do i want to be them or want to do something for myself. That day and today I never regretted a single decision in my life. Cut those people out of your life who are source of agony and depression. Find better people.

May you never see failure in life.

- New Comment: I started off from a community college as an F1 student, also in Illinois. Oakton Community College in

Reddit Posts

Des Plains, Illinois. Graduated from a public university in electrical engineering and now in graduate school. You can easily come back to a four year college. Cheers

- New Comment: Dont worry, everything will be alright alright alright ...

- New Comment: I was 2.8 in the end of my second year (also F-1), ended up graduating with 3.7 Cum Laude . If u r just a sophomore, u still have a long way to go, dont worry. Depression will come and go, it is inevitable in most cases, but dont let it ruin ur next 5 years

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: HR just told me they won't file for H1B. I'm currently on F1 OPT Extension that exp

Body of the post: Sad situation but the way I see it, I can-

A. Quit and find another h1b employer in 1 month.

B. Keep working and switch to Day 1 CPT.

C. Do a new F1 masters course in US/elsewhere.

D. Go back to home country

What's my best bet? Is moving to Europe/Canada an option? have saved up around \$50k after working for 2 years. Tia.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I think you already have weighed your options and aware of outputs. It's the decision you will have to make. People here will all have different opinions. :) If your employer has office abroad, working from foreign office also could be an option

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- New Comment: Why did your employer do that?

I'm in a similar situation with EAD expiring in July.

- New Comment: Employers are sometimes quite horrible in considering that international students need an earlier notice. Absolutely horrible.

- New Comment: You typically can't do day 1 CPT. Most colleges are not ok with this.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Find another company that can try sponsorshing and see if that works, if not you still have other options in line. Day1 cpt is nt suggested as it only adds to the debt. Go back take a break or continue working in india and come back on h1b. Canada is a mess. If you wanna get the pr then maybe yeah try but ppl from canada are moving out.

- New Comment: If you have the money (or if your parent have the money and is willing to support you), then the least stressful path would be to further your education and do CPT (or just further your education and don't do CPT if you don't want to work). I don't know what 'Day 1 CPT' entailed though.

For now, I suggest trying to find a new job (don't quit your current company before you find a new opportunity) while also apply for a master.

- New Comment: This happened to me in 2022. I couldn't find a different company to file for me in time. Some of the companies I spoke to told me they don't sponsor but it turned out that some of them did and the people I spoke to were just clueless. I ended up having to go home and be unemployed for a while because my speciality doesn't really exist in my home country. You have to choose what's best for you and if you want to stay and find a new company be very proactive and ask questions and be prepared for it to eat up a lot of your time.

- New Comment: Have you looked into Harrisburg University of Science and Technology? They offer day 1 cpt with executive sessions. I am currently pursuing my PhD in data science from the University and got approved for h1b (got

Reddit Posts

an RFE but provided all the required documents). Professors are helpful and courses are good. The semester tuition is \$5k which is quite manageable if you are working full-time (three semesters an year). Start looking for employers that offer h1b on the side and keep interviewing.

- New Comment: That?s something you have to decide what?s best for you
- New Comment: Probably ask the employer if they are ok if you pay the lawyer fees as the application fees is peanuts for them
- New Comment: I?m in the same boat. I?m planning to do a new f1 and hopefully finding a h1b after graduating
- New Comment: Option D
- New Comment: Option C could be good as a way to upskill yourself anyways, especially at a good programme.
- New Comment: With f1 i think you won?t qualify for a new opt unless its a higher degree compared to your previous f1
- New Comment: Option C is not valid for US if your previous degree was also at masters level. The rules only permit 12 months of post-completion OPT per degree level. If you have utilized that for your previous master degree then a second masters degree won?t help. If you decide to get PhD then you can avail post completion OPT again.
- New Comment: D is most likely u gonna do since even h1b is applied most likely u wont get it percentage is not hopeful safe trip bud!
- New Comment: Go to Canada if you dont mind the boredom tbh, its a pretty safe bet in terms of immigration and the peace of mind that follows. Express visa shud be a sure thing. If your company has offices in Canada, even better, you might be able to seek a transfer as well.

Title of the post: I got an offer but never mentioned that I am an international student. In the job des

Body of the post: Hey guys so I need advice, I got an offer and even passed the background check phase. But in the offer letter it states ?Verification relating to export controls: This offer and your employment are conditional upon the

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company obtaining satisfactory verifications relating to export controls for any job related technical data required for the position for which you are being hired.?

Should I be worried about this and let them know I am an international student and would need sponsorship?

Update: after coming clean it seems they are still willing to hire me and let me work on OPT but no H1B sponsorship after the 3 years.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes. Better to openly explain your visa situation & you need H1 which starts in March, so telling them earlier is good.
- New Comment: Inform them about your F1 visa status, explaining that it permits you to work for any employer; however, there's no assurance that you'll still be working or retain the job if your status becomes known to them.
- New Comment: I'd only let them know you need sponsorship if you want the H1b. Honestly, they're likely to rescind the offer if they find out you need sponsorship or are an international student before you do the I-9. That has been my experience at least.
- New Comment: Same thing happened in my startup long time ago. One person joined on opt and told he needs sponsorship. The hr told they will do it next year as they have time. He interviewed elsewhere and left the company in 3 months because they were ready to sponsor. Then our company started to proactively start sponsorship for every other employee who needed it . Tell them your situation.
- New Comment: If they hire u and they will find eventually when HR request your documentation for I-9 to verify if you are legally allowed to work. And I don't think they will like to find out after they hire u.
- New Comment: Thank you guys! I'll inform them

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- New Comment: Export control regulation or ITAR required means you have to either citizen or GC.
- New Comment: Keep us posted OP. Rooting for you.
- New Comment: If you're on F-1 without OPT and if you said Yes to the question whether you're authorized to work in the US or not, you gave them false information. Unless you have OPT or CPT, you're not authorized to work in the US. So, letting them know that you're not authorized would likely lead to the offer to be rescinded. If you're already on OPT, you should be good and you can let them know that you are authorized until a certain date but you'd need sponsorship afterwards.
- New Comment: There are companies that CANNOT sponsor, and would not be able to hire you once they know. Do not waste your, or their, time by hiding this. Yes, OPT/CPT is considered as needing sponsorship for authorization to work in the US. Either your school or the employer needs to sponsor you in order for you to be able to work. Further, export control requirements are directly tied to country of your citizenship.
- New Comment: Ofc. My company had an applicant who had his offer rescinded bc he didn't mention that he freaking OVERSTAYED his Visa. Even though there was a slim chance we could have given him a temp Visa (bc we were so impressed by him), but it was the fact that he wasn't forthcoming & honest in the 1st place that made us drop him.
- New Comment: Appreciate all the insights from everyone. I decided I will communicate with the employer that I require sponsorship. If I lose the offer, so be it but that's the right thing to do.

Thank you all

- New Comment: Yes, you need to be upfront. It will probably mean you will lose the job offer. It's better to be upfront instead of being fired later.
- New Comment: 1. I'll come up front about the need for future sponsorship. If they don't have experience with it, you should do your homework and explain it to them.
- 2. Don't think you can get away from it. I was to hire one international student earlier this year, and we specifically asked

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his eligibility to work during the interview. Though he said he was on his OPT, when we tried to get him on board, we only found out his initial OPT expired 6 months ago without renewal. At that time, our only option was hiring him on, and pray he can get the H1b lottery in April so he can start working legally 6 months later. This successfully earned himself a place on the blacklist.

- New Comment: Like mentioned before - when they talk export control, it means their technical data fall either under military or commercial export controls. You have to have GC at the minimum for these.

(I work for a company where technical info falls under ITAR)

- New Comment: Export control seems like you need to be usc to work. Save your time and their time by coming out clean. Many people here seems like to think f1 opt is free to work wherever but in reality it is not.

And most times authorized to work means usc gc and may be some approved asylum or parole of some sort. From personal to friends experiences options for work with opt is very few if any in the real world outside of academia.

- New Comment: Yes. You should tell them that you need sponsorship ASAP

- New Comment: So based on experience of someone in a similar situation I'll tell you this; now that they are aware you're employed for 3yrs and no more, be on the look out for jobs since day1. Chances are they will continue to seek someone more permanent in your position so its best you leave them before they replace you. Also, any reason they have to cut costs, they will look at your position. Like I said, this has happened to someone I know so dont sleep on this job and keep looking for H1B sponsors.

Title of the post: Got my I-20 but didn't commit?

Body of the post:

I'm not sure how this is possible since I haven't committed nor paid my deposit.

Also even if I don't decide to go to ASU can I use this for my visa interview regardless?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Not every school requires an enrollment deposit to issue an I-20. Sounds like you uploaded a bank statement and they approved you for the I-20. You can use this for your visa interview, but if you're not intending to attend this school, I recommend that you do not use this I-20 for the interview. If you're approved with this I-20 this school's name will appear on your visa. If you're not intending to attend this school it will further complicate things for you going forward. You should attend the visa interview with the I-20 of the school that you actually want to go to.

- New Comment: I'm confused. If you don't want to go to ASU, why would you use this for your visa? You would use the I-20 of the school you do want to go to for your visa.

You do not have to go to ASU or use this I-20 just because you got it. An I-20 does not mean you have committed to that school. I got my I-20 for Purdue, but decided to go to UCLA instead. I did not use my Purdue I-20, I used my UCLA I-20.

I hope that helps.

- New Comment: How long did it take to receive your i20?

- New Comment: I believe the documents needed before issuing an I-20 document are your passport and proof of funds. It might be that you uploaded your passport, together with your bank statement during your application process. I have received an I-20 from a school I haven't committed to yet because I uploaded my passport and have also received a TA offer which covers my tuition and living expenses.

- New Comment: If you don't mind asking, what is the COA of this university?

- New Comment: I got the same I-20 from ASU, seems it issues all I-20 for accepted students before hand since I haven't accepted the letter of offer yet.

- New Comment: Wait what. You mean you didn't show bank statement and still got I 20?

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System is broken.

Title of the post: Those who went home after OPT, how has your life and career been?

Body of the post: I finished my degree and might be going back after OPT or STEM OPT, mainly because of the lack of long term visa sponsorships. To those who have gone back, how has your life been? Did you have a better career? Do you have any plans to come back to the US or move to a third country? Just curious what you guys think.

EDIT: Can you guys please mention what's your home country?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Seeing no comments is concerning ?
- New Comment: I used to believe that if I went back I would be a failure. I believe it definitely depends on the country but for most of the countries people would be fine and happy.
- New Comment: I know several who went back to China after OPT or just couldn't find a job after graduation. They all found jobs, high paying ones by local standards. But their salary is nowhere near what they could've earned in the US.
- New Comment: Had gone back after my STEM OPT as I never got selected in the H1-B lottery process. Came back to the US on L1 after 1.5 years. I had a really supportive manager who helped me with a transfer to the home country and back.
- New Comment: Many of my friends work at high paying job in my country but the salary is not close to US standard. Or those that have family business continue the family business. They only hang out with people who have gone overseas and went to ?good universities?.
- New Comment: I am doing better than when I was in the US. I am working remotely for the US company, and I am able

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to travel and work from pretty much anywhere. And I am able to save more money than when I was in the US.

- New Comment: I have heard of people who are doing pretty well in their careers. Of course the salary isn't something what you'd earn in Bay Area or Texas but that's because cost of living in a third country would be significantly lower than say California. But the pay is really good when it comes to the local standards.

- New Comment: I have a lot of friends who went to different countries after doing a masters in the US. Like people mentioned, the pay is very high in local standards. US isn't the only place in the world to make money anymore! Plus a lot of them went to public universities for their masters and got TA/RA positions, so their expenditure for the masters wasn't too high

- New Comment: I had a great OPT job but no sponsorship. If I'm being completely honest, leaving the US was the worst thing that happened to my career. I'll never make nearly as much as I did in the US and I will *always* want to go back to the US. I'm just wasting my time where I am and I will *never* be happy here.

- New Comment: Probably doing worse. Cost of the education is mad. depending on where you came from you're probably not employed. I was lucky enough to get my green card in my final year before I graduated. I've been here since I was 14. Hope you didn't do neuroscience like me. Hopefully everything goes well for you mate

- New Comment: I'm 1 month away from the 90 day limits and I just couldn't land a job. My major is stem but definitely not as popular or in as high demand as compsci or engineering. And this endless job hunt is really hurting my mental state. So I am planning to go back home at the end of next month. Let's see what will happen.

- New Comment: When I was on OPT, I had a really good job and was the top earner among my F1 friends.

After I went back to my home country, I couldn't find any job that pay enough to live comfortably, and moving back to my parent's house was a disaster. When

So I moved to another country for work.

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Now I don't know if I should keep seek another chance in America with my Master's degree or move to somewhere else. Canada was a great options until their cost of living goes out of control.

My friends who are on F1 are mostly get married for the green cards. But I don't want to go into that track unless I actually like the person I'm marrying.

- New Comment: Relocated back to India few months ago at the end of my STEM OPT and started to give interviews here in India. Luckily I landed a job in a Japanese Robotics startup and they are willing to sponsor me for a Japan work visa. So hopefully will relocate to Tokyo in few months if everything goes well. My 2cents, I do not recommend going through CPT route, it only exasperates the endless mental struggle we go through as F1 students. Trust yourself and move out of States, although it causes temporary uncertainty in your life but in long term if you look back you'll pat yourself that you made right decision for yourself.

- New Comment: Worked at FAANG for 3 years on STEM OPT, got awesome experience, got promoted, etc.

At the end of STEM OPT, I was given the option of working remotely from Canada, and coming back after 1 year.

But I also internally interviewed and got offers from UK & Germany & India.

I chose the India option cuz it was the most interesting work + industry & pay is better than Europe / Canada + no immigration monkey dance.

Life's generally been better. Being in a temporary limbo state takes its toll.

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Now that I've put roots down, have no immigration anxiety, have a very similar job to the US, it's really nice

- New Comment: i'm stressing out and struggling on a daily basis. my advice for those who want to come back home after OPT, DO NOT!

- New Comment: I moved to Canada. This was about 15 years ago now, back then with a bachelors you could get permanent residency, it was nice but the salaries where lower, ultimately it worked out

- New Comment: I'm not sure if this is helpful but one of my friend got a PR and moved to Canada and said he's planning to come back to the US after a few years once he gets his citizenship.

Another moved to Europe cos he got a job in Belgium.

I'm not sure you are interested but you can look for opportunities elsewhere if you are worried that your pay might not be as good in your home country.

- New Comment: Following

- New Comment: Following

- New Comment: Hi. This is Dan from VOA. Would anyone who has participated in this thread like to speak with me about these concerns for a story? I'm looking for both pros and cons. Dfriedell@voanews.com

- New Comment: Do not opt for Day 1 CPT.

Source: I am in my first year of Day 1 CPT and thinking to move back to India.

- New Comment: There are only 85000h1b issued each year. 90% of international students will leave after opt

- New Comment: I feel like I died and my corpse is just wandering around. My entire life was over there and now I have nothing.

The worse part is that I have no one that can understand how I feel as all my international friends were able to stay but me. :(

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- New Comment: Okay, so I haven't finished my program yet but since I'm getting closer to the end of it, I started doing some maths and figuring out my options, and there is a high chance that I might consider going somewhere else after the graduation.

I can break down my thoughts process a bit.

Staying in USA sounds like a solid option because a) I'm already here b) I don't want to go back to any of my countries (I'm a double-citizen, both countries sucks) even for a brief moment c) The pay will be higher for sure d) Immigration is a bitch e) I have a good working experience and knowledge that I can sell since I worked a lot before coming to the US with different international clients and companies

There are the things that makes me wanna stay, however, there are lots of things that makes me wanna leave as well.

A) The cost of living is high, so even 100k doesn't sound as good as it used to (unless you are planning to leave in the middle of nowhere).

B) The H1B lottery is painful. I'm also not a STEM major, so I only get 1 year of OPT.

C) The lifestyle you get on H1B sounds pretty exhausting. Less PTO compare to other countries, if the job is toxic and you want to work for another company you eventually will have to move your H1B which is also a pain in the ass.

Also, I feel like I won't have time and money for traveling. US domestic tourism is great but it only goes so far.

D) The market isn't good. My niche isn't doing super bad but it's not good either and I'm not sure if I can even find companies that potentially will sponsor my GC and without the GC I feel like I will always have the same problems and anxieties.

E) I tried to do the math and see how fast I will be able to afford a house without the crazy grind in some cities/states I want to live in and it made me sad because the answer was always somewhat between 20-30 years. If on top of that I will have a kid (even one), my kid will have to be smart af and get a full ride or get a huge ass student loan.

I definitely was looking into houses near bigger cities, however, my time in US showed me that I'm not a type of person

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who can live in a suburbs with no nature, nothing to do and far away from everything, so if I stay in US I have to not only move to a better state (better = more expensive) but also find a place closer to a big city which again means more and more and more money.

So, I decided to look into jobs around the world as well. Obviously, in this case everything will depend on the country but I'm a bit more hopeful because while jobs in, for example, Europe will definitely bring less money, the cost of living is also going to be lower. Getting a place in Europe (depends on the country of course) probably will take around 8-15 years. Additionally, the path to the RP and later citizenship seems to be slightly easier (still hard but). On top of that you get more PTO days, sick leaves, access to more countries and the jobs I was looking into would offer a help with relocation.

I guess I'm also more familiar with that region which makes me slightly more optimistic about it while I have never thought about living in Europe for real until this year.

Those are things I'm keeping in mind when considering my next steps. I'm still not sure if I will leave or stay. I guess we will see.

- New Comment: I did half my Opt before my contract was over and had to go back to my home country. With some luck and connections I managed to get a job in a large bank. Pay was shit, job was easy after a while but its a third world country so what can you do. Worked there for 5.5 years same job because of Covid, little opportunities and my own lack of initiative. I am back here in the U.S doing a masters this time in Stem and see how that goes. I want to do my 3 years here and get married to stay, that sponsorship is unlikely to happen. If I don't get married, my parents are now living in the US so they have requested me for the family greencard. It will take many years but atleast I am with them now and if I don't manage to get sponsored or married I know that eventually with patience I will have a green card regardless.

So right now I am job hunting again , which its the same bs as before (we don't hire individuals with f1 visas). I don't care about the sponsorship, I just need the time to stay here to pay my debt and to get married or something. Otherwise

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go back home and wait like 4 or 5 years.

Title of the post: I am on F1 OPT and Self-Employed. AMA

Body of the post: Been seeing a lot of folks exploring the self-employment and startup founder route on OPT. Would love to answer any questions as I am doing it right now and struggled a lot before getting started. Would love to help others now that I have figured things out(somewhat). Please note I am not a lawyer and want to help others based on my experience.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I am on opt, how do I go about this, I only got a month left before I have to leave the States, can this allow me to stay longer until I can find a job that can sponsor?
- New Comment: I appreciate you. So since we can't work without authorization, does that mean you had to wait till you got OPT, then were able to finally start your business?
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: If you dont mind sharing, what kind of work do you do?
- New Comment: Does this work on STEM OPT extension as well? Thought there was some kind of salary requirement?

Also curious if you have received funding for your startup, and what your plans are for hitting the O1 targets in the coming months.

- New Comment: Thanks for doing this! So how exactly does the org structure work? Is this company incorporated by someone else and you are officially an employee of it? I remember reading somewhere that you can't technically own the company while on OPT but I could be wrong.

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- New Comment: Are you able to sponsor yourself an EB-2/3?

- New Comment: Do you have to make a profit

- New Comment: Can you own a majority stake in your company?

How much rights do you have?

Would love to have a one on one talk about your journey. And how you built this.

Wishing the best for you!

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: How long did it take you to set this all up?

- New Comment: how exactly did you approve you are self employed? did you start an llc or have an EIN?

- New Comment: Hello OP, I believe you would be on STEM OPT now. I really appreciate you taking your time to answer our queries. I have a few:

1. Did you file for E-verify for your company? as you can only work for e-verified companies on stem opt.

2. How much time did it take for your company to get e-verified?

3. Are you on 1099 payroll on your company?

Thank you so much for your time

- New Comment: Is it possible to run a business like you are, and also work a normal job while on opt? Im interested in starting a business in tech but would like to have a backup in case it isn't lucrative enough. Also can you work for your own business during the summer while still studying?

- New Comment: What is the process of starting self-employment for OPT? Would it be possible to work full-time as a

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postdoc and start a self-employment statistical consulting firm or something like that as a side job?

- New Comment: Do you know if it's possible to be self-employed and still have another full time job while on OPT?

- New Comment: Is this an option when you are on H1b? What is your long term plan as F1 OPT expires within 3 years?

I am thinking of setting up an independent consulting business while on F1 and working on it when on OPT.

- New Comment: Hey! I was considering similar route, however, after a conversation with an immigration attorney, found out there is a number of blockers. Major one, in my opinion, is staying in your field of studies. In other words, starting a business requires you to do management, marketing, finances, etc. All of these things are not in my field of study. However, data analytics is (STEM). So attorney told me that there could (and most likely will) be problems when applying for STEM extension, since your activity is not only in your field. Additionally, for OPT you need to have employer-employee relationship (manager at least), who will provide feedback to the USCIS when applying for STEM extension, which becomes complicated considering you are one person team. That's just some points attorney pointed out.

Any thoughts/ideas?

- New Comment: If someone wants to do e-commerce selling the same product on different marketplaces with the same LLC is that possible. What are the rules if someone wants to do multiple business on self-employment in their field. If someone is a business major then will it be easier for them as they studied business and they are doing business so the does this rule comply with being self employed in your field of studies?

- New Comment: Hi, I am on opt and I only got a month left to be unemployed. If I form a LLC to be self-employed and then find a job maybe two months later, will it be okay to dissolve it? And will it affect my stem opt extension one year later?

- New Comment: While on CPT technically you can work full-time for any company (within your field, which is a very abstract definition). If you have a co-founder, and that person can own the business and you work for it under CPT then

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this would work. The only thing is that you will not have any "documented" stake in the company.

- New Comment: Hey, congrats on everything you've achieved so far and thanks for taking time out to answer our questions

My question is this: I have about 15 days left out of my 90 days unemployment and plan on going on the same route and applying for an LLC soon. Since this process can take a couple days to 2 weeks in some cases, do you recommend using a service like stripe atlas in your case to form an LLC? or does it suffice just to show that I have initiated the application process even after my 90 days runs out (maybe they can give me an extension while I wait)?

Thanks again!

- New Comment: How are you showing that you are actively engaging with the business? That's one of the requirements right? ty

- New Comment: I have worked for a company, as well as run my own video editing/graphic design business in PA as a sole proprietor. Im entering STEM OPT soon.

Does anybody know if I have to close the business or just stop working any hours for that business?

- New Comment: How was your journey as a founder on OPT? One specific question I had was, if I am self-employed and working on my startup (related to my major), is it risky to travel out of the US to your home country, for a vacation or possibly for the startup work?

- New Comment: Honeslty my question isn't related to Self employment but OPT in general. How easy/ difficult is it to find work over the summer for college students. Work that pays decently well and long enough to last me the summer. Is it generally hard? What are the rules for doing online/ remote work like tutoring? Would I still need to get OPT approval? Most ppl here seem to save their OPT till after graduation, what if I want to work during the summer?

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- New Comment: Did you get any pushback from DSO or USCIS since you're self employed?

Do you have an immigration lawyer?

Have you thought about getting a US citizen cofounder and making the company sponsor you for EB2 or EB3?

- New Comment: How are you going to satisfy the O1 visa requirements?

- New Comment: Could you please tell me process after applying to OPT?

- New Comment: Hey! Sorry for a late reply to the post, but could you tell me at what point did you actually inform the relevant parties (DSO, SEVP) about your self-employment? Was it after the website went up, or the DBA completed, or when?

- New Comment: Congrats on starting your company. Does it matter if you are the sole owner or if you are co-founding a company?

Where did you get the help along the way? Anything stripe Atlas cannot do that you need to do yourself?

- New Comment: Are you hiring

- New Comment: First of all thank you very much for doing AMA.

1. can you please tell is it your opt or STEM OPT?

2. Can we be self employed on STEM OPT?

3. Can you please suggest any attorney lawyer?

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open for DM or comment whatever best works for you.

Thank you very much ?

- New Comment: I have a question. Can you work on the side on another job while running at the same time your own business?

- New Comment: Hello OP, i am on F1 OPT and work as a work-for-hire / contractor for an employer. I have a valid contract and I work on a 1099. I have not setup a self owned org as such. Would that cause any problems in future?

- New Comment: I'm going the same route and I was wondering what did you report for your supervisor on the SEVP portal?

- New Comment: Hi, are you still here?

​

I'm about to apply for the OPT. In my case, I need an EIN/IRS Number (import business). To get that, I need either an SSN or an ITIN. I'm ineligible for the SSN.

​

My question is, did you need an ITIN? How did you obtain one? I hear it takes several months, and that potentially it's only used for tax purposes, which leaves me doubtful that my application would ever be approved.

- New Comment: It's a year old post, so your OPT must be close to an end now. How do you plan to navigate through the visa limitations? From what I've read, you can't be self employed in any way during stem OPT.

Edit: grammar

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- New Comment: Can i be self employed OPT STEM? If so can you share lawyer contact who helped you to do that?
- New Comment: How do you prove you actively engage in your self employed? Thank you
- New Comment: Hello OP. Can I as a freelancer/self employed (don't know if the two are same) in addition to working a full time job on OPT/STEM OPT?
- New Comment: Hey, I am on OPT and started new business recently .I would like to know few details. How can I contact you?

Title of the post: Administrative Processing and Visa Denial Megathread

Body of the post: Due to an ever increasing amount of posts on these topics, temporarily ALL visa denial and Administrative Processing posts must be made here.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: **Status Says Approved but in Administrative processing**

Hello, I had my F1 interview on May 30 and my visa was approved on the spot, and my visa status showed approval. I was told my visa would be issued in 5-10 business days (as usual) but after 10 business days i was a bit worried i contacted them and I recieved that my visa is in Administrative Processing now yet my visa status says approved I am confused is it normal? or what and how long would it take there are no updates till now if anyone went through this please tell how long it took for you.

- New Comment: Visa "Refused"

Hi Everyone,

My dropbox F1 visa was refused and I understand that this might be admin processing, either interview or bio-metrics,

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but it has been over a week now with no update. I intended to pickup my passport post visa renewal. I have my flight on 24th and I am freaking out. Is there a way I could contact the embassy or consular and expedite this?

- New Comment: Anyone get a 221 g slip asking to submit additional documents while doing Dropbox? I got one for my f-1 visa renewal, submitted the requested docs and heard back today after ~month - consulate asked to ?submit my passport? at the available locations without any info on approval, administrative processing status. Any insight on whether this is a good sign, how long it?ll take after this etc? Currently employed in US on STEM OPT and need to get back ASAP!

****Update on timeline****

- Dec 19, 2023 - appointment and passport drop off at Chennai VAC
- Dec 26, 2023 - refused under 221g; request for supporting documents; passport and 221g slip was returned
- Jan 8, 2024 - submission of documents at New Delhi VAC
- Feb 5, 2024 - received email from Chennai consulate to ?submit passport? at nearest VAC or VFS. No clarity on status and decision
- Feb 7, 2024 - submitted passport at Delhi Vac
- Feb 9, 2024 - CEAC status changed to Approved
- Feb 12, 2024 - CEAC status changed to issued
- Feb 14,2024 - passport ready for pickup at Delhi with visa stamp (was issued in Chennai)
- New Comment: Hello,

I have been accepted into a Ph.D. Biology program in the USA, but unfortunately my F1 visa application was refused under section 221(g). The embassy has requested that I submit a detailed study plan and CV of my advisor or mentor. However, since I have not started the program, I do not have an advisor or a research project. Students in the program typically choose their mentors after laboratory rotations. If anyone has any advice on how to proceed in this situation, I would greatly appreciate it.

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Thank you!

- New Comment: What do they check while on administrative processing? Im currently on it and been in the us for about 7 years doing undergrad/opt/masters and now on opt again. I thought it wqs going to be a smooth renewal but got placed into it

- New Comment: F1 visa approved in an interview, but CEAC status changed to Refused

I held a US visa previously and was eligible for dropbox. Here is the brief timeline for status since then. Country: India, Embassy: New Delhi

June 22: Dropbox Appointment. Submitted required documents.

June 26: CEAC Status Changed to Application Received

July 3: CEAC Status Changed to Refused

July 7: I got my passport back with a 221G letter calling for a walk-in interview

July 10: Got interviewed at Delhi Embassy. The interviewer asked 3-4 basic questions about my work experience and funding and approved my visa. The interviewer verbally told me that I would get stamped passport within a week. He collected my passport and didn't give me any letter.

July 10: CEAC Status changed to Approved

July 10: CEAC Status again changed to Refused

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July 12: Ustraveldocs showing 'Passport has been received from the consular section and is currently being processed for delivery' while CEAC status still refused.

Did anyone face a similar issue?

- New Comment: Administrative Processing

Hi guys, just had my interview this morning, mid interview the officer interrupted and told me that my sevis fee hadn't been paid. However that wasn't the case and I had paid already, albeit 2 days ago. I had the receipt and everything. The officer then asked her colleague and he said that it takes time to process. She then concluded the interview. She kept my passport though and she gave me two slips. One slip was the refusal slip with 'your case is under administrative processing' checked. The other slip had the header 'if my visa is approved today, how do I get my passport back?? I did asked if 'I was accepted?' to which the officer replied something along the lines of 'mmm yeaa' (I think). What does this mean for me ?

Update: I got an email back in like 4 hrs and they told me that my sevis fee payment has been updated in their system and to wait for another email once my visa has been issued ??

- New Comment: Hello, I have been reading this thread and I wanted to ask if anyone can help point out any red flags in my application. I got rejected for a US visa over a year ago for a bachelors degree. My interview went like this

VO: Why this university?

Me: I panicked and started talking about specific professors and research I wanted to work on

VO: How will you finance?

Me: My parents business then I offered to show bank statements

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VO: No need told me to put four fingers and handed me the 214(b) slip.

The University gave me a \$30,000 per annum. I am from West Africa. It was a top 350 christian college.

Now I intend to apply again with a \$260,000 scholarship which essentially pays my tuition at a T50 college. I will fund my living expenses through my parents. Is there anything I can do to not get rejected?

- New Comment: Hello everyone,

I had an interview at the US Embassy in Vancouver on March 4th. During the interview, the officer approved my visa and informed me that my passport would be returned within one week. However, after 10 days, on March 15th, the status on my CEAC visa tracker changed from approved to refused. I haven't received any email requesting additional documents or informing me about administrative processing. Can someone please assist me in understanding what might be happening?

- New Comment: I got a second interview after being in AP for 70 days. What does this mean? Any similar experience?

- New Comment: Hello,

I had my F1 visa interview at Istanbul 2 days ago. The officer kept insisting on me telling her which specific field I would be working on during my PhD and with which advisor. I told her that my university matches students with advisors after lab rotations; nonetheless, I gave the name of the field I want to work in and names of three professors I contacted with (I believe she noted them). After that she told me that my case requires administrative processing and handed me the yellow slip.

Did anyone go through the same process in Istanbul and how long would the process take?

I am currently doing my undergraduate studies in Turkey (originally from Egypt). I had a B1 Visa that expired last year. I

Reddit Posts

visited USA in 2018 representing my country in an international science fair. So I cannot quite understand what happened.

- New Comment: hello everyone,

I have a question for those who got their f1 visa after administration processing. What type of research plan did you guys submitted as a additional document? was it given to you by your supervisor on university letterhead? Actually I submitted one written by myself and I just got to know we are supposed to submit one given to us by our supervisor?? Is It True? Should i ASK my supervisor for it and submit it again??? Please Help.

- New Comment: Do most 221(g) cases or administrative processing really get resolved in 60 days? Also is that 60 calendar days, weekdays or working days?

Is there any public data to support that or is that just what the Embassy and Department of State says?

My case has been stuck in AP since April 4, 2024, with no updates. It was a relatively simple case, of F-1 renewal while on OPT as a Bachelor's graduate. So I want to understand how reasonable this 60 days timeline really is.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Timeline for first time F1 visa for UK citizen in London:

* Wed 12 June: School issued I-20, Submitted D-160 and paid SEVIS.

* Fri 21 June: Attended F1 visa interview in London. Refused for 221(g) administrative processing (white form), CO says "it sounds worse than it is", they kept the D-160 printout, passport returned. CEAC status is "Refused."

* Mon 24 June: Emailed at 8AM to mail passport, given to courier, delivered to embassy the next day.

* Wed 26 June: CEAC status changes to "Administrative Processing"

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* Fri 28 June: CEAC status is "Approved"

* Mon 1 July: CEAC status is "Issued", passport sent the next day, recieved 3rd July.

- New Comment: Advice Regarding my Possible Answers for Second F1 Visa Interview

Hi! I'm gonna have my second F1 Visa interview soon after getting rejected 1-2 weeks ago. Based on possible questions, I wanted help to see if my answers are okay or if I should make any changes to them word wise or structure wise:

****1. Why are you going to the US?****

I will be studying for a Master's in Biology in -----

****2. What changed since your last interview?****

Last time, I wasn't able to mention that I have a two year scholarship from the university, and an educational loan from MPower Financing. Additionally, I have included my father as one of my sponsors.

****3. Why do you want to study in ----?****

I chose ---- because they have a competitive thesis based program that offers Faculty-Student Collaborative Research that includes training regarding cancer and stem cell research. Also, one of their professors reached out to me in order to work on a project together while I'm studying there.

****4. What is your father's job?****

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He is a financial director for a educational consultancies business that he manages as well.

****5. Why was your father not listed as your sponsor previously?****

My parents and I mistakenly assumed that my mother's sponsorship would be enough to present for the interview.

****6. What have you done after graduating from your bachelor's degree?****

I was under a contract with --- University as soon as I graduated, and afterwards I worked in a law firm and educational consultation centre later. During which I also worked on my research paper that is currently awaiting publication.

****7. Why are you only taking your masters now?****

I only applied now as the COVID pandemic was still ongoing by the time I graduated and I did not think it was wise to apply for my Masters especially cause my study of interest involves laboratories which were given limited access during that time.

****8. Why do you want to take a Master's in Biology?****

I picked a Masters of Biological Science because it is in line with my previous studies and I want to conduct my own original research and potentially publish my findings in academic journals.

****9. What are your plans after the completion of your program in the US?****

After completing my Master's program at ---, my immediate plan is to go back to --- and propose my research to my

Reddit Posts

previous Principal Investigator as we are still in contact which will enable me to have a possible grant or job at --- University.

- New Comment: Asked additional documents related to research

I had my F1 visa appointment and my visa was not issued. They have asked me several documents related to my past and future research. I am assuming it is due to my past work at a physics research organization. My flight is on 25th Aug. I am really worried. It would be really helpful if someone can share their experience.

- New Comment: just to share my xp renewing my F1 in Poland, Krakow: case put in administrative processing the next day after the interview (was approved on the spot and didn't receive the 221(g) slip). I'm a continuing engineering masters student and school starts on 8/22 so 3 weeks from now. we'll see how long this takes, it's been 1 week so far.

I didn't know about AP as I previously applied twice in my home country and didn't experience this - currently stressing tf out because sadly my home country is in shambles and it's impossible to plan my future beyond education. My advice to everyone is if you can avoid dealing with visa renewal, consider that option unless you got time to kill in a safe and stable environment

- New Comment: ****221G Administrative Processing****

Hello, I had my F1 VISA Interview on June 5th in Delhi. I was given a 221G Yellow Slip with "Administrative Processing" written on it and my passport was taken by the VO. Its been one month and I have received no update regarding the same. The CEAC portal shows "Admin Processing" since 2nd week and the USTravelDocs shows "Document Delivery Information:". No additional documents were asked. What should I do? It is allowed to call the embassy? I have mailed them twice and got the same generic reply. Any idea how long it can take?

- New Comment: ****Rejected F1 visa to a T25 university****

Reddit Posts

I'm a student from Uzbekistan who got accepted for Bachelors of Philosophy at the ****University of Southern California****.

As you may have already guessed, I was rejected visa, and well I'm really failing to understand why.

This is not in exact detail, doesn't include the administrative parts but explains the overall convo:

\-Which state are you going to?

\-California sir

\-And which university is it?

\-University of Southern California

\-Why this particular university?

\-Well first and foremost it is one of the most outstanding and competitive schools, with a really strong Philosophy department

\-How come you say this school is competitive if it doesn't have a minimum IELTS requirement

\-Would you like to take a look at my IELTS results?

\-No, how are you calling your school competitive if it doesn't have a minimum IELTS score?

Reddit Posts

\-Well I believe that the school is outstanding objectively, as it is ranked top 25 by US News and 120 by QS rank

\-Okay, so what major is it again?

\-Philosophy

\-Why philosophy?

\-Well I plan to pursue a career in law in the future and philosophy is most definitely the first and best step for it, being the foundation of Law in general from Ancient Greece

\-Who's paying for your university?

\-My dad, through his company

\-And what do you parents do?

\-My father is a corporate lawyer and my mother is a housewife

\-If your father is willing to pay 100k a year for university, then why didn't you go to Tashkent Internation School instead of the British School of Tashkent? (TIS is 30k\$ a year, BST is 22k\$)

\-I chose A level over the IB program, since I had specific subjects I wanted to focus on, I didn't want to study Sciences that I wouldn't utilize in the future

Reddit Posts

\-Well you probably moved schools at 14 so I doubt it was your choice, I think you parents put you there by their will

(like... no? I moved schools at 16 and it's on my DS)

Some more random questions, but in short

"Unfortunately, we will not be able to grant you a visa at the moment. You are free to reapply next time if you have additional circumstances."

I had all the docs, all the test scores, all the property and business docs of my father in my hands. He didn't ask for my test scores (IELTS 8.5, SAT 1430), failed to recognize my uni and then assumed some bs about my school?

Is there anything I did wrong? Anything at all that could've made this a Yes? Did I have any red flags? Maybe it's because my father is paying through his firm, but I doubt it's a problem?

- New Comment: Where did I go wrong in my interview?

I got denied in my first interview and I'm aware that it's because I failed to give a complete answer to one of the most crucial questions the VO asked: "Why did you choose a lesser education in business this time when you have completed a higher education in your own country??. I have prepared a lot for the interview and I thought I was ready but I got too distracted by the people who were lining up beside the window where I was assigned to; they can hear our conversation which made me so anxious and I wasn't expecting that would happen.

(For context: I'm from the Philippines. I took a bachelor's degree in physical therapy and I'm planning to pursue an associate's degree in business in Los Angeles City College (community college) because my goal is to build a rehab center in my hometown. I know this is a red flag, but I've done a lot of research and even consulted with a former visa

Reddit Posts

officer that there's still a chance for you to get approved as long as you're able to convince the VO about your real intent for getting a student visa.)

So I scheduled for another interview in the hopes that I'd be able to speak with much more confidence this time. I wasn't expecting that I would be asked the same questions I received in my first interview. This is how it went:

VO: Good morning! Where do you intend to go?

Me: In Los Angeles, particularly to study in Los Angeles City College (I wanted to give more details and start explaining why I wanna study there but I was afraid she'll just cut me off and get annoyed like what my first interviewer did)

VO: What do you plan on studying there?

Me: I want to take a 2-year associate's degree in business (Again, I want to explain more but I'm afraid of giving much details that she didn't even ask for)

VO: Who will be your sponsor?

Me: My cousin who is a US citizen will be the one to finance my education. She works as a game producer at the Riot Games company where she earns a salary of \$xxx,xxx and she agreed to sponsor me with her savings. She also offered me a stay in her apartment which is just a 30-min drive away from the school which is convenient for me. She's gonna provide me everything that I need once I get there.

VO: What's the highest education you attained?

Me: I took a 5-year bachelor's degree in physical therapy and during those first two years I was consistently the top of our batch where I have received a full refund of my tuition as a reward. I finished my studies in June 2020 and I took the board exam in Dec 2021 which I successfully passed so now I'm a licensed physiotherapist.

(The 1st and 2nd VO literally asked me the exact same questions, and I didn't even get the chance to explain why I want to pursue business, what my post-graduation goals are, my ties to the country, etc etc.)

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VO: You know that you were denied previously right in your first interview right?

Me: Yes ma'am

VO: I'm sorry but I really can't approve your visa *hands me the blue paper*

Me: I'm aware I was denied the first time because I wasn't able to properly answer a question, but now I wanna take this chance to explain myself better if you would allow me.

VO: Go ahead

Me: The reason why I want to study business is because I really want to put a rehabilitation center in my hometown because there's a need for it. There's only a limited number of physical therapists back there because of less hiring opportunities and so due to the lack of job prospects, fewer physical therapists are choosing to work in my hometown. As a result, physical therapy services are not really available in my community, so I really wanna do my best to fill that gap and pursue my passion while helping the people back in my hometown.

VO: I understand your reason but I'm sorry. You can refer to the blue paper if you want to know why I can't approve your visa.

I really don't know what to do now. I want to apply again for a third interview but I'm afraid I'm just gonna waste money again. What do you guys think where I went wrong?

- New Comment: **Title**: F1 renewal advice for prior 221g applicant

Hi everyone, I'm a 5th year PhD student in a top 10 university in CS and got an F-1 visa (duration 4 years) after AP with "Clearance Received" stamp from India. The new guidelines allow dropbox processing for renewal finally, but I am very concerned about the possibility dropbox-interview-AP taking forever and me missing a ton of crucial months in my final year being stuck outside the US.

Does 221g usually repeat for renewals?

Reddit Posts

Has anyone dealt with this in the last 1-3 months and has personal experience to offer? My AP was very likely a TAL area (robotics, AI etc.) in 2019, and I still work in the same field.

- New Comment: title: my cousin in armenia got rejected from an f-1 visa for an invalid reason, is there anything i can do to help?

hey guys i?m making this post for my cousin in armenia. she recently got rejected from an f-1 visa due to ?not having reasons to come back to home country? even though she had more than one. the person interviewing her failed to ask ANY questions regarding the subject and just assumed since she didn?t speak up when he wasn?t asking anything. i was wondering if there is anything i can do to help her from the US and if there?s anything she can do in Armenia. she already reapplied but since this is her second time the next interview is exactly in a year which is way further than she needs. we keep checking the website for rescheduling dates but nothing earlier than july 2024 so far. plssss lmk if y?all know anyone/ anything to get an earlier date. i really do feel bad for her especially bcs she was just so excited and flustered during the interview n that she didn?t think of speaking up without the questions being asked. ty!

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Friend got denied f1 visa.

The officer only asked him 3 questions.

1. what college are you going to? answered community college
2. what will you be studying? answered
3. are you married? He said he is engaged and she immediately stopped the interview and gave him a denial 214b.

She didn't even ask for any documents.????

- New Comment: I had my vi on aug 24 and my i20 says start date was aug 30. So my VO asked me to get a new i20

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with a new start date to get my visa issued. He gave me a 221 g slip and kept my passport with him.

My college responded to my request saying that they cannot change the start date but they will give me a note in the i20 saying late arrival. My college hasn't yet done that either.

I have two options: i wait for the i20 and the note and send it to consulate or i defer and submit a new i20.

But i am not sure if consulate will accept either of that because of my ds160..? What do i do?

- New Comment: Visa refused with 221 g - I20 Starting date

My 120 program start date is 6th September. I had my interview today and my application was put on AP (221g) asking me to submit a new I20 with a starting date at least 2 weeks into the future.

In my country it usually takes a week after approval to get my passport back with the visa and as there's only 4 working days left, this happened.

On the other hand my University's international office said, federal rules don't allow them to change the starting date by a few weeks. It's either the fall start date or the spring. They gave me a letter that could show at Border protection but I don't know what to tell the consulate to approve my visa. Any advice?

Update:

I deferred my admission to spring, sent this new I20 to the consulate, and my visa is in "issued" status now.

I'll have to figure something out for the next 4 months

- New Comment: Hey guys!

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My case has been in administrative processing since August 3rd (day of my interview).

Start date of my masters program is September 27th.

Most probably I have to defer.

I'm not sure which semester to defer as I have no idea about the duration of the process. The problem is if I defer to a specific semester, I have to attend that semester as deferment only works once.

What do you guys think ?

- New Comment: F1 Visa rejected

My F1 Visa got rejected yesterday and these were questions that I was asked.

Interviewer: Why are you going to the US?

Me: I'm going to study at "Uni's name"

Interviewer: At what state?

Me: California

Interviewer: Are you currently schooling(home country uni) here?

Me: Yes, I am

Reddit Posts

Interviewer: Then why go to this US uni when you are enrolled at this uni?

Me: I'm going to this uni because of it's academic excellence and it's 100% Scholarship Grant which I was rewarded with.

Interviewer: Do you have any relatives at the US?

Me: I have my uncle

Interviewer: Where does he live?

Me: Fremont, California(I accidentally said the wrong address, which is the city, it was supposed to be Sunny Creek).

Interviewer: Who is financing your studies?

Me: My parents

Interviewer: What are their jobs?

Me: My mother is a government employee nurse, and my father is a retired seaman

Interviewer: What is your father's rank before retiring?

Reddit Posts

Me: I don't know because I didnt ask him about it

Interviewer: Where are you going to be staying?

Me: At the uni's dorms

Interviewer: Everything made sense until to the part on where you are going to be staying. You know that California is an expensive place to live in, etc. etc.*Types for a while and gives 214 b slip* I'm sorry your visa has been rejected and thank you.

Me: Thank you as well(I forgot to ask the reason for rejection but it's clear what got it rejected)

So yeah, that was most of it but not entirely sure of the order of questions. I posted here because I wanna ask questions and help regarding this. Like, if there is some other red flags (except for the residence part which now I have an accommodation letter for F1 reapplication) that needs to be addressed? Do I only pay for the appointment when reapplying and not any other fees regarding F1? Do I only need to make a new DS-160? Can I use the same I 20 and SEVIS Fee payment receipt?

- New Comment: Administration processing

Okay i had my interview 10 august in toronto

It was a smooth interview. She asked me easy question. And i was pretty confident

I was applying for f-1 visa biomedical engineering ..

Reddit Posts

I am Msc mechanical engineering from egypt applying for biomedical engineering

She asked me about my birthplace .. I told her i was born in uk while my father was doing phd 29 years ago but i am Egyptian nationality..

It was smooth until she told me in the end .. when u go to website you will find your are refused but you are going AP ? ideally it will take a month? i told her i might lose my scholarship , so she replied i will try to expedite it.

She told me please leave ur transcripts and cv and she took them take a photocopy and return them to me again.

And that?s it.. it?s now 85 days and they didn?t get back to me

I send them an email after 60 days .. they told me that the consulate has no control over the pace or scope of that process, and we are unable to determine when this process may be concluded.

I managed to delay my admission to January then i will lose my scholarship.

I am pretty nervous these days .. checking my status everyday.. I don?t know what to do..

Anyone has a similar experience can advise me with anything..

Do i apply to new university ?

- New Comment: 214 (b) denial

I just got denied and i wanna reapply but i wanna know what i did wrong first

They asked me what i wanted to study which is psychology

They asked why i chose that specific college and i said because it was close to family

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They asked about relatives i have in the US i answered my sister, aunt and uncle (he's sponsoring me) i forgot to mention my brother, who's there studying (f1 visa)

The last thing they asked was his bank statement (my uncle's) and i didnt have it

I had other supporting documents (water/electricity bills/ house/ land) but they didnt ask or give me a chance to show them anything.

What should i do/not do next time?

- New Comment: F1 Visa rejection

Hey guys,

My F1 VISA was recently rejected. I believe the main reason was I couldn't present strong home ties. I have 3.5 years work experience and took break in May 2023 and gave my first interview on 30/11/2023. I was told 6 months break would not affect my VISA but it seems like it has. I just wanted to focus on the application and hence I took the break. What can I do better for my second interview?

- New Comment: Can anyone share how long 221g TAL cases are taking these days?

- New Comment: Anyone got rejected like this?

I gave my interview on Nov 20, Chennai consulate

In front of me two guys got rejected, I didn't hear the questions and answers but it only lasted 30-60sec.

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In my turn

Officer asked my I20 and passport.

Passed it through the window

Which universities have you applied to?

Answered four and their names

When did you graduated?

I told the year with the month

She replied that she only need the year

I told the year again

What's your CGPA?

My CGPA is 6.99 in the scale of 10 officer.

She told that I have to get 80% to study Masters in the US.

I replied with my work experience and the online certifications and projects will help me for my course.

But she didn't want to listen and gave me a slip of 214b and told she's not approving my visa right now, and told this slip explains you all.

It's all happened within 60sec.

Edit: I'm going to IIT Chicago for Masters in ITM

- New Comment: Hello,

My wife had applied for an F1 visa for the upcoming spring semester. She just got a 221g asking her to come in for an interview. However, the 221g explicitly states that she can only come in on or after January 5th. Now, her I-20 has an explicit remark (probably from the university) that she must be present in the US no later than the 5th. Presuming she gets approval in the interview, would she be able to use the same I-20 or would she now have to request a new one from the university and pursue a fresh application for the summer semester? Basically would her F1 visa status be

Reddit Posts

extended automatically by 6 months (approx) or should she just not appear for the current requested interview and start a fresh application for the summer semester? TIA.

- New Comment: Hi I applied for an f1 visa through dropbox for the spring semester. Got refused and was given a 221g white slip asking me to appear for an interview on or after 5th Jan. My college start date is 8th jan, so I put in an emergency request immediately, and was granted an approval which said I can "reschedule" my appointment between the dates of 18th -25th of dec. But since I didnt have any prior appointment, I didn't have the option to reschedule showing up on the portal. I called their customer support, and they made me cancel my application and start a new one, and I ended up booking appointments in the month of May. My visa scheduling portal now shows that my previous emergency request is closed (presumably because of the new application). I have since applied for a new emergency request. do I need a scheduled appointment confirmation for the date mentioned on the 221g form to attend the interview or can i walk in? any advice/insight is helpful.

- New Comment: Where are you called for an interview in case you get a 221g. For example all the drop off applications are submitted for Chennai. But I submitted my documents in Delhi and I live in delhi. My status says refused, if I get a 221g do I have to go to Chennai or can I do that I delhi? Is there a way I can have it done in Delhi?

- New Comment: Help! Dropbox for B1/B2 --> F1 visa refused with 221g.

Applied for F1 via dropbox on 15th Dec. Refused on 20th. Just got back after collecting the passport with a 221g refusal letter. The letter has instructions asking me to go to the Mumbai consulate on any working day between 10:30-11:00 AM for fingerprint verification as well as an interview. Two things are bothering me:

1. 221g slip does not have any boxes checked next to the instructions for fingerprint/interview. What I want to know is if that is normal and I can still visit the consulate or did everyone receive the 221g slips with boxes checked for the interview?
2. Some ppl on a similar thread from 8 months ago mentioned receiving email to schedule an interview. Should I wait for

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it or just go for it?

EDIT :- Walked in to Mumbai consulate as per the instructions and attended the interview. The interviewer asked me 2 questions (why did you last visit US and who is sponsoring your masters respectively) and then approved it.

My take on the above questions I had. If you receive 221g which says walk in anytime (boxes checked or unchecked doesn't matter), no need to email or get another appointment. Just go in. But be prepared for the interview. A few others ahead of me were grilled and then denied visa when they couldn't convince the interviewer.

- New Comment: Anyone renewing F1 visa while on OPT: did you give your employment letter or something other than i20 for dropbox renewal?

- New Comment: Hi all,

I'm an international student from Pakistan and am currently a 5th year PhD student in Chemistry at IU in the US. I went up for my interview at the Islamabad embassy to renew my visa on 16th November last month and they ended up putting my visa under administrative processing (221g; asked me to upload academic document and proof of scholarship which I did the same day). It is now almost January since my interview and I haven't heard back from them. Can anyone, especially someone from Pakistan who went through F1 renewal or is currently, get in touch so I can have an idea of what the approximate wait times are looking like? Thank you!

- New Comment: This year in April I received a 214b for a day 1 CPT F1 visa. I terminated the SEVIS associated with that and then in December applied for a B1/B2 visa for a vacation with parents. This tourist visa was denied because the officer said your employer has presence in the USA so we can't approve a tourist visa.

My question is this: I had mentioned a friend and point of contact in the USA who is currently on an F1 visa. Would this

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cause any problem to him in the future? For example when he goes on H1B or any F1 extension would me mentioning their name on my rejected tourist visa application cause any problems?

- New Comment: Have anyone appeared for interview on an earlier date than mentioned on the 221g slip?

- New Comment: Hello everyone.

Got rejected today for F1 visa in the Chennai consulate with a 214(b) slip.I'm absolutely blank on what to do now.Any sort of advice might help.

Counter no:15 or 16(not very sure)

Officer was a American round glasses guy.

The interview:

Officer:what are you going to pursue?

Me:I will be pursuing bachelor's of science in computer science.

Officer:which universities have you applied to?

Me:I've applied to five universities..names them.

Officer:why this University?

Me:The main reason to choose this University is the modules provided by them...(I did said this one fluently)

Officer:Why do you want to do bachelor's in usa rather why not do it in India as it will be less cost as you will be

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spending more than 100k dollars for this program.

Me:well it is because of the computer programs provided in usa are great in every terms of learning and for future career.The leading giants which are based off in the usa so it will be a great opportunity to learn from one of the us University...and then he stops me then....

Officer:sorry but you are not accepted for the moment you can try next time

(hand's me the 214(b) slip)

Also to mention that I was a little bit tensed in the interview and that my mother's sister had a I-130 petition filed for me since 2019 or 2020

Anyone with same experience or has any suggestions to change anything for the furthur visa interview.

Please Help.

- New Comment: Hi, I got a 221g slip and asked me to attend an in person interview at chennai consulate. Initially I mentioned my pickup location at Hyderabad. How do I get my passport from chennai consulate directly? I want to collect the passport as soon as possible, rather than waiting until it reaches Hyderabad. How do I do it? Any idea on this?

- New Comment: Inquiry to US Department of State

Hello! Dear Mod, please, can you tell me if I am able to ask US Department of State about my case? If so, how can I do it properly? Email request?

Administrative processing is going 205 days. F1, PhD in Aerospace Engineering. I transferred my study twice. (Could not come in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 start term)

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No updates. Wrote to the Embassy, they said they did not know.

Thank you!

- New Comment: I submitted my docs for f1 visa renewal via Dropbox at the Islamabad embassy Pakistan on 31st Jan. I got an application received update on 2nd Feb but haven't received anything after that. Currently on stem opt and need to go back for work soon. Anyone else in a similar boat as me? What's y'all's timeline looking like so far.

- New Comment: Hi guys, would love to hear opinions on my case:

I'm Pakistani, doing my PhD in Boston in the US. My F1 visa was expiring this coming summer (in June), so I decided to renew it well before. I decided to do it in Canada, as a TCN, since I was already going to be visiting. My interview was on the 22nd of Jan, at the embassy in Ottawa, and I was given 221g blue slip, and told to submit my CV online, which I did the same day. The worst part was that they cancelled my already valid visa with a stamp saying "cancelled without prejudice", so now I can't return to the US until I am issued a new one. Today my visa has been in administrative processing for about 5 weeks, and now I'm starting to panic a little bit, since I need to be back doing my research in the US very soon. I assumed that since they cancelled my existing visa, I should have the new one issued soon. Anyone experience anything similar? Thanks!

- New Comment: Hi guys! would love your opinions on my case. its a very unique case of administrative processing.

Im from pakistan. Im doing a job in the US on STEM OPT. I wanted to renew my F1 visa. Submitted docs via the interview waiver program on 2nd of Jan. Application received on 5th of Jan. application "A**pproved**" on 16th of Jan. After that, I got no direct updates so i kept calling and emailing the embassy. Then in response to one of my emails I was told that my case is undergoing administrative processing. That was on 14th feb. No updates since.

I wasnt called in for an interview or asked to submit any docs. All generic replies from the embassy say "60 to 90 days"

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or "180 days" after the **interview**. But I dont know if that applies to me because I havent even given an interview yet. Has my clock started? or will it start once Im called in for an interview? Its been over 2 months since I applied. most people on admin processing are called for interview after 1 month.

I dont know anyone with exactly my situation (no interview+ on F1 but not a uni student anymore+ working but not on H1b+ ceac status says approved). Is the lack of an interview a good or a bad thing in your opinion? I understand that most of this is not gonna yield anything fruitful because the process has to run its course but your opinions might help me get thru the process with some peace. Thank you!!!

- New Comment: Hey guys!

I am an F1 student graduating In summer 2024 with my masters.

I got married in December 2023 and was visiting Pakistan for 7 weeks for the wedding. I came back this spring 2024 and applied for my wife?s F2 visa which got denied after a very straightforward interview.

Questions asked:

1. Whats his major? (Answered)
2. When did you guys get married (December <<date>>)
3. Do you have pictures of the wedding? (Provided pictures of the wedding after asked for them)

VO: I am giving you this 214(b) slip as your visa is getting refused today. It is very strict now a days so you can re-apply.

Thank you.

She literally gave her no reason for the denial and never even asked for expected graduation, funds, what do you do here in Pakistan etc etc.

Reddit Posts

Facts about my standing in the US.

1. I have received full funding since the last year for my degree because of a research assistantship and they pay me better than average as well. I also did a full time internship on cpt last summer which has been continuing (will still continue until I graduate as part-time because my university allows it alongside RA)
2. My I-20 end date is Aug 2024.
3. My brother is also in the US but we did not mention him in ds-160 as we didnt have to in previous applications for both my parents B1/B2 applications (both approved)
4. I already have a return offer I plan to join on OPT in august and will obviously not file OPT until May, 2024.
5. My wife is completing her M-phil right now and she is set to graduate in June 2024 as well.

In our visa application, we did not add anything about her current work experience. (Even though she is doing private clinic in healthcare field) because we thought M-phil degree shows stronger ties.

I am extremely worried about this as we were planning for her to travel this summer to be with me and she was gonna tell the VO that I am going for my husband's last few months in the US and will return back with him after attending his graduation ceremony (but it never got to that point)

What should we do? There are people telling me that they are rejecting for no reason and there are countless cases of 2nd interview acceptance but I really want to get to the bottom of this before another interview.

The only two discrepancies I found were not mentioning my brother and maybe adding current work experience instead of m.phil on ds-160. My DSO also advised to get an I-20 extension until december because an earlier graduation date might be a red flag for them as they do not know about your OPT intentions and the fact that you plan to stay 3 more

Reddit Posts

years.

Any advice is highly appreciated.

- New Comment: Can someone please confirm if you can apply for the same visa again at a different US embassy/consulate if your case is stuck in administrative processing at another embassy/consulate? If you or any of your friends have been in a situation like this, please share.

Thank you.

- New Comment: 214 b refusal

I applied in jeddah, saudi arabia,

I am from Afghanistan but was born in SA

I was asked:

How many years have you been in SA?

I was born here on 2001.

Who is paying your education?

My sponsor(name) he is a family friend.

What other schools you applied to?

Only this one, but I made a search about other ones.

Why did you choose this college?

(Poorly answered) it offers a 2 year degree so I can test my skills.

Reddit Posts

What went wrong and when should i apply again and what should i change or say now?

Please help and thanks.

- New Comment: Hello everyone! I am an indian citizen, currently on dependent (H4) visa in the USA and pursuing my Master's degree. I had applied for change to F1 visa through dropbox and got a 221G to appear for an interview. Did someone go through the similar process and appeared for an interview? What do interviewers generally ask in such cases?

- New Comment: I got an old F1 visa which is valid for 5 years and then a new F1 visa which was put into Administrative processing and when issued was only valid for one year. The old visa was ****not**** cancelled when I got the new visa. Since the new visa is much shorter than the old one, it creates a gap that new visa expires but old one not.

Is it safe to travel with the old visa? Is it still valid after all?

- New Comment: I applied for the f1 visa and got approved but the officer told me that my application had to go through administrative processing, my problem is when the officer asked why I chose this uni in the interview, I don't know why but I panicked and the answer that I had in my head for that question just went away. Is this a really bad situation? Or am I just overthinking the issue?

- New Comment: Hello,

I applied for F1 visa via a university admission which has denied deferring my admission further and my visa application is still on admin processing. I have secured another university admission. Now, what should I do, should I email US embassy about the case or wait for the admin processing outcome and then apply for F1 visa again?

- New Comment: Hello, I read this thread post and want share my experience. I been in us on J1 and just finished my j1.

Reddit Posts

now Applying my next visa. My visa interview was on April 11, 2024, at the Toronto consulate as a Third Country National (TCNs) for my F1 (PhD), and I got a 221g yellow. VO asked for my CV, and I don't have that time with me. He told me to email him my CV and master transcript, which I emailed them the same day using the method mentioned on the 221g slip. I received confirmation after 2 days. Now I waiting and I am wondering how long it will take. No update since then. Web status show refused.

During interview, VO looked my file and asked me,

Q: why you come to Toronto?

A: I need to attend conference meeting.

then he said "you should go to my home country."

Q1: This is first time you Applying this visa.

A: yes this is my first time Applying this visa.

Q2: why this state/university?

A: because of research and project.

Q3: Give me your CV?

A: I don't have with me. I think i left in my car. can I bring from my car?

Reddit Posts

then he said no. people are waiting in line.

Q4: how much time i planning to stay in Toronto?

A: 2 weeks

then he said you should apply at your home country anyway today i am refusing your visa and i need cv and transcript.
email me your cv and transcript together.

he gave me 221g yellow slip. On slip he mark documents required instead of AP. That's it and I left. I don't want to argue with him or make him mad.

- New Comment: Hello everyone. I did my VISA interview yesterday and, as the title says, got an AP under 221(g). After the interview, the VO gave me a one-page paper with an itemised list of "requirements" and it had like a ?? next to two things: a CV and a detailed research plan, which she asked me to submit on a link that refers to a contact us page.

However, a couple of hours later, I received an email and was asked to fill a form out, which contains some personal information, like siblings, travel history, social media, etc., somewhat similar to what I already wrote in the DS-160. They also wrote in the email: "In addition to your CV" without any mention of the detailed research plan that was in the paper she gave me.

Given that, I have two questions...

1. Do you think I should send them both a CV and a detailed research plan (along the form), or only a CV since that was the only thing mentioned in the email, which is a more professional form of communication?

Reddit Posts

2. Regarding the CV, is it like a normal CV that we use to apply for universities or should it be different somehow?

I'd really appreciate your help. Thank you ^^

- New Comment: I had a MBA from a university outside US in 2019 and I have been working in completely different field, medicine. Last year I applied for F1 with MS in Information Systems but got rejected and that time my DS 160 had my previous education MBA Information. Now, I got accepted into another master program directly related with my field of work, medicine. Should I leave out MBA Information from new DS 160 this time or just leave it as it is from previous year DS160? I wonder if my previous DS160 is still in the system after one year.

- New Comment: Hi everyone! Yesterday I went for my visa interview at the consulate in Belfast NI for F1 status as I am starting a PhD programme in august. The interview went well and they didn't ask me too many questions apart from what I was going to study, why I chose the university I am attending and my research interests. The VO explained I was approved for the visa and I was made to pay an issuance fee before leaving so I thought it was pretty certain I was getting the visa. A couple of hours ago today I received an email saying my visa application needs to undergo additional administrative processing and I can collect my passport from the consulate since it might take a while. Does anyone know why this has occurred? And are my chances of maintaining an approved visa status good? The status on my visa application portal currently still says it's approved

- New Comment: Hi everyone! My wife(Russian) had her interview for a dependent F2 visa yesterday in another where she has residence status (my country). The VO refused her visa for administrative processing (g 221) and handed her a pink slip with no additional documents requested. We checked the status today and it says "Approved?". Is it possible that the VO changed his mind, or is it going to change to refused in a couple of days while they process it?

- New Comment: URGENT. Follow-Up Interview requested after F1 Interview Waiver Application

Can those who have gone through a similar experience explain what is happening?

Reddit Posts

I applied and sent all documents to the Dropbox site and after 6 weeks, my portal shows an option to ?Schedule Follow-Up Interview?.

However there are no dates when I click on that option. Only a blank page appears.

I haven?t received an email from the consulate yet to come for my passport so my documents are still with them.

My program starts in 4 weeks and I?m a bit nervous.

Background: I studied in the US worked there for 3 years on a cap exempt H1B.

What do I do? For those who have had similar experiences, what happened?

- New Comment: After being in Administrative Processing for an F1 visa application for 6 months i?ve been asked to submit my ?passport and a new itinerary?. Can anyone who has had something similar please advise on what this itinerary should include? Many thanks

- New Comment: Hello all! I have a doubt regarding F1 visas. My uncle resides in the US as a green card holder and a US citizen. So when I apply should I mention him in my DS-160 or should I lie about it? Will it be a problem later on if I don't disclose my family ties and they find out about it later on. Also should I apply to colleges far from his place of residence or will a college near him work as I could stay with him? I'd appreciate any guidance on this topic.

- New Comment: Do ?Refusal?s aka administrative processing timelines differ per visa type? E.g. is it resolved faster for F1 than B1/B2 or such? Also does it make a difference if this is a first time applying for F1 or if it?s a renewal case?

- New Comment: Applied for renewal on May 7 with interview waiver; case opened May 8; ?Refused? since May 13. They returned all my documents but kept my passport. They also did not give me any slip. When I ask for update they say it?s under AP. Any idea if returning documents but keeping passport is an indication of something, with no additional

Reddit Posts

info is required atm?

- New Comment: Hello,

I'm from Syria and I applied for an F1 visa in July 2023. After the interview, I was asked to submit the DS-5535 (which I submitted the same day) and was put on AP ever since. I had to defer my admission last year because of that and I'm afraid that I'll lose my seat at the college if I don't get the visa in a couple of months. Is it possible for AP to extend over a year? And is there anything one can do at this point?

- New Comment: I requested congressional help. Office of the congressman reached out to the embassy in my country and received the standard response of "you'll know when there is an update and we have no discretion to influence the process". Can office of congressman reach out to DOS or DHS in addition to consulate as well? I want to follow up with them but unsure if that falls within the realm of possibilities.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hello everyone. I hope you're all doing well.

I was wondering if I could get some guidance from the people on this forum who have been through administrative processing. I had my F1 visa interview on May 22nd and was informed by the interviewer that I basically need to upload a bunch of documents on this one website so that a few people outside of the embassy can take a look at my case. I've yet to upload those documents since I wanted to keep my research advisor in the loop and have a meeting with them before uploading the requested documents, but I'm not sure if that's the best way to go about this. I would really appreciate it if people with experience in AP could give me some guidance on how to best navigate this situation and if there's anything I can do to possibly expedite my situation.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: # Need help!! visa rejected, Islamabad Embassy

Reddit Posts

So got my visa rejected even though I was going to top program at top university and had all my finances in order too. Got into University of Minnesota, Twin cities campus in Robotics MS. Had all finances in order(father was the sponsor) and all other things set.

Any advice what to do now. Should i apply for visa again and how to not be rejected this time.

Got 214b slip saying failure to provide reasons other than home ties.

- New Comment: Hi guys. I just want to share my experience after obtaining my VISA stamp. Here are the prerequisites: PhD., Aerospace, full-funded, top-tier uni, Russian nationality. I Have been on the AP for 13.5 months. Embassy: Belgrade, Serbia. After this long waiting time, I finally got an email to upload a new SEVIS fee and I-20, and after a week or so, a new message to send my passport. Best of luck to all who are waiting under the AP.

- New Comment: AP from Munich, Germany. I am a Bangladeshi citizen, faced F1 visa interview (14th May, 2024) with full funded PhD offer. The interview was very smooth and I submitted my passport. The CEAC status shows "Approved" but when I emailed them today after 17 days, they said it is under AP. What should I do now other than waiting? Also, anyone with similar experience from Munich, Germany?

- New Comment: I just got my f1 visa rejected today i will mention below what questions were asked and please can someone tell me when should I apply for a Visa again as I wanted to attend fall 2024 and wanted to apply again next month.

Vo: Hey! Good morning Me: Hello, Good morning with a smile Vo: Ok so you are heading to Lewis university why did you choose this university Me: During my final year project I've read the research paper of xxx professor who inspired me and later when I was applying to universities for my masters I got to know he was working in Lewis university so that's why Vo: How many universities did you apply to? Me: I've applied to a total of four universities.

Reddit Posts

Saint Louis university, Illinois tech, NYU and Lewis university Vo: so will you be attending any subject online?

Me: No I am doing a full time offline program Vo: When did you graduate? Me: Graduated in September 2023 Vo:

Did you work somewhere or what have you been doing since then Me: I have volunteered in my fathers IT company as a customer service representative to get the hang of his company so I can work for it later Vo: oh so your father has his own IT company Me: Yes Vo: typing for a while then said Ok you are rejected Some background info of me: My sibling is in the USA on a green card in the same state where I was going to pursue my masters. And in my ds160 I've also written that I wasn't employed after completing my bachelors but however I wrote that I volunteered in an organisation which was my fathers IT company I've wrote volunteered because I did not get any salary that's why did not mention that I was employed in ds160

- New Comment: Hi!

I recently got my F-1 rejected in Dubai under 214(b). From what i understand, the interview was the issue. It went bad and I came off as under confident and probably suspicious (Also have anxiety issues so that made it worse). I had the proper financial documents, no loan, no relatives in US, my father is the sponser. I wanted to try just once again but can anyone advice me if i should change anything in my application? As there?s not much I can change in the documentation but maybe just be more prepared for the interview. Do you thinking applying from a different city (Abu Dhabi) will help?

- New Comment: Got my F1 rejected from Hyderabad, India.

What are the next steps for trying again? I want to make it for Fall 24.

I know I have to wait for 24 hours before booking another appointment.

Do I have to start again from a new DS-160?

Or keep the same DS-160 and try to book another appointment? (I couldn't see this option on <https://www.usvisascheduling.com/en-US/>)

Reddit Posts

Do I have to do the OFC again, or directly book an appointment?

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Hey guys I'm from India applied on the 31st for dropbox appointment, received june 4th, refused june 5th. does anyone know what that means and where i can ask about it. i tried to call 022 6201 1000 but it doesn't connect me to any officer.

- New Comment: My F-1 application is in AP and my OPT (I'm in my 1st year) is expiring in 2 months. I need to be in the US to apply for an extension so obviously I cannot extend it while I'm on AP in my home country. I understand that if my visa gets approved after the expiration of my OPT I will not be able to re-enter the US on F-1 status.

If my visa gets approved AFTER the end of my OPT:

- do I even need to get it stamped in my passport if I cannot travel on it?

- can I apply for a B1/B2 afterwards without going into AP?

- New Comment: I got my VISA approved on May 31st and most of my friends from the same date interview got their VISA issued on June 4th however my status is still on approved and the last updated date is the day I gave my interview. I mailed the embassy's consular office I gave my interview from and they replied that my case is under administrative processing and currently refused under section 221(g), but if it is so then shouldn't my status show refused? it still shows it has been approved.

What might be the reason? It has been 6 working days since my approval should I wait till 14 working days?

- New Comment: interview

8:45 Scheduled 7June

Interview at 8:00

Islamabad consulate

Reddit Posts

25-30 yr pretty lady

Me: good morning!

VO: good morning!

VO: Why u going to US?

I am going to pursue my bachelors degree in data science at Drexel University

VO: Why you choose this uni?

Me: I choosed the drexel University for couple of reason one being their co-op program which is top notch not only in USA but all over the world. I would be specifically targeting startups for my co-op as I intent to start my startup here.

VO: I see you got scholarships here, Can you explain them?

Me: Yes, I got two scholarships Drexel grant and Drexel A.J scholarship.(turns over the file cover like should I show you the scholarship letter).

VO: No, no you just explain them to me.

Me: So, Drexel grant is need based tries to mention CSS profile but forgot the name I just proceed with saying that I forgot the form name but College Board provides this form and the A.J scholarship is merit based.

VO: Okay, Who is gonna sponser you ?

Me: My uncle gonna sponser me who is an Anaesthetist consultant and lives in Riyadh,Saudia.

(I just thought VO would know who an Anaesthetist is, doesn't even mention doctor)

VO: What does your father do?

Me: He is also an Anaesthetist consultant working here in pakistan.

VO: Why your uncle is sponsering you ?

Me: (Confused awkward answer) mentioning that I am close to him and my father gonna bear my sis fund who would be doing medical studies (tries to mention that she is one year younger to me I don?t know why I mentioned all this instead of showing my uncle affection and love for me.)

VO Looks satisfied but I felt like it wasn't a good answer.

VO: What does your uncle do for work?

Reddit Posts

(Confused bcz already mentioned anniathesiant consultant)

Me: I thought may be she is asking what's his designation

Again mentions that he is working as an (emphasis on assistant)consultant in ryd, USA.(Liiike what USA, I meant to say saudia)

(doesn't even mention hospital)

Messes up the whole interview and goes extra defensive and says this

Me: Sorry my mistake he haven't been to USA ever(emphasis on ever ???)

At this time I knew I am done here and has messed up very badly.?

Silence for aprox 30-40 sec writing comments for me.

Just looking

Sorry I cannot offer you visa right now.

Gives my white slip 214b refusal

- New Comment: First of all I had a visa denial in the first time I applied.

one of the information I told them is that I have a sister in USA and I mentioned that my brother in law suggested this university for me. So the second time I had the interview the VO aksed me do you have any siblings in usa I Said yes I only have my sister The visa officer told me, that is not what you said last time you said that you also have a brother I said no I told you last time about my Brother in law not my brother but she insisted that I was lying

- New Comment: Stuck in administrative processing/'refuse' status post dropox. I am applying for a change from H1 to F1. I have a Bachelors (returned to work in India for a year) and Masters (in Econ) from the US. I have been there for the last 6 years on OPT/H1. Recently got admitted to a top 5 MBA program which has always been my dream, submitted dropbox docs along with my passport. Now we wait.

- New Comment: Hi guys, my current F1 visa application has been under 221g administrative processing for more than 2 and half months. Does anyone know if we could apply again at other/ the same consulates? Would that possibly be

Reddit Posts

quicker? Thanks!

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: My visa was approved on June 11 and I was told to wait for 10 business days for the passport to arrive. I contacted the consulate asking them for an update and they said "Visa approved, subject to a final security clearance?". Has anyone gone through this? How long did it take for you to get your passport back?

Update: Mine changed to issued on 18th business day.

- New Comment: I had my interview on June 4 at Cairo embassy for F1 visa and got approved and they took my passport. On CEAC it's been approved since then for 5 weeks now. When I contacted the consulate they replied two times that I was put under Administrative Processing while last reply was that "more clearances are underway". My course starts on July 29, from past experiences what are the chances I might catch the course?

- New Comment: PhD VISA RENEWAL STALLED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSING

Background:

I'm a 4th year PhD student in the US. My visa was initially issued for some reason for 4 years even though I was in a 5 year program. However, back then even though it was right after the whole covid frenzy, the visa process was seamless. I went to the embassy took all papers, they approved me on the spot and I had the passport back 5 days later. I assumed this time would be the same alas? On July 24 2024, my F1 visa will expire. I had two conferences to attend to in Europe and since I was leaving the country I needed to renew the visa. Went through the process and booked an appointment for July 12 2024 at the US embassy back home, (EU country where I got it the first time). Once at the

Reddit Posts

embassy, the process went just fine, like the first time, I was told my visa was approved and that I needed to go pay the cashier, but the officer told me I needed to come back and see her after because she needed to explain something. Once I went back, another lady who seemed to be the supervisor was there as well and they proceed to tell me that while my visa is approved, the system returned a yellow color or code don't remember how she phrased it. But in short, she said my application was subject to further processing and that this was not going to be done by them, but rather back in Washington. As such, she didn't know why I got 'flagged' or any potential reason as to why this happened, because it's not something generated by the consular office. She said 'they use an AI system and it used phone numbers'. They weren't making any sense, they were both talking over one another and honestly they were trying to not freak me out (which i appreciate) so I never thought to ask who's 'they'. Anyway, they tell me that it usually takes a few days but can take up to a month to clear, that they will hold my passport and as soon as it clears, they will print the visa and send it asap. I explained that my return ticket to the US is on August 20 so what happens if I don't have it by then ? And she said when I'm nearing that date, I should send the consular office an email (assuming I haven't heard back) and they will inquire on my behalf with 'Washington'. But nothing more to do now other than go home and wait until I hear back from them.

I'm like WTF just happened ? Did this ever happened to anyone ? I'm in my last year of PhD, about to graduate, I can't have delays like this. What could possibly be back in 'Washington' as she mentioned so many times that needs to check my visa application? Especially for something related to my phone number ? I'm not into anything sketchy, I only got a speed ticket once in 4 years which I paid, I do nothing illegal, file my taxes, have an excellent credit etc.

I'm white, european, and I mention this because she said it happens more for some countries and some names than others. So I don't get it because I looked it up it said that if you're from specific arabic countries you are almost certain to become subject to administrative processing. But clearly this does not apply to me so any thoughts ?

CEAC status says approved. Never got an email from the embassy, never got any form or slip, just 'it needs further

Reddit Posts

processing, go home and wait, email when it's closer to fly out date?.

PLSSSS if anyone has been in this renewal mess before, do you have any advice ?

- New Comment: My mailed-in renewal application was refused under 221(g) due to missing document. I added the missing document to the application and mailed my application back to the consulate. Is it possible for them to still request for an interview under 221(g) after all this?

- New Comment: Background: I initially went to the US with a J-1 visa last year and while traveling in my grace period I did a tour of a university in New York and decided to study for an associates degree. I did a change of status to start my study and finished my first semester with 4.0 GPA. I came back home during my summer break to visit my family, demonstrate my ties, and apply for an F-1 visa.

My interview: I had my interview today and got rejected after 2 questions. I was asked why I abandoned my studies in my home country for a 4 year program to start an expensive 2 year program in the US.

I explained that degrees from my home country do not have any values anymore and I was not happy with my education. I also said a 2 year program at my school is equivalent to a 5 year program at home. I absolutely love my new school.

I wish I had explained that I also did not like my major and always wanted to study fine arts and since I had already studied for 2 years, a 2 year program was the best match for me.

She then responded that I overstayed my visa (which I didn't even for a day, all the paperwork for the change of status was submitted multiple weeks in advance of my end date) to which I responded I received a change of status in time.

Is this true? Did I overstay my visa even though I applied for a change of status in advance and was approved in time to

Reddit Posts

start my semester?

I was denied after these 2 questions.

My next semester is starting on August 28th, and I'm wondering what are my chances from a second interview? Any tips on how to answer similar questions?

Additionally the wait times in my country (Turkey) are extremely long and close to 2 years, this time around I applied for expedited application processing as I'm a returning student and was approved.

What are my chances of getting another expedited application processing approved?

Am I allowed to apply at a consulate in a neighboring country which have appointments available immediately due to these extremely long wait times?

- New Comment: # Resubmit your passport according to 221(g) administrative processing

I had my US interview, everything went well and my visa was approved. However yesterday, I received my passport with a white page (221 g) asking me to get a new passport as the previous one is damaged. I don't need to go through the appointment process again and should submit it to nearby VAC (Visa Application Center).

Can anyone tell me the expected time it will take to get my VISA stamped when I give them the new passport?

- New Comment: I am from Nepal and currently appointments aren't available for August.

My parents have been working in Dubai for more than a decade now and I've visited here 4 times already.

Its been a month I have been here and am thinking to apply from here.

I requested an expedited appointment few days ago in Nepal and its been rejected already.

Reddit Posts

Are these good enough reasons for me to apply from here?

- New Comment: F1 Visa under Standard Admin Processing

Hello everyone, i recently applied for an F1 visa renewal in Kuwait on July 11th, and got it approved on the spot. The person interviewing me gave me a slip of paper saying my visa is approved and would be issued in 5 working days, however it's been way longer. yesterday I emailed the consulate asking if i could have accommodation as my semester starts on August 19th and this is exactly what they sent back ?Dear Sir, Thank you for contacting us about your visa application. Your application is currently undergoing standard administrative processing. Unfortunately, we cannot provide a timeline for completing this review. We do not require any additional information from you at this time. Please refrain from finalizing travel plans until you have your U.S. visa. We appreciate your patience as we work to process your application. We will contact you as soon as we make a decision. Sincerely, Consular Section | NIV Unit Embassy of the United States, Kuwait? The status on the CEAC website still says ?approved?, i also have a an older visa valid until August 13 2024. What should i do? can anyone explain what is happening? it would be so so appreciated as i'm very stressed and lost. Thanks.

- New Comment: I gave my F1 visa for renewal at the dropbox as I am going to a new college and a higher degree. My ceac status changed from received to refused. Now I am aware there can be two cases where my application is in administrative processing or the consulate needs more documents. I was wondering if someone was in the same boat. My post is New Delhi.

\- How long after were you returned your passport if it was for additional documents?

\- Also what's the average passport return time for a successfully stamped passport?

\- Did anyone experience this? Like CEAC changing to refused but an after a few days got approved and the passport came back with the visa stamp? If so how many days did the process take?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Hey everyone, I was given a 221(g) white slip and called in for interview at New Delhi after my passport was returned via dropbox. After appearing for interview and submitting my documents at the embassy, I have been given a yellow 221(g) slip and my passport was returned to me by the VO. They said they need more time to review my case. My college starts first week of September and I am worried. Anyone in same situation? What's the average time for the case to be processed? I hate to be in limbo.

- New Comment: I just got my i20 and this is my first time applying,

i have some questions:

Should i print the i20 with my printer and then write my name and sign on it with black ink?

What do i need to avoid talking about in the interview?

Will having a relative (aunt) in the us reject me applying for a CC too because i wanna finish in 2 years, also i will be staying with my aunt because it is near to the college and safer for me.

Thanks.

- New Comment: Hi

My interview was done in Montreal August 18 they put administrator hold bcz of wrong PCC,they requested for correct PCC and online link to submit my passport history and travel history which I done next day and submitted my PCC along with my passport on August 29 after that till today no update every email getting standard format reply, status still online saying Refused,I want to see my kids it's over 7 month ?, if I withdraw my passport that will effect my Case or processing will be continue , this is my question ?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: My F1 application is in AP. I need to submit a "detailed study/research plan." I've been searching but can't find any advice on how to structure this. Does anyone have experience of submitting a detailed study plan for a course based STEM MS program and getting the visa approved? The Consulate also wants "its practical applications".

- New Comment: Date: 15th April,2024 Islamabad embassy Appointment time: 7:30 am Interview time: 11:00 am PhD Chemistry Iowa State University Me: Good morning officer VO: Good morning Why are you going to Iowa state university? Me: there are two reasons. The main was that professor Kovnir's research aligns with me. He is working on materials synthesis and their application to batteries. And second I have got a fully funded offer from them. VO: How many schools did you applied to? Me: I have applied to 8-10 schools. You want me to name them. VO:No VO: Has anyone filed an immigration petition for you? Me:No sir VO: What are you doing Now Sir? Me: I have been applying for PhD positions. Because I wanted to become an Assistant Professor at a Public sector university. So I have invested time for PhD applications. I took IELTS exam I worked on a coauthored publication with my colleagues. I have also completed several online certifications through Coursera. VO after typing for sometime and handing me a white slip: Sorry Sir the US Visa policies are very strict I cannot approve your visa. I wrote in my DS-160 that my Australian visa application for phd is in progress since last 16 months

I want to reapply, how to find slots and what should I do to get approved this time?

- New Comment: Hello all,

I am in my first year of OPT. I visited my home country (Pakistan) and applied to renew my F-1 visa (at the Islamabad Embassy) as it was close to being expired. I applied via document drop-off because I qualified for an interview waiver.

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A couple of days after I applied, I received an email saying my application had been refused under 221(g). And I was asked for the following documents:

- CV/Resume, including list of publications and references
- Detailed study/research plan and its practical application
- Advisor/mentor's CV/resume
- University admission letter/employment offer letter
- Source of funding for research or degree

I submitted these documents online on the day I received the email. My passport was not returned to me. However, since I had a valid F-1 visa, my DSO advised me to see if I could get my passport back and try to travel on my old visa. I called the embassy to ask them if my old (unexpired) visa had been cancelled and they said no. I submitted the request for temporary passport withdrawal. However, I didn't receive my passport in time and my F-1 expired.

Reddit Posts

Eventually, though, my temporary passport withdrawal request was processed and I did get back my passport, and in it, my old visa had been "cancelled without prejudice" (apparently the Embassy operators had given me the wrong information prior) and I had a pink 221(g) slip.

Anyway, now I am kind of stuck in my home country until 221(g) is cleared. For six weeks, I haven't received any information from the embassy. My OPT expires in 2 months and I have to be in the US to extend it.

The following things may have contributed to me being out in AP:

1. I work in TAL field.

2. I am engaged to a US citizen and added him as an emergency contact on my application.

I now have a job offer from a different country. How long should I wait before accepting the other offer and leaving the US for good (at least for the time being)? It's very stressful because I didn't expect this outcome so I wasn't well prepared. And there isn't much data on 221(g) for F-1 applicants on OPT.

- New Comment: Hi all,

I am from a third world country in the Arab world, had my F1 appointment today and my VO didn't ask for my plans

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post-grad or what ties me to my home country. I had two J-1 visas before, and I am going into an Ivy for a one-year program in the humanities with a full ride. CEAC says it's in AP but I feel like the interview wasn't comprehensive enough for him to get to know me. Is that normal? Should I worry?

- New Comment: Hi, I gave my interview on 30th April 2024 for F1 Visa for MBA. It was approved on-spot and I was given the blue slip that said "Your Visa has been Approved". However, around 13th May, I emailed them regarding an update on my passport status. They replied around 15th May stating that my application is under review and it required administrative processing. My CEAC status is still Approved and now it is 21st May 2024, my status still says approved. I had a B1/B2 Visa previously in 2016 (I went on an academic field trip with my high school). I got the B1/B2 visa within a few days of my interview. What should I do? How much time would it take? Kind of tensed.

- New Comment: NEED HELP!

Im currently a student on opt, have been living in the usa for 7 years now and went and tried to renew my visa. It got approved with no major hiccups and after 7 business days it now appears as refused. Does anyone know what to expect since i did not get an email or anything whatsoever! It will be really helpful since its my first time being in AP in over 4 times i renewed my visa. Does anyone know a timeline or anything i can do?

- New Comment: Hi,

Advice on my F1 refusal: 214(B)

So some background: My Sister was in the US and while she was relocating back home me and my mom both applied for B1/B2 visa, which was last year Oct.

So I got admitted into ASU for this fall, *When the interview started The VO asked Why ASU? As I was replying she interrupted and started asking about my sister being in the US and that I recently got my B1/B2 visa, I clarified by saying she has relocated back and started her own business here. Then she asked about the funds and sponsors: I replied My

Reddit Posts

sister is sponsoring \$ amount and I got a sanctioned loan of \$.

That's it my visa was refused.

Thanks in advance :)

- New Comment: SEVIS fee not reflecting before interview.

So guys I went for my interview today and the sevis fee had not reflected in the system. My school paid it via check and so it takes about 3 weeks to process. I was put on Administrative processing and the consular took my passport and I 20. She said she will be monitoring as and when the SEVIS reflect before adjudicating the visa. Anything to worry about?

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: # Can students sign the I-20 digitally? My DSO asked me to physically sign it but I added an image of the my signature and it looks like I signed it physically. But I am worried. (OPT I-765 Application)

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Hi, I am a student who just graduated from high school in South Sudan.

I am 19 years old.

I was recruited by an American college to play soccer on a full scholarship.

They provided me with an i20 so then I did my application and visa appointment in Nairobi, Kenya.

Reddit Posts

I was denied because of 214b.

The interview was very short and they didn't ask me many questions:

They asked for my I20 and passport then asked me the following questions:

What will you study? Engineering

What will you do when you finish your studies? Return to south sudan and work.

Where is the college? Texas

Who are the other people on the i20 form? My mentor and his mom.

Where do they live? California

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"I know you really need this scholarship, but you are ineligible."

- New Comment: # Can anyone help me understand why I was refused under 214b?

Hello. My case might be a bit complex due to my nationality. I am 23(m) from Iran, studied at the best university in Iran and I applied for F1 visa in Dubai.

VO: Hand me your passport and documents.

VO: Were are you studying?

me: \[my Iranian university name\]

VO: Were you invited to national elite foundation?

me: Yes but I refused.

VO: I do not understand it? they offered you money and you refused?

me: Well yes due to their low income I refused and tried to stick with my studies.

VO: How many universities inside US did you applied to?

me: 7

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VO: How many in the europe?

me: 3

VO: did you get any other admission(s)?

me: No.

VO: What was your rank in konkur(university entrance exam)?

me: \[my rank\]

VO: Did you take masters entrance exam in Iran?

me: Yes.

VO: what was your rank? was it good?

me: \[my rank\], well it is not a good rank and it is below my expectations.

VO: I cannot give you a visa today. (then he gave me refusal letter under 214b)

Can anyone help me why I was rejected and what can I do for my next visa interview?

P.S: I have been informed that US officers are sensitive to national elite foundation. I do not understand it why. Could

Reddit Posts

anyone clarify the stigma about this foundation?

Many thanks. looking forward for comments.

- New Comment: Hello. I had my interview on April 24 in Cairo and got an AP for my F1 VISA for a PhD program in molecular biology. Could the reason for AP be related to TAL? They asked for a university letter, my CV, and a research statement, which I sent and were received on May 2nd. It's almost been 8 calendar weeks since the interview and I'm still waiting. What can I do other than waiting? It's really tough to have to wait and not know what the future holds. My program starts in late August but I need to be there in early August for the orientation and housing etc.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hello all! Placed in AP 221G after interview. What exactly will they check about parents during administrative processing?

I believe this happened due to living in a middle eastern country. I am wondering if they will look into one of the parents receiving retirement or social services from the government of which I am applying from, Germany. Do you know what they will check from parents? Just very interested since this is a stressful time being placed on this DS 5535. Thank you for any opinions.

- New Comment: Got a 221g post dropbox (H1 to F) asking for a SEVIS fee receipt. Submitted on 6/20. No change in status yet. Any data point on how long these things take?

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Top 20 LAC. Full-ride scholarship for bachelor's. First year. (Russian nationality, applying in Georgia)

I had my interview on June 17, they asked 3 questions, and told me that my visa is approved and that I should get it by the end of the week. I've been waiting patiently for 10 days, NOTHING happened. CEAC status just kept being stuck at "Approved". Then I contacted the support team, and they told me that my application was refused under 221g

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(Administrative processing). Status still says Approved (which they said is normal for AP). They never requested any docs, nor wrote an email explaining what is it I'm missing. They still have my passport.

I'VE NEVER HEARD OF ANYONE ON FULL SCHOLARSHIP FOR BACHELOR'S BEING SUBJECT TO THIS. The world is unfair

- New Comment: Anyone had visa go to AP and case number is invalid on ceac??

Hi, my request went to AP 6 days ago. I was give a case number (which doesnt fully match the format example they give on ceac) and the case number shows as invalid. Has this happened to anyone? When I put my application ID it shows me the refused message and that I am to wait for a new adjudication on my visa. I would have thought the new adjudication would show up on the case number. Has anyone had this problem? Is it just a matter of time and maybe the case isn't registered in their system yet? Any insight is welcome!

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: 2ND F1 INTERVIEW SOON

Was rejected F1 visa for community college am from South Africa. Was nervous and rejected after 3 questions. My Uncle(not in the USA) is sponsoring me. Should I change my sponsor to my parents?

Any tips or success stories of those who have gone for interview for 2nd time?

- New Comment: Is it possible to get a second interview in the same intake?

My F1 interview for Fall 24 was on 3rd June (it's been a month since then).

I was rejected in the Hyderabad consulate.

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Is it possible for me to get another slot for this Fall?

Or am I wasting my time and I should focus on Spring intake?

- New Comment: Hi, I've been in admin processing since April 17th, I've seen some people saying that reaching out to the office of the member of congress might help. I'm considering doing reaching out to one of the senators if my university's state, however, I have never been in the USA, so I'm not sure whether that's still ok, does anyone has experience with this ?

- New Comment: I had an interview in May at the US Embassy in Amman, Jordan, and was informed that I was accepted to receive an F-1 visa. However, after following up a few weeks after the interview via email, I received a notification stating that I was found ineligible to receive the F-1 non-immigrant visa, and then they returned my passport back.

I am planning to reapply for the F-1 visa soon, but I want to be well-prepared this time. I believe understanding the reason for my initial rejection is crucial so that I can provide the necessary documentation and address any concerns in my next interview.

A bit of background: I am a Palestinian student, and I'm wondering if there are specific factors or common issues that might have contributed to the rejection. Any advice on how to better prepare for my reapplication, including the type of documentation that might strengthen my case, would be greatly appreciated.

- New Comment: Hi everyone,

I recently attended my US F-1 visa interview. Everything was going smoothly until they asked about my father's company, even though I hadn't mentioned it during the interview. My father is my sole sponsor for my studies. After that, the interviewer took my passport, stating that my application requires further administrative review. I'm really anxious about whether my visa will get approved. They advised me to check the CEAC website for updates in two days, but I'm

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unable to log in as it keeps saying, "your search did not return any data." Has anyone else experienced this issue or have any advice on what to do? Someone plssss help my university starts in literally a month

- New Comment: **STEM OPT Denial. Please help!**

Hi everyone,

Here's a brief summary of my situation:

My OPT ended on February 6th, 2024. I applied for a STEM OPT extension in December (a bit late, my fault). After 7 months, they requested evidence because I exceeded the 90-day job search period. During that period, I did have a job, but I quit after training due to a mismatch with the company's values. I also have a small startup using AI for telemarketing, and we have an LLC for it.

I provided evidence such as an offer letter and a Non-Disclosure Agreement with my coworker. However, my case was still denied.

I am currently working for a public university that is willing to sponsor an H1B for me, but I won't be able to stay in the US until that process is complete.

I'm stuck in a challenging situation. Could anyone offer any advice on my case?

Thank you so much.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Hi everyone, I was interviewed for F1 visa in the 1st of July. Despite having not paid the Sevis fee, the consular officer told me it was okay as long as I paid the fee soon after. I immediately paid Sevis fee right after returning

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home yet my visa was denied and they held my passport for 2 weeks. My flight is next month. What should I do

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Attended F1 visa interview yesterday at London embassy

Applying for F1 visa to complete masters degree at same university as undergrad. In freshman year of college, was arrested for underage consumption of alcohol. Completed court supervision for this and never received a conviction. Explained this all during my interview, things seemed to be going well, but then I got hit with the 221(g) refusal and was told that I need to see a panel physician due to my arrest being to do with alcohol.

I am now a bit confused about how I proceed. I have my medical examination this coming Monday, it says that they will send the results to the embassy by courier within 5 days. What do I do in the meantime? Will the embassy eventually reach out with the next steps, or am I supposed to send my passport back to them by courier after I have attended the exam and then wait to hopefully get my passport back with the visa stamp? Also, it says 1 week to 6 months timeline. With my case being rather petty, can I expect it to take that long? My semester starts in a month, so anything longer than that would mean that I would not be able to enroll

- New Comment: F1 Visa Refused, Need Advice

Hi, I was just rejected an F1 Visa with the following reason:

Failure to Qualify For Reasons Other Than Failure To Show Ties 214(b)

I am applying from Pakistan. I did my undergraduate in Computer Science and was going to DePaul, Chicago for a masters degree in the same field. I have a scholarship, appropriate funds and graduated with a 3.808 CGPA. I have been working full time as a software engineer since I graduated in 2023. I applied to 7 colleges all over the states, I got

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into all of them. Here's how my interview went:

Me: Hi.

VO: Hello, can I see your i20 and passport?

Me: Sure, here you go. *handed the documents*

VO: How many colleges did you apply to?

Me: 4, in Chicago (I wanted to make a case for Chicago, so I only mentioned the 4 that were in Chicago. I think this is where I messed up, shouldn't have said this)

VO: Why Chicago?

Me: My interest is health tech and Illinois is the health tech hub, so that's where I want to go. (Second nail in the coffin, this might give the intent to work more than intent to study)

VO: Where'd you do your undergraduate from?

Me: XYZ.

VO: I see that you have the presidential scholarship, who's gonna be funding the rest of your education?

Me: My parents.

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VO: What do they do?

Me: My father's an insurance sales representative and they own agricultural and rental properties in Pakistan.

VO: Got any friends or family in US?

Me: No.

Vo: Sorry, you are not illegible for a nonimmigrant visa at the moment, you're free to reapply.

My family's earning is sufficient enough to pay for me education. Our land is worth over a million dollars if sold, I have the valuation for it but I don't think that should be mentioned since that might reduce my ties to my country. I'm reapplying, does anyone have any advice for me?

I am actually going to DePaul because of various reasons:

- 1) They have dedicated courses that align with my interest
- 2) They have a project based masters programme that is in tandem with my career goals
- 3) They gave me a scholarship

I think I should mention that I applied to 7 colleges, all over the States and then justify DePaul if asked why that's the one I picked. Am I on the right track? Any and all advice is appreciated.

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- New Comment: # F1 visa got denied after Interview waiver got refused

For context, I am an international student from Nepal. I completed my bachelor's degree in Computer Science in the US and used my 3 OPT to work at a tech start-up. After finishing my OPT, I returned to my home country for the summer. I had gotten an offer from Babson for their 2-year MBA program. My plan was to get the visa and return to the US in the fall for my MBA.

I was given an interview waiver initially, and I went through the Dropbox process. My application was refused under 221(g) (administrative processing), and I was called in for an interview. Unfortunately, I was denied the visa under 214(b) yesterday. From my assessment, the visa officer was not convinced I had enough funds for my masters. My program starts August 26 and am now crunched for time. I am planning attempting another interview in India because I couldn't find a date here in Nepal. I do want to have a good chance of clearing the interview this time so I have added a rough transcript of what interview looked like. Please let me know what your thoughts are and what I could do better to improve my chances.

- New Comment: Hi! Our F1 and F2 visa application got rejected under 214b today and we're panicking because my husband (who is the one studying - A PhD in Theology) is starting school in 3 weeks!

Some context: we applied at the Singapore embassy, and are going as a family of 4 (with a toddler and an infant). My toddler was screaming a little bit so I'm not sure if it affected how things looked for our family.

VO asked about

- The number of schools my husband applied to (he said only this school, because this PhD is so niche, it's the only program in the whole world that offers this)

- Whether I'm working (yes I am, I'm a sociologist and researcher and we actually entered the US 5 years ago because I'm a fulbright scholar on a J1 visa)

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- How we are funding this (scholarship + we own a property here in Singapore and are collecting rental income + my salary)
- Intent to come back (yes, my husband said he wants to teach in a seminary here in Singapore and contribute to the local church)
- What will you do if your visa is rejected (he said he will rely on my income for now and figure out what's next)

Okay your visa is rejected. WHAT??

From what I gather from this sub,, it seems like it could be because a) we are older than 30 years old (I'm 32 and he's 35), b) they are worried we are going as a family and don't seem to have 'strong ties' of coming back to Singapore (cause most people who go as students have family who stay behind I'm assuming), c) he is studying theology so it could be a religious thing and they worried about fundamentalism or something or d) we weren't in formal clothes or something.

But it's not like I can make myself younger or something? The first three reasons are things that I don't think we can change.

Any tips/advice? We are going to reapply, and I hope we can still make it for him to start school in 3 weeks time. If not we might have to defer a year? That's super crazy man. Completely completely not expecting this at all.

- New Comment: Hi All,

I am an Indian. I had my interview on 24th July , Hyderabad embassy. I was issued 221(g) white slip. Next day I was asked to submit my visa at the VAC. I submitted. By when can I expect my passport back? I believe since it is in administrative processing, the process may take longer time. However, without my passport I cannot apply to anywhere else too. Can I reapply without passport?

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I have offers from colleges from other geographies. Seems USA is a gone case for me. I want to start visa application for other colleges.

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- New Comment: was renewing my F1 visa, got asked generic questions about my university, graduation date and plans after graduation. I answered that I'm planning to go back to my home country to help parents. The officer didn't ask for any documents, just gave me back my passport and said that my application needs Administrative Processing. What should I do? My previous F1 visa ends in a week and I still have ~5 months of courses before I graduate.

- New Comment: Help! F2 cancelled without prejudice for F1 dropbox refusal, requires in person interview.

Hi. I am on F1 visa and my F1 visa will expire on feb 2025. However my i20 will expire on 2026.

My wife was on F2 visa and she got admission here.

She went back to her homecountry (Turkey) to

apply for F1 visa. After filling out the information she

was asked to submit the documents through

dropbox. She submitted and two days later they

said that you are not qualified for visa interview

waiver as its new F1 application, so you need to take

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in person interview appointment and send back the

passport. They also cancelled the F2 visa without

any prejudice.

Now while finding the interview

dates on the system, the earliest we are getting is

march 2026.

Now what should we do in this case? Should we fill new DS160 and try to find new earlier appointment dates in new application?

We also applied for emergency appointment yesterday but no response came so far.

Please help if anyone can.

Does someone goes through the same situation

- New Comment: Hii I applied for a f1 dropbox visa and dropped my documents on July 29th on next day my status changed to refused in cace portal , I got tensed and searched in every where it's just administrative process but today when I check ustravel.doc it showed "organization scan". I called to usatravel.doc customer care they said my passport is at final processing..what does it means? That my visa will got approved or will receive 221g slip to attend interview?

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- New Comment: Hello Everyone ?

I had my visa interview on 10th July and due to non-payment of SEVIS fee, I was given the 221g slip.

? Paid the fees in an hour and submitted with the fee printout to New Delhi VAC.

? On the portal ([\[https://ceac.state.gov/CEACStatTracker/Status.aspx\]](https://ceac.state.gov/CEACStatTracker/Status.aspx)(<https://ceac.state.gov/CEACStatTracker/Status.aspx>)) it still shows "Administrative Processing". Any ideas ?

- New Comment: Hello!

My F1 visa interview took place on 21st June, and I was approved by the VO, and given a blue approval slip. 10 days after the interview my ceac status changed to "refused" upon which I emailed the embassy, and they told me that my case is undergoing a legally mandated administrative processing.

41 days after my interview I got a mail to collect my passport with a 221g slip, which was green color indicating I got 221(g) visa refusal and my case is in administrative processing.

Can anyone tell if they faced any similar situation as I am panicking out!

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: I applied together with my wife and children for an F1 visa for myself and F2 visas for my wife and our two children. The interview was on August 1, and there I was told that my visa was approved, but for my wife and children, I was missing the children's birth certificates and our marriage certificate. I was given a 221g form with instructions to email the documents, which I sent on the same day. On August 5, I was informed via email that they had received the documents or had forwarded them to the officer in charge. Taking these things into account, when I check

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the status of their process, it still says "refused," even though I have already received my F1 visa. Do you think there is a chance that my wife and children will receive their visas before the start of classes on August 27?

- New Comment: on June 5th2024, my spouse and I attended our visa interview to apply for an F1 visa for myself and an F2 visa for her. During the interview, I was repeatedly questioned about my travel history, particularly my trip to Pakistan last year. This trip was an invitation from a partner of my current company to provide training in data analysis. At the end of the interview, the visa officer retained both our passports and informed us that our applications were undergoing administrative processing. Additionally, I have been asked to complete and submit form DS 5535 for further investigation. 20 days later, the case had its first update and recently I asked by email for my visa status and then I received an automatic email system requesting for several academic information including list of publications, research plans in the US, name of my academic contact there along with my CV and invitation letter. I sent this information 4 weeks ago and my status on CEAC remain as "refused". I am a fully funded Ph.D. student and had to postpone my classes to the next semester because they will start in mid-August 2024.

Has anyone here gone through a similar situation? Do you think my visa could be issued within the next five months?

- New Comment: F1 Renewal visa was approved. Went to pick up passport, was told it was under administrative processing. CEAC says refused. I was told via mobile I dont need to provide additional materials. In your experience, how long did it take you to get approved? Did the consulate email you in a prompt time? I have not gotten any email formal communication.

FYI I am on stem opt.

Title of the post: A drunk DSO physically assaulted me unprovoked. What do I do?

Body of the post: Was out with friends one night and out of nowhere my DSO, ran up to me and physically assaulted me. Punching me in the face. I was in shock and not sure what to do. They threatened immediately that if I went to

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report to the school or law enforcement, that the DSO will cancel my f1 visa. I am living with trauma of the event to this day, what do I do?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Report it to the POLICE. Alert them to the threat to your immigration status if you reported the assault.

If the DSO retaliated against you by terminating your visa then you have a very easy to settle lawsuit vs the university and the DSO. Additionally getting your status reactivated would be simple in this case.

- New Comment: So uh did anything happen before that? sounds too random for me.

- New Comment: That's so random though. Especially, with online I-20s now, you barely see your DSO. I haven't seen my DSO in-person once. And for him to find you on the street while he's drunk and then beating you up, god damn, that's got to be one of the most bizarre things I've heard.

- New Comment: You should delete your post. You asked people what to do, people told you what to do but you declined every single advice

- New Comment: Was it intentional or was he just throwing random punches in the air and unfortunately you got hit. Because I don't see why and how you would run into your DSO in public place, a bar, or night club and he just punch you intentionally. Unless you said or did something that deserved the punch. Because to be punched by a drunk DSO doesn't add up at all, I am confident you are telling the full story here.

- New Comment: You're not going to the police to be believed/ get results. You're gonna go because you NEED to leave a paper trail.

- New Comment: You should first make a police complaint. Mention that DSO threatened you to cancel your f1 visa. Make sure you have all the documents and previous conversations that had with your DSO. If possible try to get a video

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footage from a CCTV camera. If not try to find some witness around the area that happened. Talk to your peers and see if there has been a similar incident. Gathering any of these proof will help you with your case. Also, most important make sure that you haven't done anything illegal even by mistake. Talk to an attorney/lawyer about it.

- New Comment: You said you were out with friends. That means you have witnesses. Take them with you, file police complaint. tell them specifically that the DSO assaulted you and threatened to cancel your F1 visa if you went to report. Your witnesses can also vouch for that. File complaint to university as well.

There should be serious actions taken over here with your DSOs actions

Even if you don't believe in police, You should use the police complaint as a formal procedure for getting assaulted and take that to your university so they can take action

- New Comment: I don't think your DSO can do that in retaliation. There should be someone higher up supervising your DSO or the whole international student office. The action of terminating SEVIS in revenge for a personal altercation couldn't be legal. He's definitely heading into bigger trouble after this retaliation.

- New Comment: Talk to your school officials (dean of students or the head of international students office or the admissions office)

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Report it to both the police and university and start building a paper trail. Otherwise they'll have an easier time canceling your visa

- New Comment: Report it to the next town local police if you think the ones in town are a joke

- New Comment: [removed]

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- New Comment: Contact your state attorney's office my guy. Easy and simple fix. And it's free!
- New Comment: How long ago did this occur? If you are pondering over whether to report this to the police or not, check the statute of limitations in your local state(you have to report a crime within a certain period and it varies by state usually).

What is your gender and the gender of the DSO?

Gender dynamics might explain why they chose to assault one of you (man assaulting man, woman assaulting a woman), unless.....

Has the DSO ever beaten up other people on this night or any other nights?

I feel like it might not be their first time if they did it so callously with threats and without remorse.

What year in what kind of program(grad or undergrad) are you? I am asking these questions because my suspicion is you might be a freshman from a country where physical assault might be normalized or something. In USA, it is not acceptable at all. You should defo talk to a lawyer.

Title of the post: Review of my F1 dropbox appointment for Fall 2023 (INDIA)

Body of the post: Hey guys, I'm here to share a detailed review and process of F1 visa dropbox process. (Indian applicant). Please upvote!

Dropbox/interview waiver is available to those applicants who have a valid US Visa of ANY type.

Steps to apply: PART A

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1. Fill out DS160
2. Pay the SEVIS fee. This is mandatory and is about \$350.
3. Login to ustraveldocs portal.
4. Select application for F1 visa and proceed with questions asked.
5. On being prompted for interview waiver, pay the visa fee. I used IMPS and it took 1 day for my reference number to get auto updated on ustraveldocs portal.
6. On payment confirmation, select the date of your convenience and you are done with part A of this process.

PART B : ON THE DAY OF DROPBOX APPOINTMENT (I visited a paid drop box location)

1. Reach the location at the appointment time only. I was asked to wait when I reached 15 minutes before time.
2. ONLY The following documents were asked:
 - original valid passport
 - DS160
 - appointment confirmation document
 - SEVIS Fee payment receipt
 - I20
 - 2 photos of size 2x2 (standard US Visa size, 80% face, white background)
3. Since I visited a paid drop box location, I was asked to pay Rs. 650 in cash ONLY.
4. Submit your passport and it will be delivered in 14 days.

... AND THE PROCESS IS COMPLETED!!!

Reddit Posts

Note: neither of the financial documents, nor any test score documents or any Xerox copies were asked.

Thanks for reading this review and I hope your doubts get clear. Comment down if any.

All the best!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you have a Dropbox appointment, can you just visit any of the paid locations at the appointment time without any other approval?
- New Comment: Hi! Thank you for this detailed process, it is very helpful! Curious if you are changing visa types? I will be reapplying as F1 student, so wondering if I would have to fill out the SEVIS DS 160 again.
- New Comment: What are the chances of rejection after dropbox? I am seeing a lot of messages and threads about dropbox rejection.
- New Comment: how far in advance can you select the date of the drop off.
- New Comment: Hi right now am in usa came here on B1/B2 and changed it to f1 now. Can i go for dropbox to get my f1visa stamping in india
- New Comment: Hi, does having a B1/B2 visa makes us eligible for interview waiver for F1 visa?
- New Comment: 1. i am eligible for a drop-off but the first available date to schedule a document drop-off appointment is beyond my desired travel date. i should ideally get an emergency appointment right?
2. i had a b1/b2 visa issued to me in march. wondering if i can transfer the visa appointment fee to this f1 appointment.
disclaimer: i visited usa but i'm back in india now.
- New Comment: how long after submitting the DS 160 was your actual drop box appointment? As in, how many days?
- New Comment: do you have to physically be present at the drop box appointment or can someone do it for you and submit those documents?

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- New Comment: guys I made a mess, I gave my old DS160 number instead of new one. Not sure how to change it now :(

I have my Dropbox appointment is next couple of days.

what should I do? should I change the appointment date?

- New Comment: Do I need to take my old passport as well , cause it has no stamping in it .

- New Comment: Hello, thank you for the lovely information, I have a drop box schedule on 22nd May at Chennai, Do I need to pay the sevis fees again or will the previous proof of payment sufficient, also I transferred from Master's to PhD, what other necessary documents could someone recommend.

- New Comment: Do you know if we have to be physically present or can someone else do the drop box for us? Please can someone confirm

- New Comment: Thanks for the info. I have a dropbox appointment on 21st June. Wish me luck.

- New Comment: so they ask for a full DS160 again? How do I retrieve mine after already submitting it a month ago?

- New Comment: Should one be physically present for their Dropbox appointment or can another person be authorised to do it for them? Thanks

- New Comment: Do you have to be physically present in the country for submission at your dropbox appointment?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hey! Thanks for such a detailed, helpful post. Just one question- did you submit the original I-20 during the appointment? Since you mentioned no xerox copies were asked, I was curious if all other original documents were sent back along with the passport.

- New Comment: Hey this is helpful, I just done with my dropbox appointment 5 days back. What was your VISA

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approval timeline? and which was your initial VISA?

- New Comment: Mine says delivered to post. Anyone knows what that means and how long it may take for my passport to be delivered?

- New Comment: Hey there! Seeking info on the F1 Dropbox process Mumbai to Chennai. Any insights on the timeline and required documents? Previously on F1, currently on B1/B2. Appreciate your help! Thanks!

- New Comment: I have a Dropbox appointment for F1 Visa. My appointment says Chennai location. Am I eligible to drop any of the below locations?

New Delhi VAC Free of cost drop-off location

Mumbai VAC Free of cost drop-off location

Chennai VAC Free of cost drop-off location

Hyderabad VAC Free of cost drop-off location

Kolkata VAC Free of cost drop-off location

Chandigarh Jalandhar Paid drop-off location (Rs 850/- per individual) Paid drop-off location (Rs 850/- per individual)

Ahmedabad Paid drop-off location (Rs 850/- per individual) Pune Paid drop-off location (Rs 850/- per individual)

Bengaluru Kochi Paid drop-off location (Rs 850/- per individual) Paid drop-off location (Rs 850/- per individual)

- New Comment: Hi,

Thanks for the info! Do you have an approximate idea of how much time the whole process of the drop-off took? I have a flight from Delhi to Mumbai 3 hours after my appointment.

- New Comment: This is very helpful, thanks.

In my situation, the school who issued my current i20 is different from the original one I applied my f1 visa for. Attended a masters program at different school after undergrad OPT expired. Any idea whether I would need an interview appointment or can still do Dropbox in this case?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: May I know if I have a valid F1 visa, can I use the drop box for B1/B2 visa as well?
- New Comment: Can I go for a drop box appointment if I change the university and course but only after going to US and realizing the uni and course were not a right fit for me ? I'm currently in India
- New Comment: If you see this and reply it'd be appreciated. So one can go to any location Only at the time of their appointment right? Just cause it's Dropbox I can't go at any time and drop off the documents, right?

Title of the post: Moving Back Home

Body of the post: I'll be heading back home in a few weeks after spending 7 years in the U.S. as a student and on OPT.

For those who've been through this transition, what do you wish you'd known or done before making the move? What was on your checklist before leaving? Did you need to manage any specific paperwork or close out accounts that you didn't anticipate? I'm gonna keep my bank account open and keep my US number at least for a little while longer. Any advice on managing shipping or handling personal belongings?

Also, how soon do you think it's safe to apply for a tourist visa? I had one before, but it expired last year. I'd love to visit some friends during the winter holidays but want to avoid any issues or misunderstandings.

Thanks in advance for your tips and experiences! Your insights will be invaluable as I prepare for this transition.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: As someone who only took a year leave of absence, the thing that I wish I did was removing your cell phone number from EVERY account. ESPECIALLY anything that requires 2FA, couldn't login to Robinhood for a year , stupid company.

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Freeze your credit reports.

- New Comment: Did this a few years ago. Start planning early on what you want to bring home and what you don't. It's incredibly stressful trying to pack up your whole life to a different country. Start thinking about your car and your lease of those are things you have to settle. I didn't ship anything home, so I threw away a lot of things and fit everything into 3 suitcases.

Consolidate your finances. Having a bank account open is wise, having 5 is an annoyance. Think about what you want to do with your mail. In my case I sent it to a friend. For phone number, I recommend changing to Google Fi as they give roaming at the cost of \$20/month.

- New Comment: Before leaving, make sure to notify your university and the IRS, close any subscriptions, and sort out your healthcare. For your tourist visa, reapplying a few months in advance should be safe. BTW, if you're ever considering further studies in Canada, Halp has free immigration lawyers to help with study visas!

- New Comment: I'm just gonna comment because I'm in the exact same situation as you OP

One advice I can give though is that I don't think you need to wait to renew your tourist visa. Since it expired recently I would recommend to apply for renewal right when you're back. You most likely won't need to do the interview again

- New Comment: I did the same. I also have chase that allows international address. Question - What are people doing about their 401K account. It's been a month since I moved to India and haven't been able to figure out what to do with my fidelity account

- New Comment: Do you have any 401k or Roth IRA acc ..and if you have what are the brokerages they r in ?.. have any plans for that ?

- New Comment: This comment probably wouldn't answer your question, but if it's alright, can we please connect? I need some guidance regarding the whole process

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Not sure how I can help (im in 1st year of CPT) but CPT+OPT is 5 years right? How did you stay for 7 years?
- New Comment: it's strong to go back home, I'd definitely give my phone number to a good friend and take away all the money with me
- New Comment: For phone number, you can port your number to USmobile pick a basic plan 300 min/ 300 sms and you pay \$10/month, and forward your calls/text to a free Google voice. So you can receive calls / sms and call out or send text messages from your US number from abroad.
- New Comment: no advise, but you are one strong person!!! I am in my last year of OPT and dont know where will I be next year this time! but all the best to you!!
- New Comment: Why you leaving? I mean if you would like to share. Didn't you get the H1B?

Title of the post: F1 visa Approval 2 weeks after Rejection

Body of the post: I'm happy to share something positive here to encourage someone. Two weeks ago, a broken-hearted me came on this sub to rant and solicit advice after my near-perfect F1 visa application was rejected in an interview. I was encouraged to reapply and fortunately got a date just 2 days after dusting myself off. I went into my second interview and 4mins later, my visa was approved. I'm soo happy my dream of pursuing a PhD is finally manifesting. My advice is 1) know the strength of your application (whatever it is that makes your admission unique; scholarship, academic background, urgency of your research etc) 2) Use it to your advantage. Never let the VO overlook it. Say it loud and clear. 3) Talk like you're in a conversation with a human being and they'll listen to you. Good luck to anyone on their F1 visa journey!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Glad for you, you deserve it!

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Congratulations! Are you planning to attend the same university? Have you made any changes to your DS-160 application after your initial rejection?
- New Comment: Congratulations ?, how did you get the refusal slot?
- New Comment: Congrats!!
- New Comment: Makes me really happy for you. I got denied my B1/B2 but am planning to apply for F1 soon. I'm gonna take the positivity from your post and apply it to my situation as well. Good luck to you
- New Comment: I also was denied 2 weeks ago. I recently today received the news I received a full scholarship that i had long applied for. Should I also try my hand at reapplying since last time my Uncle was my sponsor

Title of the post: Just turned 18 years old, 54.5k usd saved up, abusive dad took 35k before and wa

Body of the post:

In dire need of advice, or a plan.

I'm a Jordanian that lives in Turkey, most my relatives/family lives in the US (at least the ones I like) I've had a very rough childhood due to my father I don't want to get into it but he's abusive in every way and he took 35k from me and now that I made 55k more he wants 35k of that.

I'm only interested in the tech/video game industry (my goal is to become a product manager in those industries). The region I live in, however, barely has such an industry and salaries are so low that I can't make such a lifestyle shift going from making that much money as a 15-18 year old with barely any stress then as I graduate college I do literal slave work for a job that I despise in exchange for like 1k USD a month.

Anyways I graduate on the second week of June and I've been stalling saying that it takes time to register a new bank

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account on Roblox because I recently changed banks but this isn't gonna last for very long, eventually I'm gonna have to confront him and refuse and when that happens I don't know what I'll do cause he might kick me out or attack me and he has all my documents and such and I still need to attend school and my graduation and need an address so I don't see how I can become free of him.

He doesn't want me studying there and will do anything to stop it, he even told me if I go there and abandon him he'll fly over and chase me down and put a bullet in my head I'm not sure if he was joking but one thing I know for sure is he REALLY doesn't want me going.

I've got average grades, 3.0 GPA, 1010 SAT score (although that's from a score I took on march to try out the bluebook system I'm gonna retake it in June and possibly get a better score)

Roblox is not stable at all and I might not be making any money soon or might be rich there's no way of knowing but I'm trying to prepare for the worst case scenario rather than the rarer best.

I'm interested in studying business or comp sci, mostly leaning towards comp sci since I've heard that even for product managers in the tech industry they prefer someone with a technical degree/background. My relatives live around Chicago, Indiana, Michigan just overall around that area/side. I'm aware a lot of what I'm saying is irrelevant, I'm just trying to provide as much info as possible.

So my main questions are do you think my goal is realistic, should I bother trying, how to gain independence, how do I deal with my father, and what steps can I take to stay in the country after studying and how should I go around getting the f1 visa?

Bonus question: For my grades and situation do you know any colleges with a decent rank that I got a good chance of

Reddit Posts

getting admitted to? preferably under 30k a year (for internationals).

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Do community college for two years to get grades up. Apply to full need schools to lower cost of attendance. Look into Macalester College, Amherst, and Pomona.

- New Comment: or go to Canada, you'll be able to work on your Roblox unlike the US

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: You're not allowed to work in the US so choose Canada or Europe!

- New Comment: If I were you my top priority would just be moving out because your dad seems dangerous. No parent should ever steal from or threaten to kill their own child.

You might not be able to financially support yourself for 4 years in the US since you can't work at all, unless it's at the university you attend (you'd make probably like \$15 an hour, not much), so either try to get scholarships or consider studying in another country.

Also, I'm a comp sci international student in the US and I'm preparing to most likely go back to my country after I finish my degree because of the current market. You only have 2 months to find an offer or OPT internship and CS grads are struggling a lot to find jobs after college.

- New Comment: Typical Jordanian dad

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: F1 visas for junior college are quite common I would absolutely recommend you getting none, especially if you can support yourself through Roblox

- New Comment: Hey! I've been on an F-1 visa for game dev.

First off, you should look into Drexel University - they're great because they offer a LOT of scholarships to international

Reddit Posts

students, need based. I went there on a good amount of scholarship, for their Game Design and Production program, and I know a few friends in CS and other majors who got a full ride. Drexel also has 6 month co-op system which can get you enough savings to support you financially for at least one term after the co-op. Not enough I know, but it is one of the few unis that while insanely expensive, offer international students a lot of ways to get financial aid. If you want to discuss more feel free to DM me.

Then, others have already said this, but you will NOT be allowed to work in the US while on F-1. Which sucks, so you're better off going to Canada or Europe. However, you can earn passive income while on F-1, which they define as income from sources that you're not actively working for. So in your case, royalties from the work you did on Roblox before you move to the US are legal, as long as you do not do any more "work". Anything that you make for Roblox should stop as soon as you enter the US, but you can keep earning money from that stuff you created until that point. Nothing new. This is also a gray area so eventually you'll need to discuss this with the school's International Students office, and some even offer free consultations with immigration attorneys.

I hope whatever you choose to do works out for you, good luck!!

- New Comment: Unrelated but what's the roblox game you made ? I love roblox lol

- New Comment: What is the legal age in Jordan to get out of the house? Does it depend on gender? If so, see how legally you can come out of there. Apply for scholarships and grants even before your student applications. See if there are any non profits or charitable organizations or paralegal agencies than can help you.

- New Comment: Secure all your documents and gtfo of there asap. Can you finish your high school degree online?

- New Comment: Hey man. You can try this guys called Mpower they give loans to people who want to study in USA or Canada. Also you won't get rejected because you got accepted in community college. Their are many factors. Anyways, I am currently working on my Visa to go to the USA with a guy. If you need any help or info i will do my best to help. Also university that cost not that much. Lewis, saint Peters, and saint Francis university

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- New Comment: Canada

- New Comment: I got my F1 visa for a community college in Texas. Starting my 2 year nursing program in the fall. You can totally get a F1 visa for a community college! :)

Title of the post: Why do Employers hesitate to hire international students on F1-OPT Visa despite I

Body of the post: What does a company have to do differently with an international student on F1 Visa, compared to a US citizen?

From my research on ChatGPT, it seems there are no financial commitments until the student requires a H1B after 3 years (!), and the company just has to report to DHS about the student and their job description.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: well very simple why would u hire temporary work visa not even long as h1b at the same time stem opt also requires reporting and many extra work which is super annoying for company side of view and plus alot more candidate with green card holder so why take trouble ?

- New Comment: ?From my research on ChatGPT?

- New Comment: Come on.. even as an international student I get why.. so whenever I got told no i just went to the next one. it really sucks but those are the rules of the game.

- New Comment: Bro I'm on F1 and the answer is obvs. Why would a company hire the f1 if after 3 years they can't stay. Most companies aren't gonna be sponsoring someone on h1b in this economy. Plus most f1 students are computing related or wfh jobs. You don't need to be in USA. They'd send you to India Canada wherever and have you work there or outsource the job fully.

It sucks but USA is both a highly populated country and also number 1 economy. Desis have this proudy myth where

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they think they're number 1 and the smartest people there are. In my case I usually tell the employer I'm Canadian and hey if you can't sponsor me after 3 years I'll work remotely from Canada if I have to but give me a chance?.and even then it doesn't really work because they don't want that uncertainty.

Moral of the story: you have potential but no experience. USA economy is number 1 in the world but in bad shape. It's just better than other countries. Inflation interest rates all play a role in company's profit margins. It's unfair but life is just unfair. Some are born lucky to be US citizens and not have to deal with this crap. Like that Lee Greenwood song about the USA "thank my lucky stars to be living here today"

- New Comment: Because would you join a company knowing 3yrs from now they will fire you?

- New Comment: I feel three main reasons, to be honest,

1. Many small and medium sized employers aren't familiar with the process and people are scared of what they don't know or understand.
2. OPT/STEM-OPT students have better ties with their country of origin than USA, so employers fear that employee will leave USA eventually.
3. If they have a better understanding of the process, then still they fear what if you leave, they feel that they did extra paperwork to hire an international student, but didn't last long time as they expected.

Not saying, this is how I feel, but after speaking with many employers and HR manager, this is what I gather.

- New Comment: I have found f-1 OPT will take the first job offered and actively interview the whole time looking for their ideal position.

- New Comment: Not every company has E-verify. So for some companies, you can only work for 1 year. Previously, there wasn't premium processing for OPT EADs or the STEM extension, although that has changed now. That led to some uncertainty for employers about when you'd be able to begin work and whether you'd have a gap in employment

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authorization.

- New Comment: 1. If the company hires you for full time, they have obligatory responsibility to sponsor you on H1 which is cost for company.

2. How many F1-OPT students really work without expecting any H1B sponsorship?

3. When a position is created/opened it will have fixed band of salary. For the same salary if I can hire a usc why the company prefer F1-OPT candidate

There are genuine companies that really offer entry positions for f1-opt candidates.

There are many (it)consulting that recruit opt candidates for different reasons.

Even in these two cases everyone needs sponsorship

Your argument of not requiring ?sponsor? is not valid argument.

- New Comment: 1) you dont ?research? on chatGPT, the G and T in GPT means everything created after a prompt in just made up stuff.

2) It takes time to train you and get you up to speed, even if you are the expert in the field, it still takes time to get used to the administrative stuff. Even if it?s the stuff you know, you might need to learn a new software, or the company just has different procedures of doing things. All of which takes time to learn.

3) it takes time for you to get assigned to projects and get you fully productive. Even if you come in with experience, you still need to get your project up and running which takes time.

4) These training and learning time are paid on company money and in general dont make profit until YOU are up to speed. It can take between 3 months to a year for someone to be fully productive, so yes they REALLY want you around for a while.

5) Even tech companies with high turnover rate dont actually WANT that. It hurts a lot to have a high turnover rate.

Codes with bad comments takes time to decipher, new hires might not like how the previous guy does it and will rewrite the whole code, etc?

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- New Comment: if you have 200 applicants for 1 position, and there are 100 qualified applicants, 50 of them are US citizens, 50 are F-1 students, who would you choose to move to the next stage of the application process given that their abilities are exactly the same and you can only interview about 20 of the qualified applicants?

- New Comment: Cause it is a competitive marketplace - if I can hire a guy and I have two options who works in a similar manner. One needs sponsorship and the other does not. I would surely look at cost benefit ratio.

Similarly, for companies, it is beneficial to hire a bit untalented guy than a talented guy for a work. As BENEFITS and OPPORTUNITY, company can send the untalented guy on training and development programs too.

International scholars need to bring a lot more to a table to companies really think about hiring. It kinda makes sense to me why it would be such a case too.

- New Comment: Although employees may leave after 3 years with no work auth requirements, companies want to hire employees for the long term. 5, 10, 20+ years, so a fixed time limit on a role usually isn't worth their time quite honestly.

- New Comment: I think OPs biggest gap in understanding is other "soft" costs.

If a company hires someone who's on OPT and will need support for H1B , the known legal cost is application for the lottery till you get one or have to leave the country.

But hiring the person also means internal soft costs of training a grad to get integrated with the team. At that time as a company the hope will be that the employee gets the H1B visa, else it'll be time and effort lost.

Sorry to say, although as a grad one might bring in some new perspective, the output and quality is still not on par with a seasoned developer.

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Let's say the candidate does get the H1B visa and sticks with the company, the next big cost will be supporting the Green Card application, else they risk losing the employee yet again.

Let's say the candidate didn't get H1B , and the company wants to retain them, they'll have to incur the cost of transferring the employee to another country and bring them back (double cost). Again, not a cost worth spending on a grad with 3-5 year of experience unless the grad had joined as a VP,/Director/Executives. (Lots of management experience already!!?)

Really large companies with global footprint may consider going through all these costs and hassle every few years. But many won't - corporate is a capitalist world where the aim to first see what value add will Company or Shareholders have with the investment and not what value can the company add to employees life! ?????

Now compare all of these costs and hassle Vs hiring a few people without a need for visa support and outsourcing the grunt work to a cheaper country (no 401K costs, low benefit costs, almost 25-30% cost to company).

- New Comment: Because their employee turnaround is very expensive

- New Comment: why would any company hiring someone KNOWING that you'll be gone in 3 years?

- New Comment: Are you serious?

- New Comment: >What does a company have to do differently with an international student on F1 Visa, compared to a US citizen?

Different paperwork verification for E-verify if they participate. Complete the I-983 for STEM OPT.

>From my research on ChatGPT, it seems there are no financial commitments until the student requires a H1B after 3 years

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We don't use ChatGPT for legal advice, it misses the nuance. The financial commitment begins as soon as the student is selected for H1B. That could be as soon as year 1 of OPT.

>the company just has to report to DHS about the student and their job description.

Again, don't use CHATGPT for legal help, the above is entirely incorrect.

>Why do Employers hesitate to hire international students on F1-OPT Visa despite it not requiring employers to "sponsor" candidates for 3 years?

Because they are by default here temporarily, cost more than a US worker, and even if they want to sponsor, it is a lottery to obtain the H1B.

- New Comment: For a company that doesn't sponsor for H1B, an international student is an attrition risk from Day 1 not just at the end of the 3 years.

This is because they will be looking for an employer who can sponsor and attempting to move.

No company wants to hire someone who is by definition looking to leave immediately. The training/get up to speed period is often wasted because the employee leaves.

- New Comment: As a Canadian that got his green card for this reason. Costs of filing the paperwork is not something a company wants to spend on. Getting it isn't guaranteed and could be a waste of money for training when you could just leave and go back to your home country or another. It's a big expense gamble, easiest way to go about getting a sniff during this weird job hunting time is look for companies usually large organizations that sponsor h1b1 or get a green card to really relive all the stress.

- New Comment: There are fees a company has to pay the federal government regardless of F1 OPT or H1B. The

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ACIWA must be paid by the company as soon as they hire a VISA holder and, depending g on campnay size, could be up to \$1500

- New Comment: Ok if you don?t want sponsorship just mention that in your job application.

Title of the post: OPT nightmare

Body of the post: It's been 2 months since I graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Quantitative Economics, which grants me OPT + 24 months STEM Extension

I've had interviews with good companies in capital markets and such, like VanEck fir example...

The main issue is always the same - they cannot sponsor my H1B after the three year period.

What kind of companies should I look for that are more ready to sponsor the visa?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hey there, I'm stem opt with econometrics and quantitative economics. I applied in 1000+ companies. Large corporations, etc. A midsize-small company took me in. Told them about my situation. They said they trust me and they believe that I can handle myself my immigration situation. After working for a year. Through hard work and being efficient. They decided they wanted to keep me. They enrolled in everify for me. And are willing to sponsor now. From personal experience and some classmates experience. Midsize-small size companies are the way to go. You can convince them and there is less politics involved compared to a large company.

- New Comment: After applying for lots and lots of positions at bigger, national companies, I was able to land a role at a smaller local-ish company that actually has had experience in the whole OPT and H1B process so that aspect wasn?t as taboo than it was at the bigger companies. I definitely recommend looking towards that aspect, often times it?ll also

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be a better experience! Good luck in your search!

- New Comment: What I did was tell the company I was interviewing with that I would find a way to obtain a work visa or green card without their help and they offered me the job. At the end of the day, you just need to buy yourself the time, with the STEM extension, you have essentially 3 years to either convince the company to sponsor you, or find another company that will

- New Comment: Try non profits or educational institutes. They qualify for cap exempt H1B.

- New Comment: Bro, you have a limited unemployment period. (2 month or 3 months)

Most entry-level jobs will not provide Sponsorship, or it is hard to negotiate for that.

I think you should accept the offer first. You have 3 years opt !!! No need to worry about that too much. After you have industry experience, it will be easier to find a job with sponsor.

- New Comment: Just say NO, you don't need sponsorship and that you have your own means of getting a greencard or something similar. That would at least give you 3 years to work and save you from tonnes of rejections and no replies. Once you get your first job, it usually becomes easier to apply - and then you can look for other companies that would sponsor you.

- New Comment: I was on a similar boat after completing my undergrad in Electrical Engineering ? Realized that the same companies are a lot more open to hiring Masters candidates and sponsor.

Went ahead with my Master's and landed a job at a top company with no issues. Been on my H1-b and working for a decade.

In hindsight, getting the masters worked out really well, as you get hired at a better level and don't really need to go

Reddit Posts

back to school unless you want to pursue something specific.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Hi, are the companies you interviewed for ok with you working on OPT? If yes, you could start working and find a company that will sponsor you.

- New Comment: Check out this website for companies that sponsor H1B visa -
https://h1bdata.info

Title of the post: OPT approved and job secured, but how can I approach H1B sponsorship?

Body of the post: Yesterday my EAD card was produced, and two months ago I signed an offer from a Software company to work remotely as an Associate SWE a week after graduating college. They know I am an international students and I made it clear I needed support with my visa status.

They are E-verified, have been great with my CPTs (I interned with them), but have not mentioned anything about H1B visa sponsorship. Because I am from Latin America I would expect that it would take me three tries to get it.

So my question is, how can approach the situation with management and possibly HR? I do not want to seem desperate or demand that they sponsor me, just want to know if it is a possibility. If not I will probably work for 3 years then get a masters. People have told me that some companies pay for their employees' master degrees, is this possible?

Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: tbh the sooner you tell them, the better. I went to my boss first and explained them the situation, the different options and deadlines. I think I could have told them sooner (i waited till late january/early february). h1b

Reddit Posts

registration usually starts the first week of March.

regarding school, you would have to talk to your employer and see if they are able to pay for it.

- New Comment: The sooner, the better. My company has been great with my OPT/STEM OPT status, but they never mentioned H1-B before I asked.

I'm from Latin America as well and got it with my first try. I reached out to HR asking if they filed (I knew they did) and they caught on. They didn't have an issue with it and their lawyers were great. I think it was before my second year of being with the company. Make sure you ask about it before the deadlines too!

- New Comment: >They are E-verified, have been great with my CPTs (I interned with them), but have not mentioned anything about H1B visa sponsorship. Because I am from Latin America I would expect that it would take me three tries to get it.

Your home country has absolutely no impact on being selected for the lottery.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: If you are not Indian or Chinese you really should consider asking them to start the EB-2 process. Don't waste your time on a random lottery with a 20%-30% chance of winning

- New Comment: H1b lottery is March 2025 again . I would suggest follow up with your HR by looping your manager in an email.

Also meanwhile find out if anyone else in your company are working on VISA sponsorship and find out the process.

Make sure you will be sponsored H1b and greencard if they say no just leave to another and don't waste your time in same company.

- New Comment: Ensure it's written on your offer letter that they will enter you in H1b lottery. I only got a verbal consent

Reddit Posts

when I joined and I got screwed over. The first year they told me I haven't stayed in the company long enough and promised me next year. In my second year, they said the company no longer sponsored H1b. After that, I got laid off and only have one last chance.

- New Comment: Just talk to them about this before you join. I made it clear to them that I needed H1B and Green card sponsorship and asked for timelines from them about when they would apply. Setting expectations for these is important for both sides.

- New Comment: Wait if you are from latam does that lower our chances?? How?

Title of the post: F1 visa rejected for a top ranked school

Body of the post: I'm from India and I got an admit for the MS in CS program at UC San Diego for fall 2022. My program is ranked #4 for cs(csrankings) and is one of the most competitive schools to get in. But my F1 visa got denied 15 days back and I'm not able to figure out the reasons. I had resigned from my job recently to take a break and learn some prerequisites required for my grad courses. Here's a transcript of my interview. Pls let me know what you guys think. I was not asked about my sources of funding or future plans as well. I was just given a 214b in the end.

Program: MS CS in UC San Diego

VO: Please pass your passport

VO: Pass your i20 and sevis receipt

So UC San Diego is it?

Reddit Posts

Me: Yeah officer UC San Diego

VO: Oh put on your mask please

Me: Yes officer

VO: When did you graduate?

Me: 2021 officer

VO: What have you been doing?

Me: I was working at X as an associate software developer. I quit my job last month.

VO: Why did you quit your job?

Me: I am planning to take a few advanced courses in the fall quarter, so I wanted to prepare for that and I have been working on some personal projects related to AI

VO: Okay. So you were working at X and You took a break. How long did you work?

Me: Yes officer I was working from July 2021 to May 2022 i.e until last month.

VO: Okay got it. What was your final year project in UG?

Reddit Posts

Me: My thesis was titled "Multilabel Text Classification of Scientific Abstract". I explored various Machine Learning methods to classify scientific publications and research articles. The results were also published in springer.

VO: Oh you published the results?

Me: Yeah it was published in springer

VO: What is your father doing?

Me: He is currently working as a headmaster in a state government school and his annual income is X lakhs rupees which is equivalent to Y usd.

VO: Please place 4 fingers of your left hand and press until you hear a beep

Me: Yeah done

VO: Please place both of your thumbs

Me: Done

VO: Im not able to approve your visa right now and I can't explain any further. You may try again.

I had 2x the i20 amount which includes my father's savings and an educational loan and the VO didn't even ask me about it. I don't understand what went wrong here. I thought leaving the job would have been the reason but I see a lot of

Reddit Posts

people with a year gap and people who had quit 5-6 months before the visa interview getting an approval.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >"Im not able to approve your visa right now and I can't explain any further. You may try again."

Yea...you were flagged before you arrived.

>I had 2x the i20 amount which includes my father's savings and an educational loan and the VO didn't even ask me about it. I don't understand what went wrong here.

It was fully outside your hands. You were flagged for some other reason. He was documenting your information to help with a future application to help overcome your flag.

- New Comment: Guys i got my visa approved today in Kolkata! Just two questions. What course and specialization, tell me about machine learning. That's all

- New Comment: Dude that absolutely sucks.

I had my VI in Chennai a week ago, and got 221g (Administrative Processing) for MS MechE in University of Maryland, College Park.

Mine was an issue due to research. But i don't even see a reason why yours was rejected.

If there's one thing i learnt from this whole process, is that these VOs have way too much power to get away with such actions and not be answerable to anyone.

I hope you'll get another slot next month, and get your visa dude :/

- New Comment: Hey, seems weird. can I ask which consulate ?

- New Comment: Next time book slot for Delhi.. I would suggest

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: A few red flags were

1: you Quitting your job or taking a break

2: Dont say anything more the interviewer is asking for .

- New Comment: Were you able to book another slot and get a second chance for your visa?

- New Comment: Really sorry that this happened. From your transcript, it looks like you gave decent answers. All of us can only speculate why you got a visa rejection. Perhaps you could talk to one of the ex-visa officers at Argo Visa to understand why this happened? I haven't tried their service but watched their videos on YouTube and they were very helpful before I went for my visa interview at the Mumbai consulate earlier this month. Good luck!

- New Comment: Hey, to me it sounds like you couldn't prove country roots and sounded like someone that has decided not to come back and with immigration intent. But it's just my guess and someone more qualified would know better.

- New Comment: Don't say anything about AI, it's a huge red flag

- New Comment: Oh i see. I wasn't aware about that. I see a lot of people over here getting approvals for MS in AI programs. So i thought it wouldn't be a problem

- New Comment: Hi! Going to Delhi made a difference? And how useful was the visainterviewcoach .com?

- New Comment: Don?t sweat it. People get denied for no reason. They might just not like the color of your shirt or whatever reason. It?s just unfortunate they use discretion to issue visas.

- New Comment: Nonimmigrant visa interviews seem random from applicants' perspectives, but it's safe to assume that the interviewers often already know answers to all the questions they ask, sometimes more than you know yourself. Just from the transcript, it's hard to tell but there has to be something that did not look right in the interviewer's eyes.

Reddit Posts

If I really had to hazard a flimsy guess, I would wonder why someone who had a respectable record (i.e. publishing in Springer, which is a great fit) would need to go to America instead of just continuing to study in India.

- New Comment: The major reason that led to your rejection was, the reason you gave for leave your job(just my opinion).

One of major causes for 214b is lack of economic ties to one's home country. If you left your job when you were not granted the visa it was seen as an immigrant intent.

- New Comment: I think you being unemployed at the time of interview is the reason. Unless that part changes in your profile, you may get rejected again. So, better go next time with an employment.

- New Comment: In how many days you got F1 refused slots again ?

- New Comment: Oh okay. Same here. I have never applied for any sort of visa or travelled to any other countries before

- New Comment: OP finally were you able to get the visa ?

- New Comment: Hi mind sharing how you overcome your rejection? Cause I am on the same boat.

- New Comment: Hey there, how long did it take for you to get rejection slot after the Chennai interview?

- New Comment: Is X > 10 lpa?

Title of the post: Someone called me say I will be deported if I don't provide them my immigration i

Body of the post: I received a call this morning saying that a legal case is filed against and wanted my immigration information including passport number, SSN, alien number.

When I asked him to contact the international student office or that I will give his number to ISS, he started threatening

Reddit Posts

me that I will be deported immediately. I hung up on him.

Is this a scam?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes this is a scam. Tell them to fuck off and that you work for USCIS.
- New Comment: it is a scam! Couple of days ago I got a call saying they were calling from the department of justice. I had time and played along, and asked him where he was calling from and asked him general questions about the US laws, dude had no idea about a single thing, Couldn't even name the place he was calling from correctly.
- New Comment: report the number immediately
- New Comment: Hate to be the guy, but what accent? American?

Fwiw it's 100% a scam of course.

- New Comment: Yeah it's a scam. Regardless of the accent.

For future reference, be it DOJ, IRS or anything, always ask if you can call back the number on the official website and speak with them.

The reason is that A. If it's a wrong number, they're done. And B. Official phone numbers can actually be easily spoofed. But calling the official number back is (more) foolproof

- New Comment: Definitely a scam
- New Comment: It's a scam. Got the same call 2 days ago.
- New Comment: It is scam . Happened with me . I know the way they threatened is scary but just block
- New Comment: Yep, definitely a scam

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: DOJ, IRS, USCIS, and SSA will never call you! I receive social security scam calls all the time saying they have an arrest warrant for me lol

- New Comment: Oh, it gives me anxiety, it was happened to me and I fell for it, worst day of my life.

Just ignore all the calls, they USCIS never calls you

- New Comment: Report this to FTC . <https://reportfraud.ftc.gov/>

- New Comment: Under no circumstances should you give your details to them. Tell them to find out about your details the same way they got your phone number

Title of the post: What do I do?

Body of the post: I applied for my stem OPT extension on December 5th 2023 and it's yet to be approved by uscis.

Did anyone face the same situation and if so please help me out.

Thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yeah, that's completely normal, those times are not real however you want to cut it, sometimes they will say 2 weeks and the next day it will say 2 months.

Just wait, that is pretty much all you can do, I ****THINK**** if you file for STEM OPT extension you have like 180 days of extended validity of your original OPT on automatic, I could be wrong, but I think that's how this works.

- New Comment: Nothing to worry about, a lot of people STEM Extension is taking. The wait time is 3-4months. I am also waiting for the approval. I applied on 20th Dec.

Reddit Posts

One of my friends, he got his STEM approved after 110 days of applying. All we can do is wait.

- New Comment: same. Applied for OPT EAD on 8th of March. Last week my status changed from 1 week to "taking more time than expected". My start date is in 2 months and I will apply for Premium this week

- New Comment: You can apply for Premium Processing if you want to but it is almost \$1700 and will have a decision in 2 weeks but it is a lot of money so your call. If your OPT is expired and you have a pending STEM OPT application then you get an automatic 180 day extension. Keep in mind if your STEM OPT application is rejected in those 180 days then your extension immediately ends and since your OPT is already expired you cannot apply for STEM OPT again.

- New Comment: I filed on 01/15/24 and still waiting as well.

Can someone applied for the STEM OPT recently chime in for a timeline?

- New Comment: Is everyone talking about stem extension? Regular OPT is still taking that long?

- New Comment: Hey hi, just wait: my friend got his card approval after 129 days. He applied it on Nov 20th got the approval notice on March 31st. It's going to take another 2-3 weeks in your case to get an update. You can call the service center to know ur status but it can cause a delay in ur case. If it is in the process of review as per USCIS website

- New Comment: Same here. I applied on Dec 14th, 2023. Still waiting for my EAD. I'm not sure whether to wait till it hits 4 months or go for Premium Processing at this point.

- New Comment: Since I had to travel so I applied for premium

Processing and it got approved next day. Everywhere mfs love ???

- New Comment: Very normal just like H1B, every process is torture

- New Comment: The system is designed to do that

- New Comment: The current approval date is near the 24th or 25th of November. You might get approval notice in another 20 or 30 days.

Reddit Posts

Mine took 109 days to get it approved.

- New Comment: Oh bro I applied May 2023 got it in September. My school tip? If you need it now you can pay \$1500

ok lol

- New Comment: Applied mine on 18th Dec. Still waiting. Same boat I guess.

- New Comment: Same boat as you! It's been 4 months and no response? Super scared

- New Comment: I paid for the premium option bc I was deathly afraid of this happening. God bless your application.

But just fyi, my application was processed in like 2 weeks, and i stupidly submitted an unsigned I-20... its almost disgusting that the usual wait time is MONTHS.

- New Comment: Hi, I applied for initial OPT on March 10th on Regular processing. Till now there is no movement at all.

It is just showing Case Received and Receipt has been sent. Except this acknowledge there is no further update or progress. My start date is around June 20. Not sure why there is no further update. Do I need to opt a premium processing now?

- New Comment: You already have a job?

I applied in February and got approved in march and no job yet!

- New Comment: Same here. Applied on Dec 15th.

- New Comment: Perfectly normal. Currently those who applied on Nov 20-30 are being approved. So wait atleast another few weeks

- New Comment: Glad i'm not the only one. I filed Stem opt on Dec 9th too i guess we just have to wait

- New Comment: No update yet, did anyone get an approval recently?

- New Comment: I applied for STEM extension in November and got the same notice. My OPT was expiring first week of

Reddit Posts

February so I paid 1500 and applied for premium processing in the last week of January. The case moved so fast that I got my STEM OPT EAD card within a week delivered to my doorstep. Even my letter of approval came in a month after that. So premium processing is super fast and if you are in a position financially to relieve your headache I say go for it.

Title of the post: F1 interview experience Hyderabad

Body of the post: Hyderabad consulate interview experience

July 2 2024

Profile

12th 70% 2022

IELTS 7 bands

2 year gap

Bba in ops & it management (scholarship of 35%)

Wichita state University

(No electronics allowed not even digital watch)

Interview time 9:30am

I reached the premises on 9 am but i was planning to reach it on 8:30 but traffic was heavy (my hotel was 5 km away)

By the time i reached 10:30 slot was called out i joined queue embassy employee checked my ds160 passport

After checking he directed me to another queue alot of students were already standing so it took another 30 minutes another officer verified our details in his tablet like device by checking back of passport then we were headed towards

Reddit Posts

waiting seats after 20-30 minutes or so we were called out and slowly directed into embassy security.

Security checked my files and remove my belt for checking then (also they remove any ties if one is wearing)

afterwards you wear your stuff and join the final queue headed to consulate itself

Waited around a hour or so was allowed in consulate building waiting another 15 minutes (washroom is available in consulate building where you will give your interview) then your turn comes up they call 3-4 people at same time i was

alloted onto 22 window officer two candidates in front of me were rejected i was nervous

VO = VISA OFFICER

My turn came up

Me - Good morning officer

Vo - Good morning pass me your i20 and passport

Vo - Which university

Me - Wichita state University

Vo - what are your other admits

Me - Colorado mesa University, Montana state University and kent state University.

Vo - can you repeat it please (as the applicant before me was still packing her stuff up she couldn't hear me properly ig)

Me - Colorado mesa University, Montana state University and kent state University.

Reddit Posts

Vo - why business in USA you can do it in india

Me - indian institution lacks practicality and heavily relay on memorization stuff

Vo - well you are going for studies not for work you don't need practicality

Me - officer I'm gonna do a job to start of my career in business sector some kind of practical knowledge is needed to certain extent

Vo - who is paying for your school fees

Me - my dad

Vo - what is his occupation

Me - he's a farmer mainly focused on growing organic grains such as rice lentils mushrooms

Vo - what is the size of your dads land

Me - 8 acre

Vo - when did you graduate

Me - i did my +2 in 2022 and afterwards IELTS

Reddit Posts

Vo- oh so gap of 2 years so what you did

Me - well it took me 6 month to clear out IELTS exam and afterwards i took a gap for myself to think what should i do with my life.

Vo - what are you going to do after bachelors

Me - I'm planning to comeback to india (interrupted)

Vo - I'm not asking you to comeback to india tell me what will you do after your bechlors

Me - i want to do a job as a operation manager

Vo - please press your left hand and right hand and both thumbs on scanner

Me - sure

Vo - ah really that's nice any loan have you taken

Me - no mam my parents have 60 lakhs in saving and assest worth one crore with 20k dollar of scholarship.

Vo - have you been outside of india till now?

Me - no

Reddit Posts

Vo - (started typing aggressively on computer) what's your height sir

Me - around 6

Vo - have you been to America before

Me - no

Vo - so you are saying you haven't been to America before

Me - no

Vo - so im approving your visa and keeping your passport with me

Me - thank you officer

Took 5-10 mintues i think

I runned out of building aggressively ???

Gave thumbs up to my dad waiting outside

Thank you for reading

Best of luck

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yyayayayayayayayayayayayayayayaysysysysysyayayayayayaya

- New Comment: Congrats!

did they by any chance ask for financial "proof" or documentation, to prove that you can sustain yourself for the next coming 9-12 months?

- New Comment: congrats but why did they ask you for your height?

- New Comment: That's very tough! Congrats tho! I'm from Indonesia and the only thing they asked was my school and major. And a pre-screen lady asked me why I'd a third alias.

- New Comment: Congrats man

- New Comment: Same my interview was on 2nd July (Hyderabad),

I got approved

But the officer just asked me to scan right hand?

I am confused. Do I need to scan all my fingers?

- New Comment: Vo - please press your left hand and right hand and both thumbs on scanner Me - sure

I don't get why did she ask you for this? Is it some kind of lie detector lmao?

Title of the post: F1 - OPT job holders: How did you convince employers to hire/sponsor you?

Body of the post: Hey everyone,

I'm feeling a bit lost and could use some advice from those who've been in my shoes. I'm currently on F1 OPT and about 3 years of experience.

Reddit Posts

Despite my background, I'm really struggling to land a job. To those who successfully found work on OPT:

1. How did you convince employers to hire you, knowing you'd need sponsorship eventually?
2. If you found a job without immediate sponsorship, how did you navigate that conversation.

I've been reaching out to companies, even offering to work for free to prove myself, but no luck so far. I'm worried about my OPT time ticking away.

Any tip would be really appreciated and will help other folks as well.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 1. Not me but my friend who is on opt got a job sponsoring her. As far as I know, she just checked the box for need for sponsorship and said she need a sponsorship to the hiring manager during her interview. Lots of managers told her they would reach out after talking to HR and never gave her a job. One company finally said yes we would sponsor you but the contract is 3 years. She accepted the offer ofc. We are in healthcare field so it can be very different in general companies.

- New Comment: Honestly, I network and talk to people from smaller/mid-size companies. Those companies gave me a chance even if they are not familiar with the process, as long as I understand it. Bigger firms generally have a system in place that if you are international, most positions you aren't even considered since the screening round. I have worked for a small company after my Undergrad OPT. I am working for one now in Masters' OPT and they are willing to enroll in E-Verify so I can extend my STEM OPT with them. Don't think I coulda gotten much flexibility in a bigger firm.

- New Comment: Our department's executive was a H1 holder himself from India, and he was very compassionate about the visa situation even from the beginning. I was hesitant to ask for work visa sponsorship, but he reassured me and other visa holder employees that the company will do anything within their reach for visa matters. I guess I just got

Reddit Posts

lucky. I think it helps a lot if your manager was a visa holder themselves since they already know visa types and other measurements more than the HR itself.

- New Comment: Am I the only person to find volunteering stupid?! Like you earn no money while living in one of the most expensive countries on earth. Apply for masters or returning home is would be my option if I really wanted to find a job in the U.S.

- New Comment: Got hired by a non-profit. They don?t have to deal with the lottery to get their people H1. Worked there for a year then got into one of the big tech companies. Big tech doesn?t care about your visa status, they have an army of lawyers to figure it out for them.

- New Comment: For me I checked the box that asks if you will need to be sponsored and when the recruiter, for the company I am currently working for called, I told him too (because the recruiter also asked me) and they were like ok the immigration team will be in touch. And they were in touch ...

- New Comment: A few things that I will tell you having gone through it successfully.

1. Where you went to school does matter. It matters especially if you are moving to a major city, which you likely want to do given there are more career opportunities. This is because given sponsorship can be expensive, employers have to view you as an asset to consider going through the process. They are much more likely to do this if you graduated from a top program in your field than a mid-tier school. A lot of people won't like this but it's true. I've seen it with myself and others.

2. Speaking English very well as well as other useful languages can give you an edge in certain career fields such as education, research, academia, law and sometimes financial careers, though less so.

3. Having work experience helps a lot, but the most useful thing is to NETWORK. This is where how high your school ranks comes into play. Having access to that network is key for internationals because you don't have as many

Reddit Posts

connections in the US as your American peers. I cannot tell you how much I networked. It was how I secured my current and several other positions.

4. Have a skill or something to offer that stands out or that is uncommon in Americans: ie translation experience, language skills, specializations in highly uncommon but necessary fields, etc. A lot of Americans only speak English, have not lived or interned abroad and may have less experience working with diverse populations. A lot of internationals have these things already by virtue of being international. Look and apply for jobs that require these skills and prioritize these things. You will have an easier time.

5. This one helps A LOT. But only apply to companies or organizations that have a track record of sponsoring or who have current or previous staff that is international. They will be nicer and much more open and empathetic about this during the interview process about your situation. Similarly, try to look for international alumni from your school and see where they work, then network with them. This is very helpful.

- New Comment: Are you on initial OPT? if so, try finding a volunteer position relevant to your degree to stop the unemployment clock at the very least

- New Comment: When you apply to companies, also check if they already sponsor for H1B and green card.

- New Comment: 1. Project yourself as an expert, not a newbie.

2. Publish often on LinkedIn.

3. Cold email, reach out to any/all LinkedIn connections for referrals. No response? Reach again, and again.

4. Create a side project and use it to show your work.

- New Comment: By actually being good.

- New Comment: Unfortunately you've graduated at a time when there have been a lot of layoffs in the last 2 years in all industries but especially in tech where the majority of the sponsorship happen. Pre-2023 it was a lot easier to get jobs which sponsored employees. It's difficult for companies to justify sponsorship in the midst of layoffs where a lot of US

Reddit Posts

citizens are also getting laid off.

All is not lost though, I would recommend to keep networking and reaching to alumni from your school, get informational interviews and request them to refer you. Referrals have the highest chance of getting through. It's better if it's a small to mid sized company as the people who refer you can directly reach out to the HM/Recruiter to atleast get you an initial interview. That being said keep also applying to jobs through job portals to cover all your bases.

- New Comment: Its 99% luck.

- New Comment: 12th 12th 2b2bb re re vefbd6

Title of the post: How is current F1 / OPT job market now?

Body of the post: We are reading news articles in Indian newspapers that MS students, after completing their masters, do NOT get OPT opportunities even though they have previous experience at Indian tech companies, etc... How true is it? How is the current OPT market for IT?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Not good; quite a few I know have returned or are planning to return.

- New Comment: it's horrible right now. I graduated last month and still no job yet..I know people who graduated almost 6-8 months back and still have no jobs. So I won't recommend you to come here. Maybe if you get admit from top 5-10 schools then it might be good for you or else don't bother spending so much money here.

- New Comment: Not good and definitely not easy

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: If you are reading this and plan to come then I would say no but who am I to say anything , if you believe in your skills then come but this market requires a fair bit of luck too.

Reddit Posts

If you are reading this and are like me job searching even after graduating, I would like to say that "tough times never last tough people do" and "hang in there".

Good Bye

- New Comment: Pretty bad, I know a lot of friends/people who even after getting the STEM OPT extension are struggling. I know some who got H1B and then got laid off and now just waiting since the beginning of this year to find a job. Most people find temporary jobs that are very unsatisfying. I hardly know people who are in "good" jobs that are also sponsoring an H1B for them. One thing I have noticed is if you're from a good university, you're usually one to find better jobs because of the alumni network so def use that and reach out to people on LinkedIn to get referrals. It's not impossible but pretty shitty out there.

- New Comment: Very horrible. Would not advise anyone to come now, especially if you taking loans (which is a very horrible idea anyway)

- New Comment: Applied for 1000+ jobs with custom resumes for most of the jobs. 0 interviews yet. Have 2 years of workex and 2 research publications in respectable journals. I am grateful that I don't have a loan to payoff.

- New Comment: It's terribleeeeeeee omg i was lucky and job hunted last year but my friends? They fighting for the life fr.

- New Comment: I found job 8 months after graduating. This was in 2023 when market was okayish and I was getting interviews. This horrible now. Even green card and citizens are struggling.

- New Comment: I'm a counselor who helps students primarily with US applications. Even I have to admit it's not good right now.

Hiring in general is cyclical. The concern now is that we're facing a major restructuring of the national and world

Reddit Posts

economy because of AI. Many jobs will be filled and reduced in number. Families have to carefully their investment in their children's education. There will still be jobs, but those jobs are going to be different and more competitive. And just because permanent residency is easier in Canada and Australia (although getting less so these days), that doesn't mean those countries are a better choice for everyone's educational and professional goals. Universities in the US are well suited to responding to changes in industry and the economy, and the proliferation of colleges means that there will we will soon be able to see what sorts of approaches are successful.

I recently found out that one of the most brilliant students I've worked with, who was accepted to three Ivy League schools and was earning big bucks as a quant at a trading firm, wasn't able to obtain an H-1B in three attempts. But he is moving to Amsterdam, where his company is based.

On the other hand, another student who attended Cornell is happily working for Microsoft in Seattle.

- New Comment: Which colleges did you guys study for undergrad, and where did you pursue your masters' education?
- New Comment: Really bad. I graduated from an okay private uni in finance last December. I got a job immediately but as a contractor (so no benefits) but my boss is pretty chill so I got lucky with the days off. I am applying everyday to different things but no luck yet. Got interviews and everything but not a job offer yet. A lot of networking for sure is the way to go.
- New Comment: The job market is extremely bad. I would not recommend coming here. It is a blood bath.
- New Comment: I am in a Top 5 school for CS still it was a pain in the ass getting an Internship even though I have prior work experience.
- New Comment: To add to the discussion, companies here really don't value previous experience from different countries a lot. There's better chances if you get internships here to show US experience.
- New Comment: Its like a lottery to get a job. Pure luck, I have survivor's guilt for getting a job just 2 weeks before

Reddit Posts

graduation and got my H-1B picked this year. All this while 60% of my batchmates are still looking for jobs after 1 year of graduation. I had no loans, so I was less stressed about job search. But the gamble aint worth a 75k debt.

- New Comment: Trash! But doable! ??

- New Comment: I got a job after more than a year post graduation. I don't have a loan but for the people with loans it's a horrible situation here. Either you have to be extra good at everything or have good connections. I have one friend who returned to India and some are still struggling.

It's up to you, just believe in yourself.

- New Comment: I mean not only for F1 / OPT individuals. But for most people. I am an F1 visa holder. Took me 1000+ applications and a few career fairs to land a job (major econometrics and quantitative economics). My american friends (engineers - Software developers - etc) took about 2 months and hundreds of applications to land jobs. My EAD approval took 3 months and landed my job 45 days after receiving my EAD. My advice for anyone who is trying to get a job would be to be consistent and apply for x number of jobs per day. Don't be afraid to apply out of state. At career fairs, go talk to every company. I ended up landing a job for a company that wasn't even looking for someone with my field. Practice interviews. Be upfront and mention that you are an f1 visa holder. My sweet number was 15 jobs/positions per day.

- New Comment: The job market in the US in general right now is bad, which is going to affect OPT students disproportionately. If Trump wins in Nov, the OPT job market is gonna get worse regardless of general market dynamics.

- New Comment: I hadn't had a problem with my F1. I believe a lot of it has to do with your degree and the state you're in. I got an associate degree in machining and within 1st week of I already had 3 interviews. I'm currently employed and have been constantly working over 50hrs a week. But when it comes to office/remote jobs, market has been shit even for americans, so for f1 students on that area is worse.

- New Comment: Is it only for tech like IT or for core sides also? How will it be after two years? My MS Mechanical Engineering program ends in 2026.

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- New Comment: Very true
 - New Comment: Has anyone had any luck with non profits and NGOs? And if so what major?
 - New Comment: Depends on which school you attend
 - New Comment: Many of my friends are still searching for a job since graduating in May 23. They have stopped the clock with consultancies like everybody else.
 - New Comment: I'm on a non-STEM OPT right now and got my job purely out of luck. It's ending in September and I was thinking of coming back for my master's but after reading this thread I'm rethinking it?
 - New Comment: What about non stem .. but edtech
 - New Comment: HORRIBLE! I'm on STEM OPT. I studied in GA, now living in San Francisco, CA. I have a job with RCM healthcare services and I am not giving it up. Please be kind when reaching out to them if interested.
 - New Comment: Thanks someone asked this. To be brutally honest, don't come to US if you are taking a loan worth \$40k as the competition post covid has increased crazily. If your family has money and is able to afford 30-40 lacs, sure come on as you have nothing to lose even if you don't get a job. Also, because of the layoffs after covid, the job market is filled with people who worked in Tier 1 companies and hence you're competing with them. I came in 2019, graduated in May 2021, my visa didn't get picked up after 3 attempts and now I had to leave my job this month because my employer was not supporting CPT extension. I am looking for jobs now, applied to more than 300 jobs in the past month, got 3 call backs. I have extended my visa till 2026 but I am contemplating on moving back to India. Of course, the exposure I got in the last 5 years was amazing, got to meet some great people and travelled all around the states. Saved a few dollars as well however, now, I feel I can't stay here with so much of uncertainty and with India booming and estimated to be world's 3rd economy, I feel I will make the right choice.
- I hope I didn't elaborate too much!! ?
- New Comment: I think it might depend on the area and the types of jobs that you're looking for. I know a lot of people

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are doing STEM and struggling to find a job, including my brother. But for me, I was able to land a job with relative ease. I only had an associate degree in arts & science and a Certificate of accounting assistant in a community college. I just applied for a nearby hotel as a night auditor and got the job. The GM didn't seem to care too much about my status. Of course it's unlikely that they'll sponsor me for a green card but I got the job and i'm good for the 12 months.

- New Comment: Loll, idk what these people are talking about. I knly have a BS and I have like 2 jobs rn. At one point I was doing 3 FT jobs simultaneously. Both of my employers are sponsoring my eb-3 as well. Job market has never been better.

Title of the post: Re-entering the US after SEVIS termination - my experience!

Body of the post: I know a lot of students who get their SEVIS terminated because of some or the other reason. Be it academic dismissal, staying out of US for more than five months.

This has been my personal experience.

I did not know what to do and I did the whole process of applying for the F-1 visa again and got rejected but still was able to travel with my old visa. I called DHS, consulates, CBP everyone but got very vague answers. Some good folks on Quora helped me.

I had a new offer letter and new I-20 from another univeristy this time.

I know the major questions are if you should get a new F-1 visa or not, what will happen at the border patrol etc.

If you have been in a similar situation this post will help you. There is no proper information on the internet and it is a very gray area because it highly relies on your reason on termination as well as the CBP officer upon entry.

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First off, once your SEVIS is terminated - don't violate by overstaying. Book a ticket to your home country within the specific time period. No place safer than home.

Next, academic appeal or health appeal your decision in the university and wait for their reply (high chances they will deny the same). If you are lucky and you get your appeal approved- the story ends there. They will activate your SEVIS number again and you can come back to the US.

If your appeal is denied - remember you DO NOT NEED a new F-1 Visa at all unless it is cancelled on your passport because of serious violation. It will be clearly visible in terms of cancellation or you can check the same on this website - [\[https://ceac.state.gov/CEACStatTracker/Status.aspx\]](https://ceac.state.gov/CEACStatTracker/Status.aspx)(<https://ceac.state.gov/CEACStatTracker/Status.aspx>)

The name of University on your Visa DO NOT MATTER.

If it says active you don't need a new visa. If you ask consulate they will ask you to reapply. Your F-1 visa is valid until the date on your visa. It is only for your entry in the United States - after that your I20 and SEVIS matter to go beyond that. Think of it as a key to a lock for gate one and then SEVIS and I20 are the key for further doors.

Now, you can't go on a terminated SEVIS so you need to either get a new admission or get your SEVIS transferred to another school which will most definitely provide a new I20 and SEVIS ID.

You DO NEED TO pay the SEVIS fees again though in this whole process.

Make sure you have your Valid F-1 visa, your new I-20 with updated SEVIS (your new university will update your status on DHS) and carry your old I-20 and SEVIS just in case.

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Upon arrival the CBP officer asked for my F-1 visa, new I-20 and SEVIS and one question - "Did you carry any alcohol or tobacco today?" and I said no.

Make sure your new university understands the whole situation. They can help you in case you go for second questioning (very unlikely) but apart from that nothing to worry about. Thousands of students change their school everyday so it is very common. If you have any questions feel free to reach out through my DM. Hope this helps :)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Thank you so much for posting this. My F1 status was recently terminated for "authorized early withdrawal" (in short I wanted to transfer out but my start date was not under 5 months from last date of attendance from former school and I couldn't enroll earlier).

I did not overstayed and I am currently home waiting on my new initial i20 to be issued by the new school. Hopefully I will be able to come back to the US mid-july.

- New Comment: Why did the consulate refuse your visa application but not cancel your old one?

- New Comment: Well. I was in this situation and got the generic ?reapply? response from the consulate. Didn?t want to risk it and reapplied. Now my new F-1 is good to go for another 5 years. I think getting a new F-1 (if you are able to) could be a good idea if you know you?ll be traveling outside the duration of your school program (such as during OPT/STEM OPT) because that?s when usually most students? initial F-1 expires. I?m from a country that issues 5-yr

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F-1's.

- New Comment: I had terminated my SEVIS by volition (withdrawal from program) and my F1 was cancelled. I went back to my home country immediately. I came back next year for another program in another school with a new F1 and SEVIS. This was almost a decade ago. Absolutely no issues.

- New Comment: I got my SEVIS terminated 2 months ago and now I'm leaving to Dubai and will re enter with my new i20 and new SEVIS . My visa still left like 10 months before expired. Will there be a problem?

- New Comment: Thank you so much for sharing your experience. But I have a question. Did you transfer your sevis or any thing from your old university? or your I20 issued initially? This will help me so much.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I had the same situation and I was able to re enter on my old F1 (valid) visa with a new i20 and new SEVIS id

- New Comment: I took a gap year from my school after finishing my freshman year and paid SEVIS again and reapplied for f-1. I was eligible for IWP (interview waiver program) and dropped off my documents to the consulate and they said I have to wait for 9 weeks to pick it up. Will edit my comment when I get my passport.

Edit: I was issued a new visa with 5 yrs

- New Comment: I went through the same situation while re-entering my port of entry was recorded on my terminated Sevis instead of my new Sevis ID. My DSO asked to request this online with CBP. What should I do? Can they deny it now? It wasn't my mistake I was at the airport for 4 hours explaining why my Sevis was terminated now this happened. Please help.

- New Comment: Hello guys, I was told about my expulsion by my Uni on 13th of December 2023 and I left immediately on 24th of December 2023. Technically they never mentioned what immediately means but my DSO said that between 15 days from now should be perfectly fine.

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Now that I'm using the same visa to enter again but this with another University and I'm flying on 28th July. Please advise on my situation!

- New Comment: Also I got my sevis terminated and few months ago when i had new i-20 and sevis from different school I went back to the states. However, I was pulled to the secondary room and the girl told me that from now on every time enter the US I will be pulled to the secondary room. Is this true?

- New Comment: When you got a new I-20, was 'Initial Attendance' specified on it? I withdrew from my previous school, got a new I-20 and paid the SEVIS fee for the different school I'm attending this Fall.

- New Comment: I had my SEVIS terminated by volition (Academic withdrawal from the program) and my F1 status shows D/S(Duration of status), I have about 12 days left to leave the country as per DSO. I went and applied to a new university and have my New SEVIS and new I-20.

1. (D/S - Duration of status) Does it mean I have a Valid F1 Visa? Can I cross the border to Mexico for visa stamping ??
2. Or perhaps I have to leave the country immediately apply for a new VISA and return to the USA??
3. Mine is H1 to F1 status change - during COVID I had to apply for f1 considering the circumstances and took almost over a year to get approval. and now my SEVIS is terminated due to administrative withdrawal.
4. Is my VISA valid or do I have to apply for an F1 visa again??
5. Will I get a new F1 VISA again if applied ??

Title of the post: Dad passed away....graduating on 10th May.

Body of the post: Hi I'm writing on behalf of a cousin of mine.

He came back home to attend the father's funeral without reporting the DSO. He is set to graduate on May 10th. He is a single child and need to stay back in india for a while. He is confident he can take the exams online being in india and

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graduate in time.

He had applied for opt with start date in July. He doesn't have a job secured yet but he is mulling volunteering during opt while he search for a job.

Question is can he stay in india until June and offer comfort to his mom, and only arrive in the US just before the OPT is about to start?

Please share your ideas and thoughts.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: We should return before the end date on his I-20. He may be denied entry if he tries to come back into the US after his program end date on the I-20 if he doesn't have his EAD card and a job offer.

- New Comment: He needs to return before the last day of his classes/ exams.

His OPT application would be rejected because he left the country. Need to file for OPT before 60 days from the program end date in I20

- New Comment: I don't have advice but I hope he stays strong in tough times like these. Wish everything works out for him

- New Comment: When applying for opt, you need latest I-94 which he can't get while in India. He won't get OPT in time and he will get denied

- New Comment: [removed]

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- New Comment: Ask the university international student council. They usually help with such queries. He definitely needs a valid i20.

- New Comment: To be fair, it's terrible that he is going through this. But he needs to get back to the US before his graduation or even before the last week of his finals. Sometimes there are too many problems and he might get denied entry. Until he has OPT, EAD card as well as a job offer it is extremely risky. If his 1-20 expires the chances of him being able to come back are very low.

- New Comment: Try to courier his EAD to him if possible, whenever it arrives. Or if you know someone going to India who can hand it to him. He will need it to come back in.

And ask him to join an NGO. I know an NGO that can help. DM me for more details

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Title of the post: BIG OPT Trouble, HEEEEELP!

Body of the post: Hi everyone! I applied for OPT on March 27, graduated from college, and came home to see family. I have my flight on July 16th back to the US and start work on August 1st. However, my OPT has not been approved yet and I don't have money to do PP. However, I have a valid F1 Visa until June 2025 and a valid B2 visa until 2028, AND a job offer. What are my options? I am scared that if my OPT is not approved, I won't be let into the country...

UPDATE: Hi, everyone! I am sure this thread will help so many other people in my situation so thank you so much! On the other hand, I got into the US with my OPT approved and without an EAD card through Logan Airport, just with an updated I-20. Good luck to everyone!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Wait in your home country until your EAD is approved and ask someone to mail the EAD to you
- New Comment: Sure you took the risk but look beyond it now..

I'm inclined to say that as long as you have

1. your approval receipt,
2. job offer letter,
3. OPT requested I-20,
4. valid visa on an unexpired passport

They have no grounds to deny you entry. Mind you the EAD card has these specific words on it :

?NOT VALID FOR REENTRY TO THE US?

I think they will take you to secondary questioning, make you wait until they confirm it with your university and/or

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employer. You might wanna ask for a letter from the employer that they are waiting on you to start the job once you get back.

That being said, it all depends on the whim of the CBP officer.

****Also, I?m not an immigration expert, please consult a lawyer for a more concrete advice****

- New Comment: Nobody can help you with this on this sub.

Your options are 1) Your OPT gets approved and you manage to get the EAD card in your hands physically before you enter the U.S.

That?s all. The valid visa F1 visa means nothing without the EAD card at this stage. You are no longer a student after you graduate.

Not leaving the country until you get your OPT approved and have the card in hand is the first cardinal rule of graduating on an F1 and applying for work authorisation. How did you miss this detail?

- New Comment: Wait till your OPT gets approved. Have a friend ship your EAD card to you on expedited shipping. Pay the premium, as much as necessary for it to happen. Or if that's not possible. Pay for someone to fly with your EAD card to you. If you were Indian and I had my EAD card in hand I'd have done that for you. Let's see the logistics of it. I am intending to travel to India first week of August for my airforce exam, if you still need help and this is a viable option, reach out to me on reddit (i am booking my tickets myself. Just find a way to come to Delhi or somethibg)

Don't be demoralized. It will all workout

- New Comment: You're worried about OPT being approved? You came to the US on a student visa, then graduated college and left the country. What grounds do you have to return at all now? Even if your OPT is approved you have no

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document showing that, unless you can somehow get your physical EAD in your hands.

Also, you don't have money for PP (less than 2 weeks pay) but had money to do a round international trip?

- New Comment: Make sure you have your I-765 receipt as well as your job offer letter and I-20. You should be okay but it's up to the immigration officer in the end.

- New Comment: In order to return you need your EAD and proof of employment. Without those documents regardless of your Visa validity and I-20 they generally will not let you back in without them.

- New Comment: If you have a credit card, pay for PP. My bf had to and it is worth it because you will make that money back anyways in your full time job.

- New Comment: Did you bring the physical Form I-797C Notice of Action (Receipt Notice) with you? If your I-765 application was submitted on time and the decision is still pending, you should be able to be admitted for re-entry when you have both I-797C and the updated I-20 WITH THE OPT RECOMMENDATION AND TRAVEL ENDORSEMENT ON IT.

- New Comment: Everyone here is wrong - you can definitely travel when OPT is pending IF you have a job offer to come back to, even without the EAD in hand. Literally did it a week ago with zero issues. The risk is mostly if your OPT gets approved before you fly back, in which case you must have the EAD - you'll have to get someone to mail it to you in that case. Just have your receipt notice, I-20, and offer letter in hand in case they ask (they didn't even ask me for it), it is highly unlikely they'll deny you entry.

Here's a helpful page on this: <https://visaservices.duke.edu/optional-practical-training-opt-travel-checklist>. Not to say that travel while OPT is pending is generally a good idea though, because it CAN be pretty risky

- New Comment: I don't think you can enter the US without your EAD card. Your F1 visa is irrelevant since you are no longer enrolled in any school. You can not use your B2 visa, as this serves the purpose of tourism and not work. I would consult with an immigration lawyer to see if there are any options for you at this point

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- New Comment: you'll be fine. i re-entered 3 different times last year while my opt was still pending without an EAD and never had an issue.

- New Comment: It's actually a good thing that your OPT has not been approved yet. According to my DSO, If you travel home, and by the time you come back to the US, your EAD card is still processing/pending approval, you should have no problem entering using only your F1 visa and your OPT I-20.

However, if your EAD gets approved/delivered while you're outside the US, you're at risk of getting denied entry, since you're supposed to present your EAD card on arrival to the US if it was approved (And USCIS only delivers the EAD inside the US, so unless you have someone who gets the EAD card and mails it out to your country before you arrive to the US, you won't have it).

For now, your best bet is to come to the US as soon as possible (so that way you won't risk your EAD getting accepted while you're outside the US). I have known people who got their EAD approved but were still let into the US, but that was on the officer, and if they want to, they would have a valid reason not to let you into the country (not having your EAD when it was approved).

So for now, you're good. Sure, there are risks, but it is not as bad as some comments made it out to be, especially is you make it to the US BEFORE your EAD is approved. Hope this helps!

- New Comment: Why don't you ask your company to pay for PP?

- New Comment: You can return without the EAD card, as long as you have a valid visa and valid I-20 and job letter. I wasn't asked for my EAD when I entered the US in the same position as you. They asked for my I20 and and my visa, as long as those aren't expired yet, you are fine. The EAD card is not REQUIRED upon entry. In fact it says on the card not valid for entry into US

- New Comment: Just to be clear, it's written on your EAD card, that it is not valid for re-entry to the US, so I don't think

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it's valid for your immigration. Just have the other documents in place. I am not sure if this is correct, please confirm it with someone.

- New Comment: I guess one option is returning to US with B1 visa and change it later. I don't know for sure. This is not a legal advice. But consult an immigration lawyer ASAP

- New Comment: I also left the US before getting the physical EAD. I'll share my experience and hope this helps your anxiousness. Despite what others say here my advisor also said it should be okay and it seemed to be true. I did make sure to see the approval letter (I-797) that confirms they're approving OPT. I brought the offer letter with it to customs and guess what, the officer said he just needs to see my passport and I-20(OPT applied version). That was it. He said he doesn't need to check my EAD card nor my offer letter. Just maybe don't present yourself or any situation suspicious for them to feel the need to scrutinize. Those officers tend to vary in their judgment and they have every right to make it hard for you for whatever reason. I did have my OPT approved and EAD was delivered to my US address by the time I was at the airport.

- New Comment: Go contact your immigration counsellor at the institution you graduated at. Or a lawyer/attorney that specializes in US immigration law. We can give you ideas here, but you must verify with a professional before anything can be decided and/or put into action.

- New Comment: Dude, just get the OPT to your house or friend's house (use that fast processing service for OPT I think they charge \$1500 or something) don't think about money at this point, Ask your friend to emergency international post with insurance via FedEx or UPS,

Don't make mistake and don't think you will be fine or something, In my immigration, I did provide my I-20 with signature, My OPT card and visa!

- New Comment: Not to get your hopes up, but being on OPT, I have re-entered the US twice, and they never asked for my EAD card. The first time I automatically handed the card to the officer and he said "I don't need this?". The second time I didn't even bother, they just looked at my I-20 and asked me what I'm studying to which I said "I'm on my OPT?" and then they said "Thank you have a nice evening?"

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- New Comment: I entered with an OPT I-20 and the OPT submission receipt! I came from JFK tho and tbh the customs lady was clearly tired and over it so idk if I just got lucky :?) hope this helps

- New Comment: If you can get I797 notice of Approval and get your i20 updated where instead of OPT 'requested' it says approved, you can try to reenter without the physical EAD card.

The EAD card says 'not valid for re-entry' and the first time I tried to reenter, the immigration officer sort of yelled/passive aggressive with me when I tried to hand him my EAD card along with I20 and passport. And the 2nd time they only looked at i20 and passport.

Port of entry needs the i20 to say OPT approved.

- New Comment: I entered usa two times after completing my degree. First time was before starting the job. I had job offer and EAD in my hand. But at the immigration they just wanted passport n i20.

Second time: already in the job for a year. Just passport n i20 at the immigration.

Better ask your DSO. I think you can enter Usa with pending opt nd a job offer

- New Comment: Read DifferentDoor354?s comment. That?s seems to be the best help you can get here.

- New Comment: Take a loan and apply for PP

Its stupid to save money and risk everything

- New Comment: I recently traveled back in the country and my OPT was not approved. I had no issues and wasn?t asked any questions.

- New Comment: Hello! Same thing happened to me last year. I had to leave the country twice before my OPT was approved. I was able to come back to the US with my passport with valid F1 visa, I-20 with OPT and travel endorsement, and I-797C (if you don?t have it, you can download it from your USCIS account and print it out). I think it really depends on the officer at the border. They let me in with no problem both times without asking too many

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questions.

- New Comment: I also recently graduated and before my graduation, I talked to one of our school's immigration specialist (DSO) about this as I am planning to go on a trip outside the US in July. She told me that if my OPT has not been approved before my trip, I would just make sure to bring a copy of my latest I-90 with me that states I have a pending OPT application. Also, I was advised to print out a copy of my I-765 Receipt Notice from USCIS and bring it with me. I don't think your situation is as bad as other people were saying in their comments here. Also, do not forget to bring/show proof of job offer just in case they question you.

- New Comment: Hello I recently traveled from Japan and then back to the US while my OPT was still pending. I had a letter of employment, my I-765 receipt, I-20 with OPT on it, F1 visa.

And I didn't have any trouble to go back in the US.

- New Comment: Apply for emergency processing. Show them that you already bought tickets. So that can immediately process it.

- New Comment: Wait but why did your OPT take that long????

- New Comment: You are cooked.

Title of the post: why is looking for sponsorship so hard?

Body of the post: Hey guys, I'm writing this for my friend who doesn't have Reddit.

He's currently on an F1 visa. He graduated from a four-year university in March last year as an electrical engineer. He worked for an internship for six months that ended in December. He's been trying to find a job in this field ever since to sponsor him, but he hasn't had any luck. He was able to join an engineering volunteer program to extend for two months, but because he couldn't find anything, he has to go back home at the end of this month :(All of my friends are extremely sad. We're trying to figure out a way for him, especially since he's our housemate too. Please, please let me

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know if there's a way for him to extend it somehow or find a job that's willing to sponsor.

Edit: Thank you to everyone's reply. It was extremely helpful and I learned a lot from this. Maybe one day he'll find someone here and marry. Other than that, he's going back home at the end of this month and will try for grad school here. I'll miss him as my housemate. :(

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Tbh people here mostly are on the same boat. The responses you'll get are basically 2:

1. Some of you need to marry him.
2. Go get a new degree.

I'm sorry but this is the reality we are all facing.

If you guys are really gonna get married, count me in as well please.

- New Comment: I'll answer your question as to why sponsorship is so hard.

1) The job market is tough at the moment (even for Americans). Simply finding a job, sponsorship or no, has never been as hard in fields like tech.

2) Sponsorship requires time, work and money. Usually Only large companies with immigration departments sponsor.

3) Why sponsor someone (which is harder, more expensive, and takes more time) when you can hire an American instantly who is just as good / talented. (You need to prove that you're better than your American competition)

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Overall the best way to get sponsored for a job is getting an internship and hopefully getting a return offer. Most companies won't even look at your application when you state that you need sponsorship.

Luckily Electrical engineering is one of the BEST majors out there. You can apply for hardware, software, manager, electrical jobs etc etc etc.

I recommend applying for everything and not being picky.

- New Comment: this might help
<https://careerhub.students.duke.edu/blog/2023/06/01/the-cap-exempt-h-1b-an-overlooked-option-for-international-students/>

- New Comment: I am an electrical engineer, the only way to make it easier to job hunt is to live somewhere where there is a lot of offer and no candidates. I live in west texas in the middle of nowhere and there is a bunch of oil field companies looking for engineers. Also, usually the idea is to have a job already lined up before graduation, more chances where you did your internship. Maybe is too late now but is all about networking and getting lucky. Usually mid size companies would make it easier to sponsor for entry level.

- New Comment: Markets competitive, companies think its a big investment when in reality they get exceptional talent for a process they have to do once a year. The looming recession coupled with the high amount of foreign talent coming in makes it very difficult to get a job that sponsors. After that, its not easy to get selected for a sponsorship either. Its a lottery system, so you could end up not being picked. So, well, it just sucks rn

- New Comment: Not want to be mean but it is just much harder to get a "job" as an international student/worker since we need sponsorship until the day we have greencard and that will be decades for people from India and China and a few years for ROW.

- New Comment: Job market is tough right now, and your friend was given a visa to ****study**** in the United States, not to

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****stay**** in the United States. There is no guarantee that he will find work that keeps him here, and it's not the US's responsibility to help find ways to keep him in the country legally.

It's tough, but welcome to the world of F1 regulations.

- New Comment: I have 2 sponsoring me. I left my first job while going through that as well.

- New Comment: a picked H1B comes at a cost of about 10k for the employer and legally the employee cannot pay for this

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: I have no clue buddy but I sure do hope your friend sorts out his dilemma

- New Comment: What do you mean by sponsorship?

Green card or h1b?

- New Comment: my friend has a PhD in food science and specializes in flavoring in beverages and alcohol products.

And Coca Cola still didn't want to sponsor.

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: How realistic is it to move to Utah while finding OPT jobs

Body of the post: So I am currently CS undergrad senior in California graduating this December, no luck finding a job. I will try my best to at least land on a volunteer job to use my first year OPT, and use that one year to find more job opportunities so that I could use STEM OPT extension.

The rent here in California is insanely high, and I've heard that states like Utah has lower housing cost and overall living expenses. If job application, preparation and interviews can all be online these days, is it reasonable to think about moving to Utah or other states and do everything there?

Reddit Posts

If I were lucky enough to really get a real job offer, I will just relocate to where the job is.

Any input will be appreciated, thanks in advance!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: That's a good idea, ngl. Research good location though, and don't get into an unbreakable lease.
- New Comment: It's realistic. I lived in Utah for past 5 years and I can say from my own experiences that living there is more cost efficient and cheaper. The cost will be lower if you have a decent job. But even with less money you can still afford the cost of living in Utah. It's not like other states where everything is far away and you have to take the bus everyday, there are plenty cities in Utah where everything is at a walking distance.
- New Comment: You are doing good in Step 1. Cutting CoL costs.
- New Comment: Moving to a low cost state is a great idea! SLC would be the most expensive (but still cheaper than wherever you are in CA). Look into some towns around SLC, like Ogden, Provo etc.
- New Comment: I honestly don't know because everyone has different experiences on OPT. I don't know about the job market in Utah but if it's cutting down on your rent and expenses, it might be a good move. The entire job market is pretty bad atm so depending on your field, some states may be better than others. I suggest you consider that carefully, moving can be expensive as well. I'd try to find students through LinkedIn who live in Utah, they may know people in similar situations, could connect you to jobs or volunteer positions. You'd also be able to see through their eyes what living there really is like and then maybe make a good decision from there. All the best!!!!
- New Comment: You need to submit an offer letter given by your employer to your university with in 90 days from the start of your OPT that you are working with an employer. It's always better to stay near that employer location.
- New Comment: cali is crazy haha

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Iowa is another option. A very good LCOL area.
- New Comment: Go to places where public transportation is good if you dont have Car. If you have car target states which has in person events. Instead of just applying meet people and participate in more hackathons/Job search events.
- New Comment: Just don't become a mormon /s

Title of the post: Leaving the US permanently. Do I need to do something before that?

Body of the post: Potentially stupid question, so please bear with me.

I just graduated and my i20 expires on August 13th. I got a great job offer in Germany and am leaving the US on August 5th. Do I need to do anything before I leave to make sure that USCIS/authorities know I'm not overstaying (since I haven't applied for EAD or anything).

I plan to apply for a B1/B2 later from Germany and don't want them to think that I've been in the US without any job.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Nope, the airline sends your name to the authorities, and it gets recorded. Heck, it got recorded when I crossed the rainbow bridge on foot to canada, where the only thing was a camera and a one-way gate. I have no idea how it still got recorded in the online I-94 departure/arrival lookup.
- New Comment: Freeze your credit if you have SSN to make sure your identity is not stolen.
- New Comment: Have you been working this year? You'll probably get a tax refund. Make sure to file your taxes and you'll probably need to deposit it into a local friends account so they can transfer it to you.
- New Comment: Out of curiosity (and if you feel comfortable answering), what's your area of study/what was your

Reddit Posts

major? I recently graduated and I am so done with the whole H1B process that I want to look for other countries. Do you speak any german?

Congrats on the offer! And best of luck!

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: OPT Denied and now out of status.

Body of the post: Hello my OPT was denied and now I am currently out of status. Are there any options for me to reapply or other pathways?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Why were you denied on the OPT? Accordingly, we can suggest. Could be your DOB or personal info is wrong or payment was wrong so.

- New Comment: Sorry to hear that ? but unfortunately there aren't any options for you apart from leaving US if it's been past 60 days since the end date on your I20.

You could try changing status to a visitor visa but I'd suggest first speaking with your DSO and then an immigration attorney to figure out the next steps.

- New Comment: Contact your DSO as you get 60-day grace period from your I-20 end date. If you are denied after your 60-day grace period then you are not eligible to apply for OPT again. You should leave US asap if the grace period is over to avoid accruing unlawful days in the states.

Reddit Posts

You can apply to further study (Master's program) get a new SEVIS and I-20 and apply for F-1 visa again if you wish to come back to the States.

- New Comment: Which OPT? STEM or post-completion?

- New Comment: wow i have see some rfe but opt denial super unique case lol

- New Comment: Reason for denial?

- New Comment: Hey any reason?

- New Comment: Reason for denial? Did you apply without Opt recommended I-20? Before 90 days of your graduation or 60 days after?

- New Comment: How could an opt be denied ????

- New Comment: If you're within your 60 days post-graduation date then you can reapply. Make sure you fix whatever the reason was for denial.

- New Comment: There is a page on instagram called immigrant_talks. Contact him. He might help you.

- New Comment: Talk to your DSO ASAP. You may be able to reapply if you are still in the US and within your grace period.

- New Comment: Speak to DSO and immigration lawyer. Imo you need to leave US within 60 days.

- New Comment: if you are truly out of status, travel back to. your home country. Staying for any longer will jeopardize your chance of being able to travel to the US again. check your I20 grace period to see if you are truly out of status

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: If you aren't in your 60day grace period then you need to depart US or else you would be staying here illegally causing issues in the future if you ever want to come back. Some countries look at your us visa denial when it

Reddit Posts

comes to giving visas for their countries as well

- New Comment: > Are there any options for me to reapply or other pathways?

If you are past the time frame for application (90 days before graduation and 60 days after), you cannot re apply for OPT.

> other pathways?

For F1 status, enroll in a new program and file for SEVIS reinstatement.

- New Comment: Re-apply, and make sure everything are correct this time, triple check every documents. I was in the same situation and just reapply asap, ask your school if they can process it faster. Good luck!

- New Comment: Are you married to a GC holder or US citizen?

- New Comment: OPT denied why? That's impossible.

- New Comment: Hello does anyone knows how?s the interview for tourist visa renewal ?

I applied for renewal but they sent me back my passport with a blue paper saying they need my finger prints and interview. And they ask for some documentation.

That?s a formal way to denied my visa? ? I?m nervous cuz my interview is in 2 days

Title of the post: ?Your search did not return data? error on status check on CEAC

Body of the post: Is anyone else getting this error it only started happening a while ago?

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes. I'm guessing this is system issue
- New Comment: You need to select location of your interview and not the location on your DS-160. This worked for me.

VAC: Kolkata

Status: Issued

Case created: Dec 07, 2023

Case last updated: Dec 08, 2023

If the status is still not updated, this could probably mean there's some system issue/lag at the VAC location you selected.

- New Comment: Same.

CEAC only asked for an application number last night but today it asked for an application number, passport number and first five letters of my last name.

- New Comment: It's fixed now.

- New Comment: I got passport delivered with the stamp but still on ceac it shows same message ?your search did not return any data ? so I guess it just system on issue or may be they don't update because I never was able to see any update on my application until I received my passport

- New Comment: My timeline is listed below.

Oct 17 - Dropbox appointment

Oct 18 - "Your search did not return any data" message in CEAC website

Reddit Posts

Oct 19, 11.30 AM - ?Application Received? status in CEAC website

Oct 19, 11.30 PM - ?Approved? status in CEAC website

Oct 24, 12 PM - ?Issued? status in CEAC website

Oct 25, 4 PM - Received ?Passport ready for pickup? email from usvisascheduling.com

- New Comment: Oct 26 - Dropbox Appointment,

Oct 31 st - CEAC website still shows "Your search did not return any data"

Should I be worried?

- New Comment: Had dropbox appt 2 days ago, getting ?No Status? on ceac website

- New Comment: After keeping NA in both PASSPORT and SURNAME, am able to see the status

- New Comment: Had h1b drop box appointment on 22nd of January. Its 25th January today. On checking the status for my case it's been showing "your search did not return any data". Is there a problem with the site or delay? Has anyone else got the same issue? How long does it take to get the status change on tracker?

- New Comment: My us visa C1/D drop box on 02 February 2024 but still not showing any data why???

When I search there are showing!

Your search did not return any data why???

- New Comment: I submitted my application in drop box on 02 February 2024 in Mumbai but still not available any status?

- New Comment: In case this information is helpful:

Reddit Posts

F1 visa renewal; Dropbox at Kolkata; Appointment at Chennai; Pickup at Kol

VFS dropbox appointment at Kol: Feb 16

****CEAC status progression****:

No status: Feb 16 - Mar 1

Application Received: Mar 2

Approved: Mar 7

Issued: Mar 8

****usvisascheduling status progression****:

Delivered to post: Feb 17 - Mar 10

Origination scan: Mar 11 - Mar 12

Ready for pickup: Mar 12

Picked up: Mar 12

Reddit Posts

Received email on Mar 12 that document is ready for pickup at vfs. Picked up passport with visa stamp on Mar 12.

- New Comment: Drop box for b1b2 was done on Feb29th, Chennai and the status says your search did not return any data. Today is 13th March still the same.

- New Comment: yes it is happening to me right now

- New Comment: I'm seeing the same issue now. Dropped off in Delhi on March 6.

- New Comment: Tried to check status in CEAC and it reads: "Your search did not return any data." Tried with my brother's information and it works perfectly. Could this be because they are "updating my status"?

- New Comment: I was able to initially access site and saw application was in process but following other attempts I was unsuccessful. Getting the error msg " your search did not return data". This is because I kept selecting ID & passport # from predictable text. I then re typed instead of being lazy and it worked.

- New Comment: Same

- New Comment: I am also facing same issue

- New Comment: I'm seeing the same issue. It was fine until yesterday

- New Comment: Yes I got this when I checked my visa status

- New Comment: Yes I got this when I checked my visa status

- New Comment: Same

- New Comment: same here.. can you guys provide more context.. Aug 3 appointment in mumbai, dropped off docs in hyd at the app time .. status said "received" until yesterday.. giving error message today.. and yeah .. asking for additional info passport num and first 5 digits of surname etc.

- New Comment: \+1 to everything, including passport and 5 letters of last name now. was freaking out lol, but probably just a system issue

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Same here since yesterday night. It was working normally before yesterday afternoon. I could still see the status

- New Comment: i just checked and it shows the same for me- does anyone has any idea how long will this take?

- New Comment: Same and following

- New Comment: some programmer's gonna get fired lol

- New Comment: Same here

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Am having the exact same issue. Been freaking out -
[https://www.reddit.com/submit?source_id=t3_15sq24b](https://www.reddit.com/submit?source_id=t3_15sq24b)

It said approved until yesterday n I was waiting for it to be issued but then it all went away. Following this thread!!!! This is a lifesaver

- New Comment: Still issue persists (as of aug 16 8:40pm IST)

- New Comment: i am having the same issue ...from todayi applied for f1 visa

- New Comment: From Twitter:

?Some of our website applications are undergoing routine testing and maintenance this week. There may be brief interruptions to service, please try accessing the system again later today.?

- New Comment: Following this post...

- New Comment: Same here

- New Comment: Same

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I am still getting the same error.
- New Comment: Following
- New Comment: I am seeing the same issue as of now 8/18. I sent to Mumbai Consulate in India. Are everyone still seeing the same error? It is frustrating for me too & i am getting worried
- New Comment: I submitted the documents on 16th Aug in Hyderabad VAC for Chennai. I am also getting the same error. Is there any way to contact the call center or any update
- New Comment: Still the same error :-/
- New Comment: I still have this issue. Has it been resolved for anyone else?
- New Comment: Has not been resolved for me neither as of 8/22
- New Comment: Not resolved yet for me too
- New Comment: Same issue , I interviewed on 6/30/2022 and my status was refused before this issue.
- New Comment: I am also having the same issue till today. Any updates ?
- New Comment: I am also having the same issue as on 08/25
- New Comment: Same issue here on 08/25
- New Comment: Today my status got changed to ?No Status?
- New Comment: Same issue 09/01
- New Comment: Put NA to surname and passport, then check
- New Comment: this issues seems to be persisting. My wife got her visa issued but it still shows same error. I submitted my dropbox and getting same error
- New Comment: Facing the same issue - submitted at dropbox a week ago, still unable to check status - visa

Reddit Posts

scheduling website says documents delivered.

- New Comment: Same problem here. It's been a week since the submission of documents. I am quite sure the information that I am typing in is accurate. This error pops up on mobile and desktop! Has there been any recent update from the consulate/embassy or whoever maintains the tracker?

- New Comment: I have the same issue and I get "No Status" when I try the NA hack. My dropbox appointment was on Sept 5th. Not sure if it's too soon to change to "Application Received" or if the portal is slow in updating these things.

- New Comment: Hi

I can't check my visa status and get the error " your search didn't return any data". I'm sure that I enter all the data accurate but still can not check my status. It just worked when the website required Application ID. Does anyone has this issue? my dropbox appointment was on 11 August.

- New Comment: Hello, my Dropbox appointment was on Sep 8 and I have the same issue; unable to track

- New Comment: i am getting the same issue

- New Comment: Same for me as well

- New Comment: Looks like it takes 2-3 days from the appointment date for the status to show up in the system. My case was approved on Sep 12 and I received my passport today.

- New Comment: Need to put NA on both passport number and surname column, and you will be able to see your status.

- New Comment: I am applying for B1/B2 visa and I am unABLE TO PRINT ds160 DUE TO THE SAME ERROR.

- New Comment: after how many days should it show up on ceac status tracker, after we drop off our documents??

- New Comment: I submitted my H1B documents (drop box) on 15 Sept 2023, when I try to verify the status of the case, the result comes up as ?no record found?, Is anyone facing the same issue

Reddit Posts

Please anyone advise the next course of action

- New Comment: I submitted my docs on aug 28 and it doesn't show me status too and keeps showing ?your search did not return any data? although I am sure that the details I'm putting are correct

- New Comment: Me too. Any resolution yet? How do you know the status otherwise? Anyone in same boat?

- New Comment: I'm getting same error for last 4 weeks, someone knows about it?

in other application number I'm getting a second windows with a status.

- New Comment:

I sent my documents on 22/09 and until now I still get this same message, I left it to be picked up locally, so I don't receive it via post, I don't know what to do to get my passport :(

- New Comment: I have the same issue since September 29th, and my appointment was in the morning of September 21st. It was showing status between these two dates showing my application is at checking status. But since the 29th, there has been no result! I don't know what to do....

- New Comment: Hi Guys did you ever get any update on this? I'm still stuck with "Your search did not return any data." - I tried emailing them but nothing yet. Did any of you receive your docs despite this site not working, and roughly how long did it take after sending documents in? Many thanks!

- New Comment: This error is valid from a recent system update.

DS160 was created in Jun 2022 but got an appointment only Nov 2023. I thought I might need to create a new DS160 but I was told not to create by referring to multiple links.

As soon my appointment was complete I got the status updated as "approved" followed by "Issued" So no need to worry.

- New Comment: I have submitted my application on November 27th. The CEAC status still shows as "your search did

Reddit Posts

not return data". Tried with entering NA in passport number and surname, still shows the same. Could you please help?

- New Comment: My status still shows ?Your search did not return data? error on status check on CEAC but I got an email stating documents are ready for pickup, did anybody face the similar issue? Second time h1b stamping

- New Comment: My Drop box appointment was on the 18th, I am getting error"your search did not return any data", what should be done, should I wait or is there any way to reach out consulate

- New Comment: Your search did not return any data even after 11 days of passport drop box submission

- New Comment: I am getting the same issues. I have my appointment in December 18, 2024. They said my visa should be ready in like 2-3 weeks. B1/B2 visa btw. Have yet to hear a word from them so I decided to take a look at the CEAC and it said "your search did not return any data". Anyone having the same problems at the moment? If anyone knows a phone number/email, please let me know so I can contact them. It is a nonimmigrant visa and I check the application ID and passport number which were correct. I also tried NA on both passport and surname, and still get the same result. Does anyone know any other fixes, or is it just a server/lag issue?

- New Comment: Can anyone tell me I have given my passport 17th Jan 2024 at Kolkata embassy drop box. Still CEAC Website showing Your search did not return any data. Today is 23rd jan2024

- New Comment: Anyone submitted for renewal via DHL drop off in Nairobi? Got insight into timelines?

- New Comment: I entered my information, and they already notified me that my visa was approved, last 2 weeks didn't work.

1.25.24

- New Comment: I submitted request on the page around 30 times, post which I finally got a result that my application was received.

- New Comment: When I login to

<https://www.usvisascheduling.com/en-US/>, I see status 'Delivered to Post'

Reddit Posts

for Passport Status. I guess this is more up to date than the ceac website.

- New Comment: H1B (dropbox) case.

Original appointment: Chennai VAC.

Submitted docs on : Jan 24th 2024 in Mumbai VAC.

usvisascheduling.com says "Delivered to Post".

On the ceac visa tracker portal, it says, "No status". This is after I chose Mumbai VAC and entered NA for Passport and Last Name.

Today is 7th business day from the passport drop-off date.

Does anyone know how long it might take?

- New Comment: After keeping NA in both PASSPORT and SURNAME, am able to see the status

- New Comment: Any idea about this. My status says, "Your search did not return data." Asking for passport number and last 5 letters of surname. My dropbox happened on Feb 5 in Delhi.

- New Comment: Dropped off my documents for F1 visa renewal in Kolkata on Feb 8th. My status says, "Your search did not return data." Any idea what's going on? or in general what's the wait time?

- New Comment: Same status since last 13 calendar days. What does it mean? Whom to contact

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Just an Update. Dropbox was done on 12th FEB, at Pune, and Mumbai as the center for B1/B2 renewal. The website from the 13th till today shows "No status".

Today received passport with VISA(on 21st Feb)

- New Comment: Does anyone know how to fix (your search did not return any data) i have an appointment near by and i don't know what to do , need help badly

- New Comment: Non-Immigrant Visa Status -

I had the same issue - but then I left "NA" under the Passport and "NA" under the first 5 letters of the surname..... it pops results after...

- New Comment: VAC: Chennai

Appt date: 14th June.

Dropped: Hyderabad

To check status I entered my DS-160 number, chose Chennai for location, gave my passport number and first 5 letters of my last name.

It showed the result "approved" with status: case created on 24th June and last updated on 26th June.

Hope this helps.

- New Comment: Hello

Based on my appointment, here is what I found:

* Before the passport is received, if you enter the passport number and surname, you will probably see "no records

Reddit Posts

found." Try using the dropbox location with "NA" for the surname and passport number. It should display "No Status" with the application date as the DS-160 creation date.

* After it is received, you will start seeing "no record found" again. At this point, use the actual appointment location with the surname and passport number. It will show up as "Received" with the received date as the creation date.

* It then moves to "Approved" and "Issued," at which point it will be dispatched.

* The total time is 7-8 working days.

Hope this helps

Title of the post: Laid off

Body of the post: I was laid off today from my company. I am currently on F1 OPT. My stem extension is due soon before June 19th. What are my options here?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Start applying for jobs that'll sponsor your STEM OPT.

Do another degree at a higher level.

Leave the US.

- New Comment: You can apply for teaching jobs if you have a Masters

- New Comment: You can even apply to Research Assistant positions in academic labs .

- New Comment: Teaching jobs. Doesn't have to be full professor. Just instructor etc can work too. A good idea is to go to the university you got your diploma from and see what openings they have.

If you have a bachelors then also apply for a masters program or PhD- depending on your field of work. Talk to

Reddit Posts

everyone and anyone you know about you looking for a new position etc.

does this company have openings in other areas? Maybe apply to those

- New Comment: Might be time to switch careers

- New Comment: Why were u laid off

- New Comment: What job are you looking for?

- New Comment: What was your degree in? Which uni did you go to? What role were you in?

- New Comment: Are you tesla?

- New Comment: Look into economics predoctoral research positions. You can also look at e-verified employers on the e-verify database (linkedin kinda sucks lately imo, big tech and fintech postings flood everything, like same job position has 10 different postings because the recruiter entered 10 different locations and worse, many times they are not even hiring, just want to collect resumes).

- New Comment: I believe you can do 'volunteer' work and that technically counts as work.

- New Comment: Join a desi consultancy where they fake your resume and you can work as a ?senior software engineer? with no experience

Title of the post: From India: Visa appointment wait time 400 days

Body of the post: I am planning to apply for visa by next month. I was casually going through this, and found these really horrible numbers. Is something wrong here?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Chill, slots will open up. It?s still too early for fall 2024.

- New Comment: It's the same every year after COVID. In May or June, mass slots are opened, at that time only most

Reddit Posts

people book their slots

- New Comment: Damn, I need to apply soon too.

Hope it's a glitch or something

- New Comment: Damnnn, this is not even logical. Universities send decisions by April, joining is in August. I hope this is a glitch.

- New Comment: Slots for fall will open up by April

- New Comment: Same here, let's connect

- New Comment: I'm waiting for slots for O visa to open up in August. Any news? Please help

- New Comment: WhatsApp 82488-38475 for early slots

- New Comment: This is just the beginning of US immigration my guy. There are wait times way worse than this. keep in mind all the future wait that you need to go through.

CPT - up to the clg to process it. some clgs really suck.

OPT - easily taking months

H1B - lucky if you find a company, and even lucky if they do premium processing, otherwise you need to plan your return.

PWD - upto the employer and then takes more than 6M

PERM - probably 2 years by the time you apply and increasing levels of denials day by day.

GC - forget about it, not in your lifetime.

Not discouraging you from pursuing your goal, but just keep in mind this is what you need to expect if you are doing a F1 in 2024.

- New Comment: I'd really love to hear what someone whose program starts in early June is supposed to do, please.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Seconding booking a slot now and then rescheduling. One thing I did while trying to reschedule is checking super late in the night/early morning around 1 to 2a ish. Somehow more slots were available
- New Comment: you can always go to another country to get visa stamping. Many people go for a vacation and get the US visa there as well :D
- New Comment: You can book one and ask for expedit.

Title of the post: F1 Visa expired and have to travel to India for a month or so. Currently on OPT and

Body of the post: Hi Guys,

​

Sorry if this might have been repeated, but I need some advice on this.

​

I am currently working on my OPT which ends in December 2025, and my current F1 visa has expired and my H1B got rejected again this year.

However, I need to go back to India for a month or so for a family function. Is there any way I can go to India and come back to the US without any complications?

I have been advised not to go for the F1 renewal process as that might be risky since visa can get rejected. Any help on this would greatly appreciated :)

Reddit Posts

Thank you guys!!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: how are you going to return on an expired visa?
- New Comment: By H1B rejected, do you mean it didn't get picked in this year's lottery? Rejection and not getting picked are two different things.

If your F1 has expired and you really need to go back then the only option you have is to renew your F1 visa before coming back to US. If you want to avoid complications and visa renewal rejection then just go after you're done with your OPT.

- New Comment: You will not be allowed to return once you leave. Your only option is to renew your F1 visa. And as you've noted, there is a chance that it will not be renewed, seeing as you finished your degree.

- New Comment: There is no alternative beside renewing your visa. If you have held a good record during your stay in US there would be a very less chance of denial. Like you have maintained your F1 status, done nothing illegal and working with a genuine employer.

Since you are going for a month, it would be enough time for a renewal, barring some exceptional cases. But its for you to decide risk vs gain for yourself.

There likely won't be any issue renewing your visa or travelling in OPT. I recommend you make copies for all important documents and take it with you. E.g: EAD, I20, copy of transcripts and employment verification letter would be a plus.

- New Comment: OPT is part of the student visa. Go for the renewal. It should happen without issues, same as H1 renewals even if the renewal is for a small number of days.

Reddit Posts

I don't understand why people are discouraging OP. It's more likely that someone's OPT application is denied than an entry stamp into the country. Y'all really need to understand that maintaining/obtaining a new status and getting a mere visa stamp are very different things.

OP already has a legal status in the country. Why would getting a travel document that lets you enter the country to live in that legal status pose an issue?

- New Comment: Why was your H1B denied? Was there an RFE?

- New Comment: Denied and not picked are different things.

- New Comment: There are quite a few success stories about F1 renewal on Reddit. You could talk to those folks to hear their experience. But I do agree, renewing F1 is risky.

- New Comment: Either you should complete your OPT or travel for good to India. Thats all.

- New Comment: Bro you can renew your F1 visa on OPT no problem. I got mine renewed few months ago. Just be aware it will probably take a month to get it renewed

- New Comment: Dude are you crazy????

- New Comment: I thought USCIS provides the EAD date the same to match the F1 expiration date.

It's true in my case. Let me know if anyone else has experienced this.

- New Comment: I recently just went back home to the Bahamas for a wedding last month. **My F1 expired in 2018.** I was let back into the states with my signed I-20 and EAD card. The most they did was take me to the back and ask me about my company and what I did. I don't know if that will work for everyone else but I've been coming back home for funerals, wedding and holidays ever since. I just recently got knowledge that i wasn't suppose to be let back by reddit but i haven't specifically got told that from the Custom Agents.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Do not leave the country until you have secured a job. If your OPT period ends, you can obtain a new I-20. Getting readmitted to a program is not a significant issue. However, leaving the country could pose problems for reentry into the USA.
- New Comment: Wait I'm confused. What does it mean by renewing your F1 once you go to India ? Can anybody please explain ? He already finished his degree ? Does that mean he has to join a new University do another degree ?
- New Comment: You can apply for new F1 VISA with the school listed in your OPT I-20. I got a new f1 visa after 2 years since my previous f1 visa had expired.
- New Comment: No way you coming back if you leave at this point
- New Comment: Idk if I am wrong or not but isn't F1 visa valid for 5 years? (2 years for MS and 3 years if you have OPT)
- New Comment: You'll need to schedule an appointment for Visa renewal while you're in India, and get your passport back with a new visa stamp before returning to the US. My F1 Visa was renewed while I was on STEM OPT with no issues.
- New Comment: Question. If F1 visa renewal is rejected, can you return to the US by using Automatic Visa Revalidation while having an expired F1 visa?
- New Comment: You can't come back
- New Comment: I was in your same boat. Without the H1-b rejection. I went back to my home country to renew my visa with my new I-20 which had my current employer stated on it. It was a Dropbox application I did and it took about a month which was gut wrenching but I faced my fears and it was approved.
- New Comment: As an F1 on OPT with an expired visa don't risk it. It's just a family function, not worth all of the hassle you'll go through. Especially since you're in valid status till December 2025.

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Title of the post: Sevis got terminated for not attending a class for one week.

Body of the post: I got my Sevis terminated today for not attending the only class last week and I didn't submit my assignments. The reason was that I got covid with symptoms and I was under heavy antibiotics the whole week. When I went and talked with my DSO, she told me that I had two options: 1.) Cross the border and come back with a new i-20. 2.) Apply for reinstatement. I've read that reinstatement is a time taking process and there is no guarantee about whether USCIS might approve it or not. So I want to go to Mexico and come back with a new i-20. My question is that will there be immigration? How many days do I have to stay in Mexico before returning back?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It sucks but Those are the only two options for you. You will have to pay the sevis fee and get a new I-20 then you can enter again.
- New Comment: Its the first time hearing such a case, is this even real? Terminating SEVIS for attendance issue. Name the school and the course.
- New Comment: well to be fair you probably should have told your instructor as soon as you know you'd miss the class and the assignment ? but it's the first time I've seen something like this. Sorry that happened
- New Comment: Why did you take antibiotics if you have covid?either way, here's my two cents. My SEVIS was terminated in November 2019 due to an unauthorized reduction in courseload, and I drove to Canada and re-entered through there.

However, it's not as easy as it seems. I was detained for hours at the border (trying to re-enter the US) and almost deported because the CBP officer didn't even fully know the correct laws regarding this process. That experience still remains one of the most traumatic memories of my life, and I'm pretty sure the only reason I was let back in is because I was traveling with my US Citizen partner at the time, and he was there with me while I was detained. Be prepared with every document, every detail, and do this process as soon as you can. I was out of status from November 2019 to

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February 2020 (because it took a while for me to get a Canadian tourist visa), and I don't advise anyone to wait longer than that. Another thing I will say is don't argue with the CBP officer, they are usually on power trips and will not take kindly to it. Just try your best to explain your situation, I remember crying and pleading with her because I was panicking and couldn't find a specific email that she wanted to see (regarding my administrative medical withdrawal which turned out to not be authorized by my ISSS). I ended up finding the email, but regardless of it, she finally gave me an i-94 after hours of questioning me, with a sentence I'll never forget: "If we give you an inch, don't take a mile." She had earlier threatened to cancel my visa and deport me immediately.

Good luck with your situation. I know firsthand how miserable it feels. I truly hope you are able to come out of it triumphant.

Edit: When I came back in and got in touch with my DSO about the incorrect information that the CBP officer was going off of, my DSO agreed with me and was astounded that they have people enforcing laws that they aren't even educated on.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: I had an issue where they terminated my SEVIS, I simply had to pay the \$350 fee again and the school provided me with a new initial I-20. I went over the border to Canada and returned a day later. You technically don't have to spend any time across the border, you just have to cross it. From my experience there, the patrol officers were super chill and just asked if I had previously had another SEVIS record, they saw no problem with it and I came back in.

Also yes do not apply for reinstatement! I've heard it takes ages

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I didn't have the exact same situation as you, but my SEVIS was terminated, I did the 2nd option of a new I-20. There wasn't a set amount of time to be in Mexico, I just had to leave the U.S. and return on a new SEVIS record.

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Edit: Idk if it counts as "immigration"? It goes on your travel records (passport, I94)

But also, wtf kinda school are you going to? I missed classes all the time lol. And that was not the reason for termination

- New Comment: How do you know your sevis is terminated ?? Pls

- New Comment: What kind of shitty university does that

- New Comment: What universities do you guys go to that pull this shit lmao

- New Comment: you just have to cross the border and come back and show the new i20 on immigration. you can stay in mexico for a few hours even, just make sure you have your i-20 on time and mention the reason when you come back. This happened with a friend of mine and he went there for the weekend, had a nice little vacation and came back on Monday and went to work the same day lol

- New Comment: My sevis got terminated due to academic violation. Now I'm planning to cross the border and reenter. So my question is that mandatory to go Mexico /Canada or else can I go to my home country which is India as it is the summer right now?

- New Comment: Can you stay in usa after termination and wait to go to Canada before the next term starts?

- New Comment: It is always wise and appropriate to communicate any absences to the DSO and Academic Dean to avoid any issues regarding attendance. I think most DSOs will send an email warning you about dropping below the required amount of units, attendance, etc instead of just terminating the student for missing 1 of week of class. That's so unheard of. Every school has an attendance policy and therefore we are can miss several classes during the semester

- New Comment: Wtf this is something I've heard for the first time. I'm sorry you're going through this. But did the university communicate their absurd rules before your classes began?

- New Comment: Covid ain't a real excuse anymore buddy

- New Comment: Your I-20 would not get terminated for that. You would have had to be dropped from your classes to

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have had it terminated

Title of the post: Extremely urgent, am I going to get banned when I reapply for a F1 now?

Body of the post: I fell out of status 2 years ago without realizing. This was the result of severe mental health problems and miscommunication with DSO. Basically, I took less courses than needed and DSO never received my request. I have to preface that didn't realize back then had fallen out of status. I continued with my studies, did well, recovered etc. This was caught by SEVIS when my DSO made an error in my I20 and reached out to SEVIS and then SEVIS pointed it out. The time between when I fell out of status and when SEVIS realized was about 7-8 months. This led me to depart the US with a new SEVIS/I20 and re-enter as soon as ai found out. All went fine and was allowed back in. This was a few months ago. Now, I've graduated and plan to re-applying for a F-1 visa again in my home country for further studies. How likely it is that I'm going to get banned for accruing illegal days. I'm extremely nervous and don't know what to do. Should just not leave and stay here? I'm also assuming there's no way I qualify for an appointment waiver because this counts as a violation. Please help me, I have nobody to talk to about this. I'm extremely scared about my future.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you were in the US on an F1 visa and admitted for duration of status (as is normal) you did not accrue unlawful presence even if you were not maintaining status. See the regulation below. If you were able to depart and be readmitted by CBP despite this happening, then it is unlikely to impact a future visa application.

You may still be able to qualify for an appointment waiver since you did not accrue unlawful presence - see what the appointment website asks you in terms of interview waiver. But if you appear then make sure you tell the truth, explain what happened, explain it was inadvertent but that you were readmitted and completed your studies, and advocate that you are genuine student who wishes to continue your studies. Good luck!

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(<https://fam.state.gov/FAM/09FAM/09FAM030211.html>](<https://fam.state.gov/FAM/09FAM/09FAM030211.html>))

d. (U) Unlawful presence will not accrue for persons who have been admitted for duration of status (DOS) (as is usually the case with individuals in A, G, F, J, and I visa status), unless DHS, IJ, or the BIA finds a status violation in the context of a request for an immigration benefit or during removal proceedings. This finding of status violation by the DHS, an IJ, or the BIA will cause a period of "unlawful presence" to begin. In DOS cases where DHS or an IJ or the BIA makes a formal status violation finding, the individual begins accruing unlawful presence on the day after the finding (i.e., the date the finding was published /communicated). For example, if an applicant presents a letter from DHS dated December 1, 2008, that says the applicant was out of status starting on May 28, 2001, the applicant began to accrue unlawful presence as of December 2, 2008, not May 28, 2001.

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: ICE Phone calls : Beware !

Body of the post: I've posted this on the scam subreddit but I thought it could be useful to my fellow F1 already under a lot of stress. This happened to me a few hours ago ! So I know someone who is already stressed for their OPT or else could be easily overwhelmed as it was pretty convincing.

The event :

I've got a call from a number (same as the one listed on the governmental site)

THEY KNEW MY NAME and said I misfiled an Alien Registration number , they said it was a violation of the US Laws. They also said that I should not by any means tell anyone that an ?on call? investigation was going on about me and that I should not hang up by any means even after I said I was having a panic attack.

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they then asked me to go on ice.gov and check the number to confirm their identity (it was the same number as they used to call me) , they told me to check my rights and that I was on surveillance.

another number called me while the call was going on, they said that I was under surveillance and that anyone who called me they would know , they said ? a number is calling you why aren?t you picking up? in order to make the surveillance threat legitimate.

they asked me to put them on hold and pick the other call, someone else posed as a police officer on their way to arrest me unless I cooperated with the ICE agent. They gave me names and Badge numbers. They called 5 more times when I hung up the phone and wouldn?t pick up anymore. They said I was going to get arrested if I talked about it to anyone or hung up as we talked since it was an ? on call? investigation and that it was recorded.

The fact that they knew my name definitely spooked me beyond measure , if you get this kind of calls ; DO NOT give them any kind of information, my International office said it happened to a very frightened girl and she gave them SSN/Bank Account numbers. US agencies do NOT call you on your phone to mess with you , neither does the police department.

Y?all stay safe !

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hahaha I just got that call today! To be honest I don?t understand her strong accent. She sounds so fake she asked when when was the first time I went to US. I said a wrong year in purpose but she didn?t notice anything. And she was so demanding and controlling when I asked her if I can call her back because I was about to drive to somewhere. I said to her ? you sound so unprofessional. Go and arrest me!?

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- New Comment: That's scary, man. I'm sorry that happened to you. Thanks for sharing
- New Comment: Same thing happened to me like last 2 weeks while waiting for OPT as well. It was terrified but then I reported it to international student services at my university.
- New Comment: My uni also made this very very clear that no government agency will ever contact you via phone. Government agency almost certainly always send mails if they need to contact you.
- New Comment: OMG, that's happened to me since I got my OPT in January! They also claimed they are the officer from ICE, and I also checked that their phone also appeared on the ICE websites! They have every single information about me, My passport number, my name, my address, and my school I enrolled in. I just hung up, called my school, and told them about that! I have checked many subreddit, and they also notified me that they all scammers!!!! Do not give them anything about SSN/Bank account numbers. If you make something wrong with the government, they have a better way to approach it not just scaring you via phone, threaten you!

Title of the post: Hiring recent graduate on OPT - what gotchas are we missing as an employer?

Body of the post: My company is planning on hiring a recent graduate under OPT. We're a small shop and this is a brand new process to us. We're excited to bring this person on board but we also want to make sure we're dotting our i's and crossing our t's for their benefit and our own.

We spoke with an international services representative at their university and from the sound of it, hiring an F1 visa holder under OPT is very much like hiring anyone else on the employer's side; most of the burden is on the employee and things don't become complicated until a STEM OPT extension is required.

The stipulations as I understand it are that:

* we establish a bona fide employer/employee relationship with a minimum of 20hrs/wk

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- * the work is related to their area of study

- * our staff provides guidance/review/training - we can't abdicate this responsibility to clients/customers

Anything we're missing here? Beyond this is it a straight 1099 or W2 relationship?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hats off to any employers who are willing to go through this simple process instead of avoiding OPT students like plague

- New Comment: >hiring an F1 visa holder under OPT is very much like hiring anyone else on the employer's side; most of the burden is on the employee and things don't become complicated until a STEM OPT extension is required.

You basically do nothing different for OPT. For STEM OPT your company must be E-verified and you must fill out 2 pages of a training plan and give that to the school when on STEM OPT.

>The stipulations as I understand it are that:

To be clear... You have ZERO stipulations. This is 100% the responsibility of the student.

>we establish a bona fide employer/employee relationship with a minimum of 20hrs/wk

You don't have to do this. The student does need at least 20 hrs a week.

>the work is related to their area of study

Again, not your responsibility. This is a student responsibility.

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>our staff provides guidance/review/training - we can't abdicate this responsibility to clients/customers

Only for STEM OPT and only in the most basic ways you likely are ready doing.

>Anything we're missing here?

Honestly, you are over thinking it.

>Beyond this is it a straight 1099 or W2 relationship?

We cannot tell you. You need to decide what type of employee they are.

- New Comment: The only thing you'd need to consider is that unless you can sponsor that employee within the next year or the next three years depending on their degree, their employment authorization is going to expire and you'd need to find another employee. Even if you may want to sponsor them, they will have to go through an H1B lottery which doesn't have the greatest odds. Other than that, there are no stipulations for you at all. You just need to confirm that they're authorized to work in the US by seeing their employment authorization card and that's it.

- New Comment: There's no gotchas if you follow labor laws (which include verifying that all of your workers are authorized to work in the US). In America a person's immigration status is that person's problem.

- New Comment: I salute you. I've seen Fortune 500 companies that actually avoid OPT.

- New Comment: Yes. For the duration of their OPT, the employee has to make sure to report their employment to USCIS. But as you mentioned, it will feel like hiring anyone else. The only 'issue' that may arise is when the employee applies from STEM OPTION (if they have a STEM degree). In that case, your company will need to be e-verified (I've read a fairly simple process) Maybe other fellow redditors can add more to this.

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- New Comment: Are you guys looking to hire someone with background in Data Science and Machine Learning? I'm on F1-OPT actively looking for jobs in the domain of AI/ML and DS. Please let me know if you guys would be interested in scheduling a call to discuss my skills and your requirements. Thank you!

Title of the post: Renewing F1 visa on OPT success stories

Body of the post: Hey guys, I am currently on STEM OPT extension. My EAD expires in 2025. I currently have a job and in the meantime I'm applying for grad school. My visa expired in 2022. A lot of people told me not to renew my visa on OPT as I have a higher chance of being rejected but I feel like a prisoner in the US. I would like to go home and see my family and I can't wait until I get a school. Can I hear some of your success stories on renewing visa on OPT?

I also come from a country in West Africa. I don't know if that reduces the chances of getting approved.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: i just renewed on opt, and so did two of my friends. one of them is on STEM extension and the other one is on a phd program in a different school than previous visa. we all got our visas a week after dropbox :)). I am from WA as well as

- New Comment: I just did while on STEM OPT in Lisbon consulate as a third country national. Even though OPT expires in Sept 2024, they renewed the visa for 5 years....lol. The interview lasted less than a minute. 15 years of F1 visa accumulated, what a joke lol.

- New Comment: >A lot of people told me not to renew my visa on OPT as I have a higher chance of being rejected but I feel like a prisoner in the US.

OPT does not negatively influence your visa application.

>I also come from a country in West Africa.

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This does however. Assume your visa interview while on OPT will be similar to your original visa application. Which may have gone well or been awful. I generally advise caution for my African students, although some West African Countries (Senegal, Gambia, Ghana, Togo) can have fewer problems. The other countries especially Nigerians, Liberian, and any non-costal countries have many more difficulties.

- New Comment: Why is there higher chances for visa refusal on OPT any specific reasons?

- New Comment: It's pretty straightforward. I just renewed my F1 visa for 5 years on initial OPT using dropbox appointment. The whole process took about a week. My initial F1 visa expired in Sep 2022.

- New Comment: I renewed my visa on OPT in London, with 7 months of OPT left. I went in for the interview and had no issues!

- New Comment: I just renewed mine. I am on post completion OPT and from southern Africa. I went to the visa interview with all the documents I could possibly get. But they just asked for that "confirmation" page, I20, and the expired visa. The interview was super short. Mainly about what I have been doing in the US, if I like it there and when I want to return to the US.

Just like you, I was anxious and felt trapped, I just had to go home for a bit. The problem I faced was that the consular section in my country was closed very early for the holidays due to staff shortages. But, I still managed to get an expedited interview appointment to return to work.

- New Comment: F1 renewal on OPT: Recieved 221g white slip with call for interview. It does not mention what documents to bring or anything. Is this something to worry about?

- New Comment: OP do let us know how it goes if you decide to renew on STEM OPT extension, I am in a similar situation

- New Comment: Did anyone receive 221g (call for interview with no specific docs requested) for renewing F1 on OPT?

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I'm in a similar situation and would like to get to know the experience of all the folks here.

- New Comment: I'll add mine: I just got my passport back with the visa in it this Monday. My interview was last Thursday. I'm currently on post-completion OPT and my visa expired back in December. The new F1 visa is 5 years, just like the expired one. I had an interview and did not have the dropbox option.

- New Comment: can you renew F1 after it expired 11 months ago? currently on OPT and would like to travel and see family.

- New Comment: Hey everyone! My f1 expired in June 2023 and I am currently enrolled in a Masters program. Have been thinking of going home to renew the f1 but hesitant if it gets stuck will not be able to come back to graduate. If you have any recent experience with f1 visa renewal, specially when you are financing the degree through student loans, and do not mind sharing. Thank you so much!

- New Comment: Whoever did renew their visa on F1 OPT: what documents did you submit other than i20 and ds160? I recently got refusal for renewal on opt and only documents I submitted were i20 and ds160. Wondering if I should have submitted something else (but they didn't ask for anything at the VAC Drop-off counter)

- New Comment: I just renewed mine two weeks ago while on OPT and they did 2 year extension. They only took I-20 and a copy of my EAD but none of the other supporting documents. However, I'd suggest to have them with you if you go just in case (offer letter, last pay slip, and a copy of your sevis).

Title of the post: Tired of H1B leaving US

Body of the post: For those of you who have tried staying but were not successful or simply got tired of the process, what's your view or opinion? Currently deciding to move out despite having one more try for H1B, I do not want to be tied down to my current position as I am trying to get out of it and probably best thing is to move to a better position in Europe (European company) and maybe come back later if I wanted to. It just seems depressing to be tied to a position that will delay your career progression and make you depressed

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yeah, even there was a 2nd round this year but I doubt there will be any major difference next year and the chance of selection will still be 10 ~ 15%, even worse if they still don't do anything to prevent multiple registrations, so I'd say it's smart to plan your next step now.

- New Comment: I was on H1 for 5 years, worked for a fortune 100 company full-time before I moved after a total of 9 years in the US to India in 2018 and then to Germany in 2019. I now have a PR (GC equivalent for y'all) in Germany. Life is fairly laid back. My rights as an employee are respected. I'm entitled to 31 days of vacation plus unlimited sick days. Work life balance is amazing. I have access to 26 other countries to travel, learn cultures, experiment with. I'm not worried about safety (guns and \$hit) I'm not worried about a 2 week notice, no h1b transfers, not tied to an employer. I have decent health care.

It all feels completely different but in a good way.

But also understand that it's a trade off. You'll give up the luxury, the comforts of the sweet sweet USA. Are you okay with public transit? Are you okay with half of the pay, and in euros? Are you okay with no air con inside your apartment? Grocery will involve a walk. Drive thrus aren't as common. The food, the variety will be missing. The taxes are high. The money you'll receive after tax will be less. Lesser than what you may have made in the States.

If you're really ready for that, then yep EU is an alternative.

Hope this helps. :)

- New Comment: I am on the same boat. I would suggest to stick around until the next round, but keep applying to Europe as well.

- New Comment: I'm Indian. As some people might know, it is close to impossible for Indians to get a permit of permanent residence from the government from being on a work visa (known as the H1-B). Which forms a major dent in

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motivation for a lot of us.

Now, about H1-B: the numbers are quite telling, really. There is about a 10% chance for a person to be selected for the H1-B through the lottery system. And the probability to get selected for the H1-B interview is going to get worse in the coming years as more internationals come into the US.

My plan is to start the process to move to another country if I don't get selected the second time. I'm specifically looking at APAC since I like the continent and the lifestyle (hoping for a decent WLB though). I suggest that every international makes contingency plans in case something like what I describe happens to you.

Cheers, would love to hear more about your plans. Which country might you move to? What is your role? What are your plans in the future? Which country are you from?

- New Comment: You are lucky you got H1B. I don't get it yet?. Feel like not human. Currently, labor market is not good in us.

- New Comment: I see a lot of people mentioning EU countries. If I was you, I would also look into Canada. It's a great alternative!

- New Comment: Try Canada! Europe is meh when it comes to salary

- New Comment: If you are Mexican or Canadian, you can go for the TN visa instead! FYI

- New Comment: .marry a citizen in the next year and you're good.

- New Comment: In the same boat, but don't have the energy and time to keep exploring country after country for career.

Assuming you are Indian (as am I), the problem is India as a country is a big time failure and will remain so. That's the reason we all left India, in search of good life, career and money.

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Of course, USA is the top choice of all Indians (in fact all immigrants) when it comes to education/job/career. The ones who don't get it, go for EU, CAN etc.

Coming back to the real issue which is India sucks, that is why you are looking to go to EU and not to India !!

Indian PM keeps making tall claims about progress, but the reality is completely opposite. Given a chance, every Indian (especially the middle class) will run away from India. Look at the backlog of GC for India (EB2/Eb3) and you will agree that people from India are dying to come to US. If India were so good, it would have provided similar quality of life, job, education etc. that Indians run to other countries for. Also, people like you and I would have gotten our GC long long ago just like immigrants from any other country.

As for me, I will have to slog for some more years and decide If I want to give it all up in the US and move back to India, knowing that India sucks and live with it.

- New Comment: Leave and come back without paper through southern border. Wait for an expedited work permit. Its that easy.

Title of the post: My parents passed away from Covid. Is this grounds for f1 interview rejection?

Body of the post: My parents passed away from Covid 2years ago. I have no siblings. They were aware and enthusiastic of my plans to pursue masters. Infact I was all set to move to the US for studying in 2021. Unfortunately, covid happened and I stayed back re-building my life after my parents? demise. I got into a top 5 university in the US this year. I have strong funding and I have my parents house and assets in India. I?m sponsoring myself with their savings and insurance money. If the interviewer asks me what my parents do, should I be honest and tell them the truth? I?m worried it may look like I don?t have strong ties to my home country. I have no immigrant intent, how do I prove it to them in my case? Please suggest how I should answer this question.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Mad respect for you. Your parents would be proud. You should be honest and the assets establish ties to your home country. Good luck

- New Comment: You could say you got property your parents left behind or something I think

- New Comment: First of all , I'm so sorry for your loss . I understand losing a loved one . You will definitely get a visa . Just tell them unfortunately due to covid they died in ur way and be cool minded . God bless you . JUST go in interview and be frank that's it . They want good people for their country, matter of fact every visa holder is a potential immigrant to them . Good people like u will definitely be issued visa. So their actual motive in my opinion is who is worthy enough to be an immigrant in future , Bc immigration will happen which will never stop . You just be cool minded and you will crack ur interview .

- New Comment: God bless you dude and more power to you!!

You will figure out everything:)

- New Comment: My condolences.

It sounds like you had a plan, but then family obligations got in the way and you had to delay. Now things are stable and you are continuing your plan. Obviously, you have some additional family obligations you are responsible for back home, but I am glad you have the time to get the degree now. Make sure you explain the family obligations that you need to return home for and let them specifically know what city you re planning to return to due to property ownership and family obligations.

- New Comment: Sorry for your loss. If they don't ask, don't tell.

A lot of times, they don't ask you if you have T5 admits. Make sure you have something to say about your current job in India and how new masters/PhD will help you to start something new in India.

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In all fairness, I really doubt you won't develop intent once you land here. Only exception is you have an Uber comfortable life in India.

- New Comment: First of all sorry for your loss. Life is unpredictable and in your case situation gon beyond your control.at the same time you have own life and career to build and move on.Be very honest while answering and to the point. Definitely you will get approved.

Title of the post: Anyone just stay for OPT,STEM OPT and leave?

Body of the post: Has anyone worked with the intention of just staying for the duration of OPT and STEM OPT without looking for some kind of work visa sponsorship? If so, how did you communicate that to your employer(s) and how did it work out?

​

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'm in my last year of STEM OPT and have no intention of staying longer, or even applying for H1B.

My employer has many international employees (as contractors) and I will be able to keep my job.

Having no job lined up would not change my decision either. While I had a good time overall, the US govt has made it abundantly clear that the likes of us are not welcome to stay, and I am sick of the bureaucratic hoops.

I'm looking forward to starting over yet again.

- New Comment: You dont need to. If the job description asks if you need work authorization now then the answer is NO and you can proceed from there. If the job asks if you would need it now or in the future, then in your case the answer is

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still NO.

- New Comment: OP nobody can give you a one-size-fit-all solution I don't think. What I would do if it was myself, is bring up reporting requirements during the interview. Also they will need to be on the eVerify system, it would not be possible for them to hire you if they're not. Additionally, prior to your starting date, they will need all of your data including proof of work authorization. What I'm saying is that they couldn't fire you at a later point for having to report OPT progress because I don't think you could even start before them knowing you are on OPT.

Do not say anything about your long term plans: I don't think you need to. If they do ask, say you are thinking of remaining long term but do not necessarily offer more piece of information. You are not doing anything illegal by lying to them, and it is in your best interest. Do not feel guilty: people leave their jobs and/or are fired all the time. 3 years at a job is a perfectly normal amount of time to stay and then leave, whatever the reason (personal, professional, etc.). I think most companies take that risk into account anytime they are hiring a candidate.

TL;DR: they will need to know you're on OPT before even starting; they don't need to know your plans and lying to them isn't illegal.

- New Comment: Please, do not think about the company's best interests. Think about YOUR best interest. If your best interest means not telling your plans, do not tell them

- New Comment: No way to get around that, companies will not hire and train if they can't retain you for more than 3 years.

Title of the post: Do most companies not sponsor Bachelors students?

Body of the post: The other day I came to a realization that all my friends who are international students who found a job to sponsor them are graduate students. This is a little concerning for me because I am doing my bachelors. Do companies prefer sponsoring masters students? Do they not sponsor bachelor students? I may think like this because

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most of my international student friends are masters students(95% of international students are master students in my university). And I am going into my senior year, I was able to land internship in the us but didn't end up getting full time offer because of companies financial problems. How hard is it finding a full time position after graduating from undergrad?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: They do, Master students have just slightly better chance for winning the lottery. The market is very tough and it is an inevitable fact that there are a lot of "US" talents that are out there not needing a sponsorship. But don't give up until the end. You will regret.

- New Comment: They do, it's just a hard time to be in this field.

Get your cold applications done, but also do your best to network and try to land referrals. They help for full-time roles.

Referrals can be your basic referrals, where someone in the firm sends you a link, but also a high-quality version of a referral where the person specifically gets the hiring manager to view to your resume. Both play an important role, try to get them.

- New Comment: I think a lot of these graduate students probably have work experience before they did their masters. That might be why a company is more willing to sponsor.

- New Comment: It really depends on the industry. Specifically, the tech industry is in a recession and the labor market is absolutely saturated with F1-OPT applicants.

- New Comment: Depend on where you are and what is your major. I'm EE in midwest and almost 90% of my international friend from college got sponsored/ job offer on their senior year (our Uni's program made us go on Coop since Junior, most of the offer are return offer but still).

Reddit Posts

market for CS is terrible rn ngl so good luck if you are CS major

- New Comment: Adding to everyone else's points: masters students have an easier time filing for green cards since they'll qualify for EB2 visas (with a shorter waitlist than EB3 visas) that also include a national interest waiver, which don't require a wage determination.

- New Comment: I have a bachelor and my company is sponsoring me. Before graduation I had two job offers and they were offering to sponsor me. Keep your head up, it's definitely possible

- New Comment: What's your field? I'm in Civil Engineering. When I graduated in 2019, it was hard to find a job but not impossible. I also noticed my friends who were grad students got offers or interviews always immediately after career fairs on campus. I did OPT and then STEM OPT with my first company. They applied for my H1B and I got it the first try.

The next question I have for you is, if the job you're offered is not your dream job or have some shitty working environment, would you still take it? Point of this question is, for a lot of us, companies that are hiring sometimes have manpower or management problem. They wanna hire you to use you for the work no one likes to do or overwork you. Not true for all circumstances but it's common.

I got my first job not knowing what I sign myself up for. It affected my mental health pretty greatly even till today. I was also low balled because when they applied for my H1B, they had to pay me a prevailing wage so I got a pay bump (that's how I knew I was low balled).

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I graduated with bachelor's in CS in 2022 and got multiple full time offers (3) but I think 2024 is way worse time to be graduating. The company also sponsored my application for h1b last year - so if you do get full time position companies do generally want to sponsor you. Just try your best, there's not much to be done other than keep applying. This has been the worse time for applications in the 5 years I've been here

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: same with my university and im nearing the end of junior year :(
- New Comment: I only had my undergrad degree when my company sponsored me. but I'm a nurse, a job that has continuously been in shortage in the US, so that could make the difference.
- New Comment: isn't there opt?
- New Comment: To get a job, honestly I think a US undergrad degree and GPA are a significant help especially from a ?focus? university that the company recruits heavily from.

Nobody in software companies cares about the additional courses one does in a MS degree. The multiple internships you should have during an undergrad degree program are better resume material than an international student with only a MS degree in the US who likely has 0-1 internships.

To get a H1B and green card, the MS degree makes a huge difference.

Title of the post: Stem opt got denied

Body of the post: I graduated with an MBA with a concentration in Health Informatics from Westcliff University.

? Initially, my SEVIS record reflected a general business administration degree due to an administrative error.

? The correct CIP code for Health Informatics (51.2706) was later updated in SEVIS.

STEM OPT DENIAL:

? My STEM OPT application was denied due to a discrepancy in the CIP code, indicating my degree as business administration instead of Health Informatics.

2. Response to RFE:

? I received a Request for Evidence (RFE) from USCIS requesting an explanation for the discrepancy.

? I responded with:

? Corrected degree verification letter confirming the correct CIP code (51.2706).

? DSO letters explaining the administrative error.

Reddit Posts

? Course descriptions and syllabi.

3. Current Situation:

? My F-1 visa is valid until 2025.

My initial OPT expired on March 31, and I am on the 180-day extension period ending September 9.

I have not yet filed Form I-290B

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Since you already got denied, and your initial OPT has already expired, you will have to leave asap.

The 180day extension only applies when your OPT is still pending. And it doesn't matter when your I20 expires. You should discuss with the school DSO ASAP. Right now your I20 OPT status is over. So take with DSO, and either plan to leave as soon as possible or file the Form I-290B as soon as possible. This is my opinion. Good luck!

- New Comment: Typically an MBA isn't gonna count for STEM- even with the original wrong CIP code, your school would've needed to prove how the curriculum qualified as a STEM degree (not that you just took one or two stem related classes)

Westcliff is a day 1 CPT school and in my experience, these schools try to push the boundaries to make as much \$ as possible. Day1cpt schools tend to get exponentially more RFEs and denials than a normal school. Filing an I-290B is an option but also USCIS might just be cracking down more on CPT schools now

- New Comment: You say that your correct CIP (51.2706) is eligible for STEM OPT, but where did you get that information? Looking at the [list of CIPs eligible for STEM OPT](<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub/additional-resources/eligible-cip-codes-for-the-stem-opt-extension>), it does not seem like that is correct. Check the entire list of STEM designated CIPs [here](<https://www.ice.gov/sevis/schools#dhs-stem-designated-degree-program-list-and-cip-code-nomination-process>)

- New Comment: Wait, so are you still waiting on a response after submitting the corrected information, or is it DENIED

Reddit Posts

and done?

- New Comment: Where can you see the CIP Code in your SEVIS Record?

Also SEVIS record is same as the data that's in SEVP portal, correct?

- New Comment: I am a PDSO. Three of our students were denied STEM around Christmas time. All 3 filed I-290 B and all have been recently approved.....after 6 months. Work with an attorney for the I-290 B. This goes beyond the DSOs at your school. Good luck and remember, no working til this is resolved. Sorry!

- New Comment: Where was the CIP column in Stem OPT.. I-765?

Title of the post: How hard is it to get h1b or stay in the US after graduation?

Body of the post: How hard is to get h1-b after F1 visa?

Hello, guys.

I am looking for studying in the US and I came across the difficult to stay in the country after finishing university by many students searching about the topic.

I know that the h1b is lottery based but I would like to know if the country you're from interfere in the process or the major you graduated. In the case I am from Brazil and am interested in the STEM field, which I know you can extend your OPT.

The H1b visa is the only option if you want to stay there besides doing graduation or masters, phd? Or is there something else?

I really appreciate your help and sharing your experience.

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Honestly it is much harder to get the job than to WIN the lottery. To put in perspective, you will do twice or more effort just to get a job willing to sponsor you and once you find one(if you do) there is a huge chance that you wont get the visa. I was employed by a company willing to sponsor. %70 of the employees were students and people keeping their student status through master programs. Several years of them participating on the lottery and not get it. The turnover was high not because of the company beings cutthroat but because people had to go back to their countries.

I don?t mention this to discourage you but sadly I was naive to not know until I experienced it firsthand. I am still on the grind and looking for a way to stay.

Most companies wont hire you because it?s not viable to hire someone with no experience and pay for all the costs of H1B. If possible I would research any american companies in your country. Come to study and do internships and use your OPT on said company. If they are willing to sponsor after college, great, if not go back and work for them and continue applying to that company for a position in the U.S with you having more experience and being familiar with the industry there?s a chance they are willing to bring you back.

I only know of one person that did this and worked, take it with a grain of salt.

- New Comment: H1b is a 1:5 ratio or about a 20% chance which is low as hell and that comes down to America being the dumbest country in ever seen, I mean besides them who the hell does lottery to work visas. Anyways your main problem is getting a job in the first place as most employers are not a fan of sponsorships even after 3 years, so you have to be actively searching and networking.

Good luck

- New Comment: My friends got it. I'm from Nepal though.

- New Comment: [removed]

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Title of the post: Unemployment days

Body of the post: Got my rent and credit card bills due. 80\$ in my checking account and no job in sight. I graduated in June. How are you guys surviving out there?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Sadly, unfortunately, parents' money ?
- New Comment: Burn through savings
- New Comment: Stay with family or friends? There is no point paying rent and and other expenses every month just for nothing. Do you expect to get a job soon? If so, burn through your credit, your job should pay for this in <2 months. If you don't expect a job, no real point in staying here anymore.
- New Comment: im paying for med school out of my parents retirement money ??
- New Comment: what major did you graduate?
- New Comment: Whats your job? Have you looked for an online job, asked for referral?
- New Comment: Credit cards
- New Comment: Survivn on hope ?
- New Comment: Money in the bank for only the last 15days ??

Hoping for the best ..

- New Comment: What's your qualification? If you don't mind me asking.

I'm graduating in May 2025.

Title of the post: No job!

Body of the post: I need advices!

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I've been volunteering on OPT for a year now and it's time for STEM OPT and I'm starting to get no interview calls anymore. As an international student, what options have I got to sustain in the US.

Any suggestion or guidance would be extremely appreciated.

PS:

1. I'm an electrical student from a top institute. I did get an offer from two MAANG companies but the offers got rescinded due to recession.
2. I've been associated with consultants to hold my clock from ticking. Not sure how long I can do that.
3. Any advices asking me to APPLY FOR JOBS: I am aware of it and been doing it for longest time with all MAANG companies. If you have genuine advice, pls post.

No time for negativity

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Try grad school

- New Comment: Cap exempt H1B jobs are way to go.

You can work as research staff or staff software engineer in many universities and collect experience . Have you looked into this option? I would aggressively go all out and try to get some staff software engineering / data science position in some academic setting.

- New Comment: The best bet for you is to try to network with people who studied with you and see if they can recommend you. The market is terrible, and you should also have a plan B in case you don't find anything.

- New Comment: You should apply for some software positions in hospitals, they are h1b exempt and looking for people

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who can help their researchers with processing data.

- New Comment: Expand your job applications, Why only focusing on MAANG applications.. apply for any company that does work related your areas of study.
- New Comment: Do you not have to leave the country after 90 days of unemployment?
- New Comment: Bro which course and University?
- New Comment: Share some more details of your qualifications please
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Which university did you attend?
- New Comment: Have you tried applying for jobs with non-MAANG companies?
- New Comment: Jjsike
- New Comment: Are you currently volunteering in the university? Like unpaid work as a research assistant?
- New Comment: Apply for EB3. Look into bdv for that. The system in USA is messed up. They will sustain illegal immigrants over actual paying migrants at this present state. Your EB3 can process while you also maintain your current visa.
- New Comment: > I've been associated with consultants to hold my clock from ticking. Not sure how long I can do that.

This might cause problems for you in the future if you used a consultancy to stop your unemployment clock

- New Comment: wow how did u survived in US for a year without salary?
- New Comment: Marry USC
- New Comment: In the same situation - I had a job and got caught in layoffs in Feb. Opt end in June. I apply every day but no companies r considering opt students .. even though I explain them that I don't need sponsorship atleast 3 more

Reddit Posts

years, still the HRs don't even give me a chance. Parents are furious of course ~ I have started to apply for jobs back home now :(

- New Comment: How have you been employed for a year??? What are you doing??? Apply to jobs

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Try buying a ticket back to your home country and do something good with the degree you earned here. That's the best advice you can get.

Title of the post: F-1 VISA Renewal got REFUSED while on OPT

Body of the post: Just received a notification from visa status check that my VISA for F-1 was refused. What should I do? Please advise ASAP!!!

I submitted every single document except for EAD card and financials docs (like paystubs from company and overall financials). I am just realizing that person who was accepting my documents did stupid thing by saying that I would not need those documents. What should I Do????????? Should I resubmit my documents by adding those 2 ??????

Update:

Sorry all for severe delayed update but finally I got my F-1 VISA renewed. I lost access to this threaded. So, Initially I wanted to use drop box service but got into weird situation where person who was collecting documents decided what to accept and what not to (that is why you must follow a list and persist them to take more info than less). Eventually he did not took my EAD card ... and said that it is not required. After a week, I got refusal notice and immediately began looking for the reason. I contacted the embassy and asked for the reason, and they said that I would have to book appointment for physical interview. That time there were no available windows, and I had to monitor the website couple times a day. Another week passed by, and I started calling/ emailing embassy to get me appointment. Then I got email notification

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that there is window for the next day, and I needed to book that ASAP. Fast forward to that day ... I collected ALL my documents and all possible proof of employment to make sure I am going with 110% preparation. Interview with the officer went pretty much straightforward, although ALL people before me were rejected for their TOURIST visas. I thought that it will affect the entire situation, but it did not.

The office asked about the company, position, and where I live. How I commute and how much I paid for my car. Then office asked about proof of employment and what I do in my job. Conversation was easy but took about 35-45 mins. I think the background check took long.

Apparently, the problem with dropbox was that 1) The entire file did not had my EAD card (the reason is above) and 2) there was some discrepancy with my I-20 when i changed my major 2 years ago. I hope this helps ! Have a nice day everyone.

Update 2.0

Timeline wise -

Dropped my docs to dropbox, and after 4 days got refusal notice. Then started calling and trying to book appointment, that took additional 1 week. Interview got scheduled after 2-3 days. After passing physical interview, i got my passport back in 7-10 days. Total procedure took about 3-4 weeks. So, be prepared for larger period, something like month. The wait time was crazy long at that time, but please be patient and strategic. This will work out !!!

Update 3.0:

If you guys have any question, please drop me DM ... I missed lots of peoples' questions here.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Refused is not denied, just FYI. It could mean a 221g asking for additional documents or asking for in person interview. Check with the embassy.

- New Comment: Relax. They are calling you for the interview. Unless an obviously ineligibility, they don't deny visa

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through dropbox. Since you are working on OPT, you better have some really good reasons why you would return to your home country.

- New Comment: Sorry that happened to you. Commenting so that this post reaches more people who could help. Good luck!!

- New Comment: Hey,

Please update us as to how long will it take for this to be processed. I'm in the same boat currently..how long it took for you to get your visa...timeline would be very helpful for many people.

Thanks!

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Commenting for visibility. That?s why I haven?t gone to countries other than Mexico since my F-1 expired (STEM OPT with a job I love, pretty unique job, won?t find anything like that other than where I am).

- New Comment: Did you contact your DSO?

- New Comment: Commenting for visibility. I'm so sorry this happened.

- New Comment: *Updated the conversation*

please review.

- New Comment: Put couple of additional updates.

- New Comment: Did you have to interview? I would reach out to your DSO and check if you can reapply with evidence that you have employment in the US.

- New Comment: Please help !!!!!

- New Comment: How did you renew? Did you go to your home country to do so? I want to renew to travel

- New Comment: How long have you been in the US for? What consulate is this?

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- New Comment: Bro, I am so sorry. That's just awful of them especially when they are in need of people to fill jobs. Is there any reason you can think of why they might have denied the visa. Did you maintain your status while on OPT or as a student? Did you have a record or any incident that might affect your status? Is your OPT training directly related to your major?

I am going through the process as well. I am on my STEM OPT and have kept my status throughout my stay.

- New Comment: Hey!!!

​

I am exactly in the same boat and it is so frustrating! I also think because the drop-off officer didn't take my EAD card I have gone down this road. I specifically asked them if they needed it but they said they didn't need it so I assumed they knew more than I did! I already went to my interview also after but they placed me under admin processing so I am waiting! Keep me updated of your case!

- New Comment: Hey! Did you get your renewal approved? What's the status

- New Comment: Can you share more information and any updates? As I will be applying for a F1 visa on OPT soon.

- New Comment: Could you update the case ????

- New Comment: I submitted my documents yesterday and I am on my first year of OPT. Please let us know what happened to your case. A bit worried now!

- New Comment: Hello, what was the number you contacted the embassy on for your status?

I tried calling the numbers they provided for the US visa travel docs site to check on the status of my application and get more information, but it just keeps showing 'Line Busy' and won't even dial. I tried the US number as well and no luck.

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Tried calling the embassy directly and they said they can't do anything because it would connect me to the "library" and would ask me to dial the number that doesn't work. I told them how I've been trying and again, they said they can't do anything keep trying.

There's no way to reach them via phone. Yesterday, I reached out through their email and it bounced me to an embassy in a different country. I finally got the right email but am awaiting any responses. I don't know when to pick up my passport nor any information about what I need to do.

- New Comment: I just got mine refused as well. I will start calling and sending emails because I have no information

- New Comment: What questions were asked during the physical interview? I have my interview scheduled and I am anxious they might deny me because of being on OPT.

Title of the post: I may or may not have set a world record for fastest approved interview :P

Body of the post: So I spent months trying gathering supporting documents and just spent a lot of time preparing for the interview, to the point where my friends called it overkill. Fast forward a couple of weeks to the interview, I was standing in line shitting my pants when I get called over for the interview. I plop my thicc binder I have been working on and the interviewer (I am in Korea btw) ,asked for my passport, I-20 and my sevis receipt. I gave her the things and she asked me what I was going to study so, I answered "I will be studying Computer and Electrical engineering" Then she asked me if this was my first year so I answered "No, I did a year online" and then she looked at me, typed something and just went "Ok, good luck on your studies." I was like wait thats it, so I left and the whole thing took 30 to 1 min tops and I just stood outside the embassy like she didnt even bother asking for my perfect binder.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yup, i think this is pretty common. F1 students are just kids after all

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- New Comment: You go back in there and show her your perfect binder!

Jokes aside, congrats

- New Comment: Lmao mine was faster, they didn't even ask for anything other my passport, asked what i'm going to study and said "okay, your visa is approved, you'll get your passport in the mail in 3 days" ??? (from Kenya and that was like 2 years ago)

- New Comment: The same happened to me I was so stressed, had a binder full of papers, my heart beating soooo fast lol, and then the only questions I got was who pays for my tuition, and do I live close to Poughkeepsie or not? I was out in 2 minutes lol

Good luck on your studies

- New Comment: This should be pinned because most of us got scared before the interview and it ended up being so easy. People who are just applying should see this.

- New Comment: Was your school prestigious? That might've a reason why

- New Comment: Similar situation. One question and that was it!

- New Comment: Sorry, that record belongs to a student of mine from Ireland. Consular Officer didn't ask a single question. Just took their documents, looked at finances, and approved the visa.

- New Comment: I thought I had the fastest interview with 4 questions with one word answers but I think the crown belongs to you.

- New Comment: Lol I feel you. The embassy in my country is closed so I had to go to another country, "quarantine" (be outside my country) for 2 weeks to then go for my interview? I also had a whole bunch of documents, translations and anything they could ask for. 2 weeks outside my country and when I finally got to my interview they barely asked for anything and it took literally about 1 minute

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- New Comment: lol same here, came with a stack of documents and all I was asked what ?what school are you attending?? (Canadian)
- New Comment: They just asked for my passport and for my major, then they said that my visa was approved. I was stressed for like 4 months and it took literally 15 seconds
- New Comment: Mine was faster lol. She only looked through my documents and asked, is the money in your parents account legit? I answered yes. She said ok. I was done.

Title of the post: Tax Question Megathread

Body of the post: **All Tax Questions go here.**

>Do I need to pay my 2021 taxes?

No, tax filing now is for the calendar year 2020 and started February 12, 2021, and ends April 15, 2021.

>Do I have to pay/file/submit taxes?

Yes, all F-1 visa holders regardless of employment or not need to file their taxes.

If you worked in 2020 you received tax documents from your employer (likely a [W2](<https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-form-w-2>) or a 1099 of some sort). You will need that form(s). You also need to file a [form 8843](<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8843.pdf>). If this is you continue on to the next question.

If you did not work then you need to file a [form 8843](<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8843.pdf>) That is all that you must do if you otherwise did not work or receive taxable payments.

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>Can I use Turbo tax or another program to file my taxes?

Yes, but you need to find out if you are a "Resident for Tax Purposes" or a "Non-Resident For Tax Purposes". You can find the questionnaire [here](<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/determining-alien-tax-status>)

Alternatively, you can go to [Sprintax.com](<https://www.sprintax.com>) sign up for their program and use the tax determination questionnaire at the beginning of their software. You do not need to pay to use this portion of their software.

If you are deemed a non-resident for tax purposes and you like their software you can continue to use it for your taxes and pay them for convenience. If you want another option there is [Glacier tax Prep](<https://www.glaciertax.com>) Both of these companies specialize in Non-Resident Taxes. You can also just complete the 1040NR

If you are deemed a resident for tax purposes you can use any other tax software designed for an American. Such as turbo tax, Tax Slayer, etc.

>I was deemed a "Resident for Tax Purposes" am I now eligible for permanent resident benefits?

No. That's why it says, "Resident for tax purposes". You are not an actual resident of the US and your immigration status has not changed. You are just now given more flexibility with your taxes and qualify for some additional tax benefits you didn't otherwise qualify for before. That said, you also have more tax liability now compared to before.

It is 100% separate from your immigration status and does not, can not, and has not granted you any sort of permanent residency in any way shape or form.

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>I got a 1098-T, can I use it?

You can only use a 1098-T if you are a Resident for Tax Purposes. Otherwise, it does not apply to you.

>I have Dependents on F2

You need to file your taxes based on the above and file an 8843 for each dependent.

>My spouse on their own F1 needs to file

Have them follow the procedure above and file their own taxes separately.

>My friend got a refund and I had to pay

That happens, there are many reasons it could happen. Taxes are VERY individual. It is possible your friend also filed using the incorrect status Resident vs. Non-Resident etc. You also could have filed wrong. If you are concerned, then use the software linked above to get an answer. If you are still confused after that contact the software provider for support.

>I/my friend/my lover/ the neighbor/my uncle Muhammed Lee got a covid-19 stimulus check? Should that have happened?

Maybe, if you/they were a resident for tax purposes in 2019 or earlier and filed their taxes correctly, they were eligible for the automatic stimulus checks. If they were not a resident for tax purposes in 2019 then they filed their taxes wrong and

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should not have received the check. They need to return the money and refile their taxes correctly. Sprintax has several blogs with more information about this and how to refile. [Most Recent Blog Post: Jan 5, 2021](<http://blog.sprintax.com/second-stimulus-check-guide-nonresidents>)

[Original Stimulus Blog Post: April 17, 2020](<http://blog.sprintax.com/nonresident-aliens-guide-navigating-covid-19-cares-act-stimulus-payments>)

[What should I do to fix this Blog Post: May 14, 2020](<http://blog.sprintax.com/filed-as-resident-left-us-received-stimulus-check>)

>How do I use tax form 1099-A/M/J/L/Misc

You can use the tax software above to file your taxes or follow the instructions on the 1040-NR for non-residents or 1040/1040-EA for Residents

>When do I get my refund?

If you are eligible for a refund you must submit your application as a non-resident via the mail to the IRS on/before April 15 (update now it is May 17, 2022) and will receive the refund in July-October. If you elect to have it be a direct deposit, please list your valid US bank account. If you want a check, give them a mailing address where you will be later this Fall.

Residents and Non-Residents who can file electronically can receive the refund in a few business days depending on how you filed your taxes. Via the mail, it takes several weeks. If you elect to have it be a direct deposit, please list your valid US bank account. If you want a check, give them a mailing address where you will be later this summer.

I don't know where I will be in the Fall/Summer or I am leaving the U.S. this Spring/Summer! Ask a friend you trust to use their mailing address.

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>Can I file my non-resident taxes online?

Yes, but e-filing can be limited by the online filing services.

>I do not have a Social Security Number (SSN) Can I file taxes?

Yes, but if you are not filing only the 8843 then you need an ITIN or an SSN.

You can get an ITIN using Spritnax (for an additional fee) or via a private company using the [Acceptance Agent Program](<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/acceptance-agent-program>) (for a fee) or you can schedule an appointment with the IRS at one of the [IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers](<https://www.irs.gov/help/tac-locations-where-in-person-document-verification-is-provided>) to both submit your taxes and the ITIN request form in person at one of their offices for free. You will need to call, schedule an appointment and bring all completed documents to the office for the submission of the ITIN request and submitting your other tax forms. If you use one of the software above as a non-resident then you can print and bring the documents from that software to their office.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Also, to be clear, Spritnax has not sponsored or paid for their prominence in the posting. They just have good software and good resources that are very acceptable for non-resident taxes.

If Sprintax does want to Sponsor r/F1visa they can create a discount code for r/F1visa users to receive a discount and we can discuss how that could be distributed.

- New Comment: I was looking up the instructions for 1040 NR on the IRS website. Page 4 on [the instruction

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pdf](<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i1040nr.pdf>) says that Non Residents can efile now, but I am unable to find any tax software which e-files for non resident aliens. Does anyone know of any?

****Edit April 4, 2021:****

I did more reasearch on free options. Only TaxAct has a option for efilng for nonresidents. It can generate form 8843 if options are selected properly, but:

1. Are you filing a Form ****1040-NR(EZ)****? This is the form is you only have stipend income, and no dividend/capital gain income. Then yes, T****axAct** will work.******
2. For any ****1099-DIV/B**** forms, you need form ****1040-NR****. TaxAct adds this income to Schedule D of form 1040. As a F1 nonresident alen, the correct form is 1040-NEC where all dividend/capital gain will be taxed at a special unfavorable rate of 30%. In this case you ****should not use TaxAct.****
3. Advanced: If there is any other income/deductions, some of them are not applicable of students and some of them not to nonresident aliens. I am not sure how TaxAct would handle them. I have a reference that it does not handle IRAs properly for sure, even for residents who are students.

TaxAct finally replied to me last week by saying they have added new FAQs and ignoring any questions I had asked. They will not provide any support.

There some others which will do it for a fee (will have to look again if anyone is interested), but considering you have 5 years to file in the same status, it could be worthwhile to do it yourself.

- New Comment: I am a non-resident and a student on F1. I received a 1099-INT form from my bank (Savings Account). Am I required to do anything?

- New Comment: This is awesome. Thanks!

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I efiled 1040NR today and i am a F1 student. I used Tax Act and it did not automatically create a 8843 for me. Now IRS has accepted the return. How do i file 8843 now?

- New Comment: I was filling out my taxes with Sprintax when I came across this after inputting my W-2.

"Would you like Sprintax to prepare your Social security and Medicare (FICA) tax claim?"

I have never heard of this and don't know how it differed from regular Federal tax filing. What should I answer?

- New Comment: How can I file tax for 2014-2015? I earned from work study program at my university. I was and still am on F1 visa and don't pass the Substantial Presence Test.

- New Comment: Do Indian non residents (for tax purposes) get to apply standard deductions when filing tax?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: What is standard deduction? How can it help me? I am a citizen of India and Non-resident here in the US.

I have received a W2 as well as a 1040-S (Stock Broker)

- New Comment: Why is there such a significant discussion about being or not being residents for tax purposes? Doesn't F-1 visa automatically imply that your days don't count toward substantial presence, and unless you're a resident via other means, most F-1s for tax purposes can't be residents. What am I missing here?

- New Comment: Does anyone know how to add the charles schwab brokerage forms to sprintax ? It seems that sprintax is asking me to add each trade manually

- New Comment: I had a couple of questions:-

1) If I receive a 1042-S from my brokerage account and it is 1042-S for only dividends how do I report capital gains? (My brokerage does not provide 1099s as it is an international brokerage account)

Reddit Posts

2) WeBull, Robinhood etc. file a w9 form and not a w8-ben is it okay to open an account with them being f1 visa and non resident? Basically is it leagally wrong for a f1 non resident to fill a W9 form?

- New Comment: I cannot seem to find any services that efile a 1040-NR? Why does this not seem to be a thing? Any companies that do, and DON'T require a US phone number?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I lived in the us since 2012, I was in h-4 visa till 2019. And f-1 right after. I assume I?m resident for tax purposes, is this correct?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I have invested around 450\$ in Robinhood and don't have any significant gains, do i have to submit 1099 along with w2 and 8843, is that enough? or am i missing something

- New Comment: I?m filing for tax as a resident alien with Turbo Tax cause I?m qualified for it. However, I only have health insurance for 7 months of 2020. The program determines a penalty for the months I didn?t have insurance.

My question is, is F1 student exempt from this penalty? If that?s the case, what should I choose on the list of reasons for no insurance on Turbo Tax?

I check with Turbo Tax service and they really don?t know a thing regarding this.

Thank you everyone for your help and input!

- New Comment: I am a resident for tax purposes as this is my 5th year filing. I have a W2 and a 1042S form (a fellowship). What is a recommended tax prep service in my situation? I don't mind non-free options. Thanks.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: What happens if you were a resident and working while on F-1 during 2020 but now live back home outside of the states in Jan 2021? Do I still file as a resident like I usual since I worked in 2021? I currently am unemployed since January 2021. A bit confused. (Also do they keep track of when you are in/out of the country? As in, would they expect me to file my taxes if I no longer live in America)? Sorry for stupid question.

- New Comment: How do I request w2?s from 2018? I did not file that year but I made less than \$5,000. I need the w2 proof of wages for college financial aid.

- New Comment: What if get my payment is saying social number is incorrect? !!!!!

- New Comment: What do I do if status on get my payment says social wrong? I have already advised IRS, every time I get a call , midway through I get cut off, don?t know if is really the irs, Vec or the hacker?

- New Comment: I have filled all the necessary forms (1040NR, 8843, etc) for my federal return using GlacierTax. According to the instructions for the 1040 NR form, it is possible to e-file my return. I know Glacier won?t do it, and looked around the IRS website for the option to no avail. Is there any way to electronically submit my completed forms? From other questions on this thread, the answer seems to be ?no?, but I wanted to confirm.

Thanks a ton!

- New Comment: F1 Stem OPT tax filing

A friend not on reddit wants to know: I am on F1 stem opt, and for a period of two months (dec 2023 and jan 2024), I was employed by a consultancy. They gave me i983, and mentioned a pay biweekly. In Feb, I joined another healthcare company and received final evaluation on i983 from this consultancy. Now, during these 2 months, I never received any pay or any training stuff to complete. I am now reaching out to the consultancy for w2, which they are denying saying I wasn?t under payroll. What are my options here?

- New Comment: Hi Guys , did anyone file for state tax return from California, I came to Cali 11 months ago , I hired an

Reddit Posts

independent tax consultant and they file CA 540 , and not CA 540 NR . Is this correct?

- New Comment: This is so helpful! Thank you! I have one question: can I efile my tax? All my international student friends saved they have to mail them to IRS, but when I checked sprint tax blog, it says we can efile federal tax but not state tax? Is that correct?

- New Comment: Are we able to get a tax refund of that 30% amount as an F1 student?

- New Comment: Does anyone know the opt tax % for a 62,500 in texas?

- New Comment: So just to double-check if I understand your post right.

>Yes, but if you are not filing only the 8843 then you need an ITIN or an SSN.

filing the 8843 form (to declare no earnings or income) doesn't require having an ITIN or SSN?

and I can just mail the form by itself, no other documents required?

- New Comment: I'm a Resident for Tax Purposes for 2020, and currently, on F1, will I be able to get an educational tax benefit?

- New Comment: Hello All,

****Out of US (Remote Work) Income Tax for Non-Resident Alien****

Sprintax claims that non-resident aliens (F1-visa) are able to claim a portion of their income as out of US work. IRS website also states similar things for non-residents work performed out of the US even if it's paid from a US company. Sprintax helps you to allocate out of US part of this income.

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So with this method, a non-resident alien actually saves some of the income taxes. **Are there any negative sides of this? Does IRS care whether if I paid tax for my US income at my home country?** What happens if I spend months in some 3rd country as a vacation and claim I have worked remotely?

So let's say I went to Mexico for vacation etc for 2 months and worked remotely for a US company, perhaps as a self-employed individual. Let's say you worked the 2 months in Mexico and 10 months in the US. Sprintax directs you to allocate the out-of US part of this income. As a result, your total federal income tax gets reduced.

Option A: - If I was a Mexican citizen, that might create some tax liability for me. I am not sure about this.

Option B: - If I am not a Mexican citizen and just went as a tourist, I guess it wouldn't be a problem for Mexico. And in general, I don't think Mexico would even know I count them as my out-of-US work. Because in ***tax documents that come from Sprintax, I haven't seen any indication for which country I worked for. There is only an allocation for US, out of US.***

- New Comment: My social has been compromised, called the irs, nothing! What do I do?

- New Comment: I studied my bachelor +OPT in US, stayed 5 years (2007-2012)

then I went back to my home country to work

and I come back for master (2019 - now)

I thought I am nonresident since I am only counting the year for my second f1 visa (2019 - now)

but sprintax said I am resident, so I am confused

Reddit Posts

Should I still count my bachelor year in US?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: My visa changed to H1B on Jan 28,2020. Before that I was on a F1 student visa which is exempt for tax purposes. I have calculated number of days for the Substantial Presence Test which 213 days which is more than 183 days. I think that makes me a resident status for tax purposes. I?m married to US citizen. Can I file my 2020 tax return married filing jointly and consider myself a resident for tax purposes for the entire year? Or do I have to file dual-intent tax return that is non-resident until Jan 27 (when my visa changed to H1B) and resident for the remaining part of the year?

- New Comment: My F-1 visa is valid from Januray of 2021, and I got here shortly after. Do I still need need to file form 8843? I haven't worked, and I wasn't in the US during the tax year, but my university still sends me emails that I need to file it

- New Comment: I did some trading on my Firsttrade International account (which I now learned I?m not supposed to have it since I?m living in the U.S). My broker account only provides 1042-s form and the numbers on that doesn?t seem right (it displays a gross income 2\$ and federal tax withheld for 1\$). I don?t have a ITIN number nor SSN, and I never filed for 8843 (which I?m trying to file right now), what should I do right now to avoid any troubles?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I've been so confused about which form to file.

I came here to the US in 2016. So I've had 5 years of non-exempt status (2016,17,18,19,20). This year I'm a resident (I meet the substantial presence test).

Do I have to file 1040 or 1040NR, because we're filing for 2020 and in that year I was a non-resident?

Would appreciate if anyone knows this it's been so confusing!

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Edit: I read somewhere that we shouldn't count the days I was exempt to calculate substantial presence test, is that correct? So that makes me a NRA for tax purposes, correct?

- New Comment: Hi, I got a no pay job for OPT. How do tax work for no pay job?

- New Comment: Hi there, just used sprintax services and it looks like I'll be owing a lot in taxes. I don't quite understand how that would be the case? Pretty sure I didn't set my withholding to take off less in taxes each paycheck? What could be the reason/s why my employer would withhold less taxes in my paychecks?

- New Comment: Did anyone have luck with investing in Bitcoin and reporting it on taxes? I made a total of 2 trades on Coinbase (1 to buy, 1 to sell) and it seems Sprintax doesn't support crypto. Does Glacier do that? Or do I need to actually go to an independent consultant? The overall gain I made was ~\$187 so I'm confused as to whether that even matters/needs reporting.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: This is the first year that i file my taxes as a resident for tax purposes (I have determined this using glacier tax prep). I was a nonresident when filing my taxes last year. I used turbo tax to file my taxes this year. I haven't received any of the stimulus checks and turbo tax indicates that i should get a tax refund that includes both checks. Is that normal or did I do something wrong?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Should international students who started their first year in college remotely and have never been to the U.S. file taxes? And what if I have taxable income in the form of a scholarship?

- New Comment: I have filed my taxes for 2020 during mid-late March. When I use IRS website to check my refund

Reddit Posts

status, it cannot find anything regarding my information. Should I keep waiting or contact them or something? USPS tracking shows that my documents had been received.

Is this normal for F1 students these days because the whole process is taking long or something? Has any international student received their tax refund yet?

- New Comment: Hi, I am on OPT in California.

I just got a "notice of tax return change" from California with a penalty of \$750 for not having insurance. I have health insurance from my origin country as an f-1 student don't need insurance, right? I filled with Sprintax and they did not include this form, and they're telling me by chat that I must not have entered the information correctly, so not helpful.

Has anyone filled **form 3853** "Health Coverage Exemption and Individual Shared Responsibility Penalty" while on f-1 visa?

Can I claim code exemption **E**? " Non-resident/Part-year resident ? A bona fide resident of another state for that month. For more information regarding resident status, get Pub. 1031, Guidelines for Determining Resident Status ".

Would it be code **D**? " Citizens living abroad and certain noncitizens ? You were:

\# A U.S. citizen or a resident alien who was physically present in a foreign country or countries for at least 330 full days during any period of 12 consecutive months;

\# A U.S. citizen who was a bona fide resident of a foreign country or countries for an uninterrupted period that includes the entire tax year;

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\# A bona fide resident of a U.S. territory;

or # An individual who is not a citizen or national of the United States and is not lawfully present in the United States for that "

Or was I supposed to have insurance in California?

Thanks!

- New Comment: I still haven't got my 2020 tax refund. I received a letter to say I need to verify my info - the online verification tool won't work, and I can't reach anyone at the IRS over the phone.

Has anyone been through similar and resolved it?

- New Comment: If I enter the US as an F1 student for the first time in December 15th 2021, do I still have to file any forms for 2021, even if I'm only there for like 2 weeks of the year? And if so, do I have to include income I earned during all of 2021 (eg dividends from US companies throughout the year) or just from the date of entry?

- New Comment: Hi, do I have to file even though I just came in January this year? I started working on-campus two weeks after the classes started. I was able to get an SSN recently but I am still confused with the taxation here in the States.

- New Comment: I filed on May 15 my 2020 taxes and I am still waiting. My refund status does not show up on the IRS where's my refund website. Should I get worried? On one [page](<https://www.irs.gov/refunds/tax-season-refund-frequently-asked-questions>) (search for 1040 NR) the IRS says that it may take 6 months for the refund to be processed, but last year it took just a month.

Reddit Posts

Thank you

- New Comment: I have been in the US in F1 visa since 2017. Apparently, after 5 calendar years, I qualify as a "Resident for Tax Purposes."

What I don't understand is whether I should have completed the 5 years for this to kick in. For example, when I am filing my 2021 taxes in 2022, should I file as a "resident" since I have been here for 5 calendar years or as a "Non-resident" since in 2021, I hadn't yet completed 5 calendar years.

Appreciate some light on this matter.

- New Comment: Is it possible to amend 8843. I went to my home country for 18 days in 2020 and I forgot to report that.

Will this be a problem?

- New Comment: Needed some help in tax setup with below characteristics:

Current visa: F1

Marital Status: Married to US Citizen

State: Texas

Application for Adjustment of Status is under process with USCIS.

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Which option would be wiser '1. Married filing separately' or '2. Married filing jointly'? Considering that MFS would incur a higher tax rate and MFJ would incur FICA. Also, MFS would allow me to use the Tax Treaty between the US and IND.

The current setup is at MFS with a tax rate of approx 17% without FICA.

Thanks in Advance!

- New Comment: My mom has F-1 status since March of 2020. She hasn't worked or anything, just attend to online class and she switched schools this past June.

Is she or was she, supposed to file form 8843 with the IRS?

- New Comment: Is there someplace that lists the benefits of being a resident alien vs non resident alien? If you're a non resident alien, can you just choose to not file form 8843 and file like a resident and enjoy the tax benefits of a resident? Or is it always better to file 8843 and be treated as non resident for as long as possible?

- New Comment: As an F1 Visa Student can I get the Electric Vehicle Tax Credits?

- New Comment: I'm on OPT. Last year I was outside of the US for 30 days. Does that affect my W2?

Title of the post: Happy to help and mentor

Body of the post: Hi everyone. I am a recent grad from a university in Boston. I am an international student and I studied computer engineering. In short I had a hard time finding internships in my junior year and I tried everything. Sometimes I was just unlucky and sometimes I was not prepared enough. Nevertheless I learnt from my mistakes and got a full time

Reddit Posts

job at a public tech consulting company as a developer.

The reason I am posting here is because I know there are so many students like me, specifically international students who are looking for advice and hacks to navigate the job search. Honestly speaking this market is really tough and you need more than just skill to get it your way but if there are any sophomores or juniors who require any sort of help with anything related to job search or just college, I am here ! Please dm and I would be happy to help as much as I can. We all know it's a numbers game when it comes to jobs but we can do things on our end to increase our chances.

Cheers and best of luck.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: How did you navigate this market to search for jobs and get interviews? I have been applying aggressively but getting nothing.
- New Comment: what tips do you have for finding an internship in tech? I am an IT sophomore and am already worried about not being able to find an internship.
- New Comment: Thanks for the tips!
- New Comment: Can I dm you please? ?
- New Comment: Hey could I dm you?
- New Comment: I want to dm you my questions
- New Comment: HI everyone, I have gotten a lot of DMS and I would love to help as many people as I can. I am also open to connecting on Linkedin and setting up a call if you want to network. Please reach out if that is the case and I can share my information. Cheers.

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Title of the post: I think I am going to take a risk

Body of the post: 23M on OPT, a few days til I start my 2 year STEM OPT, already have the new EAD and working in an E-verified company. Just as I thought I can finally start my life anew after graduating, due to some personal reasons I have been stuck in severe mental depression for the past year and have been having some pretty dark thoughts and it has broken me. My current workplace is a depressing 8 to 6 job in a cubicle and leaves me with no time for psychiatric counseling or treatment. There is no family to support me (not that they care) and no friends and with the little time with doctors and med I have it is not working. Honestly seeing my grim personal life shattering like that really makes me see no future anymore. What I really want now is just some rest from constant stressing for the past 5 years from exam grades to jobs. I do have some cash saved so I had this really crazy idea to quit my job and use my unemployment days to finally have a few months to myself. Not worrying about back to school, not worry about I-765 processing delays and making fake ass small talks with people who know nothing how hard I fought to stay here. I just want to go out west and nature and travel and actually see the reason I chose to come here.

I know I have 150 days for stem opt unemployment and I haven't used a single day of my opt unemployment days. Am I correct in thinking I can technically not work continuously for 150 days if I choose to quit once the stem opt starts? I just want to make sure that this is the choice I have. I will be gambling on getting a e-verified job within whatever days I have after traveling. But I think it's still worth than rotting in my mental prison.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes, you will have 150 days of unemployment days since you haven't used any.

I know it's a shitty company, but ask for an unpaid leave anyways. No need to burn bridges. You might find yourself in need of cash later.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Hey I'm so sorry you're going through this. Hope you feel better soon. If you quit your job, you will have 150 days of unemployment.

Aside from that, I will say don't care about family, friends. You should hold the power of making yourself feel happy and your friends/family presence shouldn't affect it. I would say do what makes you feel happy and do not care about what ppl think.

Finally, maybe leaving this job will make you feel happy or there is a possibility you won't be able to find a job within 150 days because of terrible market(in this case are you willing to go back to your country ??). If it's me, I will spend one - two month finding a job and switch (I know it's hard but financial security is also an important aspect for mental health)

- New Comment: May be try finding a job and tell them you have longer notice period and could join only after serving that. Take that time to recharge. It will be less stressful knowing you have a job waiting.

- New Comment: You don't have any vacation/PTO? You may also be able to get short term disability for mental health or even take unpaid vacation. See what your employment offers before quitting

- New Comment: Which state??please come and visit us .our home is open for new friendships

- New Comment: Echoing all the comments above. Try and ask for leave, explain your situation. I went through a similar thing, couldn't take it anymore, woke up one day and quit I couldn't take it. Looking back I had to do that to save myself, but I wish I would have talked to hr about options, I didn't know that there was leave options/they didn't offer. Ended up taking most of my 150 days and found a new employer. You've worked hard to get to where you are at, make sure it's the right decision.

- New Comment: U can take medical leave as long as you want .Mostly it will be paid !!

- New Comment: Take a vacation and try to get some unpaid on top of it, explain burn out etc.. join gym, bjj, mma, board

Reddit Posts

games, some dance (bachata, tango) you have to have a little escape

- New Comment: Dont quit until you have another job lined up. Also most jobs are this. Who knows you might end up in another dystopian. My team members are cool but management is horrible but Im hanging in there. Job market is tough for us this year.

- New Comment: I truly believe just quit and find another job when you calm and ready. You will experience rushing and uncertainty feel while you are working and looking for job. This country brings no freedom for us, u have to free yourself

- New Comment: Hey OP, first off i would like to say you are incredibly brave. Its so difficult to come to America expecting a job that is mentally stimulating and be stuck in a politically infused 8-6 workspace. I am in a similar situation, i will be on stem opt and am thinking of quitting my job even though i got my h1b approved. My job takes a huge toll on my mental health and my anxiety has been at an all time high. Theres no good or bad decision but it all comes down to money. If you have totally given up enjoy 2 months and move back to india. I wish you the best

- New Comment: > making fake ass small talks with people who know nothing how hard I fought to stay here

I?m totally with you OP.

As others have said, you can consider getting unpaid leaves. While they are not common, they are not uncommon either. I have friends who have done this in larger corporations.

- New Comment: Do it brother, you got this.

- New Comment: This time the job is scarce. Before you make any decision please be sure that u dont end up regretting any. Ask for leaves. I would say take shorter breaks every now n then. Constantly thinking of next travel would mk you something to look forward to.

- New Comment: i personally would not recommend that. at least get an h1b or a green card before you allow yourself to relax. i know it sounds harsh but your future self might appreciate you for it. if you're from a third world country like me,

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earning the US salary will set you up for life in your home country, sacrificing a few years of your youth means nothing if you can one day go back and live like a king. I'm in a similar situation like you. whenever i feel depressed i start pulling up youtube videos of the daily lives of people in my home country and start feeling better about myself. if you're from a developed country in EU or something, disregard what I just said and just do whatever you want, lol.

Title of the post: F-1 OPT student starting the job, but the employers aren't aware of my F-1 OPT sta

Body of the post: Hi guys I need your suggestion for the below. This issue has been bugging me for the past two weeks, and I need your guys' help!! what should I do in the below scenario:

I interviewed for a job, and it went well; they never asked me about my status, and there was never a time to bring up my F-1 OPT status; however, I did mention that I grew up in my home country and that I came to the States for education purposes. I got the job and completed the onboarding and background check process. I will be starting the job next week, Monday the 12th, so when would be a good time to bring up that I am an international student who needs sponsorship to work after completing my 3 years of stem OPT? Should I let them know on my first day?

Any suggestion would be appreciated!

UPDATE!

Thank you everyone for your suggestions and insights. I went through the onboarding process smoothly. The HR only verified my EAD start date and said nothing . I had a small informal conversation with my department director about my visa status and he said he would be willing to help me file for sponsorship.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: HR is going to request ur work permit and they will find out you only have a temporary permit.
- New Comment: How did you finish onboarding without using your EAD?

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- New Comment: You just show them your EAD when filling out the I9. That's it. Nothing else to show or bring forward.
- New Comment: Normally on the first day of work you have HR schedule you for a 1:1 to verify your documents.
- New Comment: It's illegal for HR to ask about your immigration status to know if you're eligible for work. Some don't know what is OPT, they just see the EAD card then verify if it valid.
- New Comment: They would be asking you to fill I9 section 2 once you join. So eventually they will know.
- New Comment: they will know, just go with it, especially if nothing else is lined up. they're not supposed to discriminate based on your immigration status if you present acceptable work document, which you have, but... you know how the world is. good luck, and don't worry too much
- New Comment: I wouldn't do that unless u need to start applying for employment based green card some time soon. They seem to already know ur status since u told that u came to US for education. I would probably talk to supervisor and ask around for other people who got employment based visa in that company to see what the company's perspective on that is.
- New Comment: Hey! This is me now with the same story. My OPT is for a year, and I have signed my offer letter. I ticked that I did not need sponsorship because I actually did not. I was scared that was going to be a problem on my first day of work. Thank you all for your comments!!!
- New Comment: Is it okay to apply for a job that requires OPT (while I don't have my OPT at the time of applying) but will have my OPT at the time the job/internship starts?
- New Comment: Any updates on how everything went? I am going through the same thing as I am interviewing now... but I have the option of TN so I feel safe..
- New Comment: Hey @Ad6054,

Can you share the updates on this? I am on the same boat and getting really nervous about this.

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- New Comment: Hey off topic, did you plan on refinancing your loan by any chance after getting the employment on OPT?
- New Comment: Also, when applying for stem opt extension ur employer/boss must fill out a form. So u should tell ur boss or clarify with him ASAP
- New Comment: They can?t fire you cos it?s illegal, enjoy your job. Also they most likely already know
- New Comment: Dnt tell them it kind of happend to me i asked they told due to budget they cannot so change the job after 6 months its better to be jobless than h1b visa and u r getting us experience
- New Comment: Any updates?
- New Comment: They will ask for passport or some ID. When you will be caught. Email Hr or talk to boss
- New Comment: Not immediately. You are good for the period of your work authorization. I would continue work and do a really good job and then talk to them.
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: It won?t be a problem if u don?t need sponsorship, if u need it then they would need to be in a program I forgot the name. And just tell HR what are your requirements before it is too late
- New Comment: It really depends on company. I am recently being terminated immediately after asking for my STEM OPT extension. I works for 9 months already and I together with my senior involved in a big impact project. Still, it is not enough and I am letting go without any hesitation.
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Updates? Did they accept you?

Title of the post: My dumbass forgot my I-20 on top of my bed and I just had to spend 30 minutes ru

Body of the post: I had JUST printed it and triple checked my room to not forget anything

Reddit Posts

Don't forget your I-20 you all, worst 30 minutes of this year

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: At least now we can just print it from anywhere. Before covid it was a real nightmare to lose or forget your i20

- New Comment: Who reprinted it for you?

Title of the post: Should I mention I'm an international student?

Body of the post: I was invited to what I believe is going to be the final round interview with a company, and they will be paying for my flight roundtrip and for accommodations.

So far, they've only asked whether I'm eligible to work in the US or not. They're a relatively small company and they aren't in the H1B database, though they are e-verified. I'm at the end of OPT and I'll be starting with them with STEM OPT if I get the job.

I feel like I should tell them at this point that I will need sponsorship in the future since they're paying for all this for me and bothering to fly me in just for an interview. It would be a waste of both of our time if I do all this and they realize they can't hire me in the end just because they didn't know about sponsorship, OPT, etc.

Should I be forward about my situation and tell them now, or should I just wait until after I accept the offer (if I get it)?

EDIT: In case this is helpful to anyone in the future, I ended up not bringing up anything about work authorization, OPT, STEM OPT, or sponsorship until I got the job offer. Once I got the offer, I asked HR if they're e-verified for the purposes of my work authorization (STEM OPT). They then asked me what my exact work authorization situation is, I explained it,

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and then they agreed to sponsor me. I know it won't always work out like this, but just wanted to share what worked for me.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I am surprised HR hasn't already asked you. IN every interview I had, I was asked if I needed sponsorship of any kind.

- New Comment: IMO, Always be clear about your expectations from the company. I understand the hiring chances would go lower comparatively, but you don't wanna end up in a tricky situation if you were ever to go for H1B lottery as the H1B attempts are limited and the competition is absurd!

- New Comment: Take the offer, start working and keep looking for a job that sponsors h1-b. Switch right after you get an offer even though if it's within few months.

- New Comment: The only person you should be concerned about is you. Are you free to travel? Do you need the experience/pay? Can you start on day 1? If Yes, go on and get the job. I told my HR manager after my offer about needing sponsorship and it was a quick OK and I resumed. For me, I really just wanted to know if I was good enough to get the job w/o them knowing my status. I would be ok if they recalled their offer.

PS you will get judged for your status against other candidates if you reveal it now, no matter how good you are. Best of luck.

- New Comment: With STEM you'll have 2 years working for them. That's the industry standard turn-over time. If they like you, they'll keep you at all cost. If not, you'll have income and experience. Nothing to lose.

It's up to you, but I don't see any problems with not telling them.

- New Comment: No need to mention unless they ask. And no problem to tell them after they give you the offer. Get the experience, that will help you to get that job that WILL sponsor your work visa. (I'm ex international student as well) best

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of luck!

- New Comment: My perspective on this is that *it is their responsibility to screen for international students*, assuming they don't want to deal with them. I know it might feel kind of slimy to think that you may get an offer from them and then hand them your EAD card when they ask for your work authorization, but that's on them. You are not obligated, legally or morally, to tell them you are an international student.

- New Comment: You're not hiding anything from them. They asked a question and you answered! Are they still hiring though? ?

- New Comment: There's some terrible and great advice on here.

I always tell folks during my first interview. Just because a company isn't in the database doesn't mean they won't sponsor you. Tell them upfront, and help them help you.

My company is relatively small, and they not only sponsored my h1-b, but also are applying for my GC.

- New Comment: buddy, if you are the right fit and they like you, sponsorship shouldn't be an issue. Just tell now and get things cleared.

- New Comment: This is not the last opportunity. Keep moving ahead with transparency. It helps in long run. show them your efficiency for role and commitment then ask if they have scope to consider for H1B sponsorship. Even you have enough time to prove that you are worth to sponsor. Good luck always with Honesty!

- New Comment: I think you answered your own question but yeah, you should share that. Be as positive as possible

- New Comment: You should be transparent and tell them. Don't waste their time or yours.

Title of the post: OPT NATION SCAMMERS

Body of the post: I made a payment through Zelle in November. I was assured that I would get training from them and

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will be placed within 2 months. my profile was passion on and on and on to another person every week. neither was I train not even placed.

I know that there are a lot of people who are looking for jobs on OPT but please don't use this website [o](<https://www.optnation.com/>)ptnation.com

they are scammers once you pay the money no one is going to reply to your email or call.

these are some of the numbers of the scammers

this post is just to save people who don't go through the problems which I faced.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: OPT Nation has been sending dozens of fake accounts to give fake reviews on r/F1Visa. There have been multi account here and elsewhere on reddit complaining about OPTNation. As such any and all conversations about OPT Nation are now assumed to be in bad faith and will be immediately removed and the account banned.
- New Comment: Thanks for the post. I came across them while job hunting myself , but their website and everything felt too sketchy so I never bothered. People like them are scums. Sorry you had to go through it to learn it the hard way. I'd recommend reaching out to people you know in the workforce for referrals to get interviews.
- New Comment: I wish I saw this post before. Lost my \$600. Worst experience. No one will respond after the payment is made.
- New Comment: I just experience this. I wish I saw your post sooner.
- New Comment: Thank you for sharing, friends.

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I came across them while hunting for a job myself. They called me and sent me emails. It was almost like too good to be true.

Thanks for the inside.

- New Comment: Thanks for the post, dear . I just got an email from them. Sadly, you had to experience it.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Please do your part and report these companies here:

<https://www.uscis.gov/report-fraud/uscis-tip-form>

Title of the post: Stressed to the limit

Body of the post: I think I am going through the worst time of my life and mostly feel lost. I am in the 4th year of my CS Phd. I was working in a Mid west based Senior healthcare company as a Machine Learning Engineer, I was aiming towards a permanent position at the company by this year and finally putting an end to my Phd. But my boss suddenly got a better offer and switched which hindered my full time opportunity. Now they are not extending my contract as well. I got married last year and took out some loans and 0 Apr credit card debt in the hopes of paying them back by this year with a full time job. Now I have nothing. I am trying to get calls for job interview but the tech job market is so bad right now that its impossible to get even a single call. With 0 hopes of getting a new job in time and not very good relationship with my advisor it feels like the end of the world to me. Most of the days I feel depressed. I have no idea what to do next. My personal life is taking a toll. Most of the days I dont even leave the house. Sudden panic attacks and what not. Just felt like sharing.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You are working as a machine learning engineer and doing a phd. You are already at the top level.

Yes market is bad. But not so for ml eng roles which requires phd.

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I am sure you will get a good role soon.

- New Comment: Have you tried more research oriented roles? They typically sought after PhDs. Also how's your resume looking? Do you have any pubs?

- New Comment: Take some time off applying and do something you enjoy, you can't give in to depression. Speak positively to yourself and remember the last time you were in a difficult position that you got out of. Everything will be fine and this is not the end

- New Comment: You should definitely reach out to your advisor and ask him for some referrals. One of my professor's PhD student had an offer as a research scientist from Amazon, which got rescinded 2 weeks before joining. My professor helped her get another position at Walmart through one of his friends.

- New Comment: How about trying to find a postdoc? What field of ML are you working with? Would having more publications help at all?

- New Comment: Have you considered Eb-1 or Eb-2 NIW? I think you qualify, since you have publications and background in a STEM field.

Also, how are you searching for jobs? Are you applying to ML positions exclusively or broader tech roles like Data Analyst/Scientist/Engineer? Maybe try lower level jobs, such as Data Analyst

- New Comment: How did you land a job when you are already still on f1visa ?

- New Comment: Be with the PI

- New Comment: Stay strong.

You'll pull through

- New Comment: I only wish I had a PhD in Machine Learning, every role I apply to seeks for ML PhD folks. You can

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easily land jobs trust me. I had to do 600 applications to get an ML applied research role as an MS student. You got this!

Title of the post: F1 --> OPT:they don't make this easy do they!!

Body of the post: I'm trying to choose a start date for OPT at the moment and feel like giving up, it seems like you have to have a crystal ball to choose the right one!!!! I am lucky in that I have a job on ice in my home country which ideally I'd return to for a few months (notice period and to clear some debts from this year). A transfer to the US seemed like a possible option last year, but with the economy the way it is it seems increasingly unlikely. Latest plan is to apply for a late-ish OPT date, go back home for a few months, and then pray that other jobs come up here that I won't have wasted the best part of \$1k on a visa I won't/can't use. And hope that some amazing job that wants me doesn't magically turn up in the meantime ...

Anyone else feeling like their entire life is totally up in the air right now? ? ? ? ? I'm super grateful and lucky in that I didn't think I'd ever get the opportunity and funds to study in the US but I'm now worried that it could all be over before it's begun in a way...

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Don't leave till you have your EAD card in hand or you won't be able to reenter the US.
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: It's only a date range of 60 days which in the grand scheme of things is very little time.

If you choose an earlier date and you don't find a job that starts on that date, you will begin accumulating days of OPT unemployment until you do find and start the job. You have up to 90 days of OPT unemployment before your F-1 status stay in the US and OPT authorization come to an end. You can also do unpaid work in your field of study such as volunteering or internships that count as OPT employment.

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If you choose a later date and you get an offer of employment that starts earlier, you simply need to have a conversation with the employer explaining that you very much are thankful for the offer, and your authorization doesn't allow you to start at the slightly later date listed on your OPT EAD (again, we're not talking years here...). Most employers will be fine with that if they really want to hire you.

What is not probably a great look when looking for jobs in late March that would start in May, June, or July is having to tell the employer that you haven't even applied yet for the OPT EAD. Employer: "Great, when can you start?" You: "Well, I don't know. I haven't applied yet for the authorization. It can take anywhere from 1 to 4 months typically once I apply. So, if I get on it and apply in the next week or two, maybe sometime in the next four months?" Employer: "So, you don't even know yet that you'll have authorization to work with us, and if so, when that will be?"

A better conversation would seem to be: Employer: "Great, we would like you to start on June 15!" You: "Thank you for the great offer. Can we discuss the start date? I've already applied for and been approved for my OPT authorization which is set to begin on July 1. You can see here that I already have the Employment Authorization Document, and it states a July 1 date, so I can guarantee I can begin working as of July 1."

- New Comment: Horrible plan.

Please speak to your DSO before committing to any plan.

Please always apply early as possible.

- New Comment: >I'm trying to choose a start date for OPT at the moment and feel like giving up, it seems like you have to have a crystal ball to choose the right one!!!!

It's a 60-day window...its not particularly challenging. Would you prefer to not have a choice?

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>Latest plan is to apply for a late-ish OPT date, go back home for a few months, and then pray that other jobs come up here that I won't have wasted the best part of \$1k on a visa I won't/can't use.

This is an awful plan. You want to be outside the US while attempting to find jobs in the US? How is this helpful in the US job hunt? Why would you not just commit to searching for a job in the US? You have upwards for 5 months from graduation to obtain a job to go home. Plenty of time to find a job if your goal is to stay in the US for OPT. Will it be an amazing job? No. Will it be a job? Yes.

>Anyone else feeling like their entire life is totally up in the air right now?

This is almost everyone when graduating college. Welcome to the shared experience.

- New Comment: And just to add a technical note, OPT is not a visa. OPT is not a status. Optional Practical Training (OPT) is a part of and benefit of F-1 student non-immigrant status for the purpose of continuing your education inside the US through US practical training in your field of study. You are not applying for a visa when applying for OPT. When applying for OPT you are applying for a benefit of your F-1 student non-immigrant status.

Title of the post: Close friend's girlfriend is asking me to be listed as his sponsor for his F-1 Student

Body of the post: My friend's girlfriend wants to study in the US but needs a sponsor. He is asking me to sign a form that states:

If you have a sponsor who will be funding your studies, you must provide their bank statement(s) showing the annual estimated cost for one year.

This evidence is required to complete an official US government form on which the school official is confirming that

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financial support is available.

I am committed to supporting the student for the entire period of their F1 sponsorship with the university. If for any reason my financial commitment changes, I will notify the student and the university in writing so the student has sufficient time to find a new sponsor if necessary.

If I am unable to provide the financial support I have promised, I understand that the university is not obligated to support the above named student. I understand that without my financial support, it is likely that the student will be unable to continue his/her education in the United States.

There's a line where I will sign:

I guarantee that I will be responsible for providing financial support

​

Lawyers have said that it may not be an obligation but I may get sued by the university. It does not seem like an obligation as it states I can back out at any time. I've seen a similar post here but I was wondering if the previous statement changes things. I am looking for advice!

​

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Not worth the mental stress

- New Comment: Idk man...i mean it's your choice. If it were for my girlfriend I might ask you but if you aren't comfortable

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with it, I'll be okay with it. Girlfriend != Wife so the possibility of them breaking up might cause stress for you. You might get involved in it in the worst case. Or you might get a lifelong friend so it's again your choice

- New Comment: No one is gonna hold you if you don't pay lol.

Their school isn't gonna let them enroll. And they would subsequently fall out of status. If they don't pay, that's on them. Not you!

- New Comment: There is no obligation to pay anything. This is a formality to get an I-20 form.

Once she gets an I-20 form she can apply for loans etc, she needs to prove her ability to pay

to get a US visa. Unfortunately, without an I-20 it may not be possible to secure a loan.

- New Comment: What if there is a RFE in future and you need to send all supporting docs to her so she can respond to rfe. This includes ur bank statements and all.

Too much headache.

- New Comment: If this person is intelligent and ambitious then you will never be bothered again after making that initial signature. I've never heard of sponsors being held liable for students inability to pay tuition. Is she really going to risk her academics? I would like to hear from some sponsors who had problems because of signing up. I haven't come across students who come to the US to screw up deliberately.

- New Comment: I understand why you don't want to do it. No judgment here. In my case, I saved and paid everything myself (visa, tuition, etc.), but when they told me I still needed a sponsor, I almost gave up. I have no family left, and it was hard to hear every single time from university staff: "Why don't you ask your parents? Why don't you ask some relatives?" If I had parents, I wouldn't be here begging for a chance. Just a few days before the deadline, a friend decided to believe in me, and the only thing she had to do was to give them a copy of her ID and bank statement. That's it. They never bothered her again, even when I struggled to pay a few semesters later.

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I'm not trying to shame you in any way. I don't even know this girl's situation. I just wanted to share my story and how it feels when you are on the other side.

- New Comment: Regardless of whether you agree or not, your friend is about to be single again.

- New Comment: No you are not.

- New Comment: It's just a proof of funds for her

If you don't pay no one can sue you

- New Comment: I honestly feel like it depends on if you trust the person or not.

There are many questions here to ask before signing.

-If you sign, you need to agree that you won't be responsible for paying her tuition but how will she be able to pay for her tuition ?

As an international student, you can only work 20h weekly and only on campus.

-Will she be able to afford life in the US?

At the embassy when she will go for the process, they will ask her what is the relationship you have with your sponsor. If things are phony, they will deny her.

If she is someone responsible, trustworthy and knows that she will study hard, you won't have to worry about your name being on her I-20. But you need to know how she will pay for her degree first.

- New Comment: Nope!

- New Comment: I went through this hassle last year, I was in your friend's girlfriend's position looking for a sponsor. The school told me that the form is not legally binding and that I would be responsible for paying my tuition, etc. My sponsor would not be liable. My sponsor was even able to block out his bank account number as long as he kept his name and the balance on the form.

- New Comment: As someone whose counselor ended up being the person to sign that portion of their i20, I'm forever

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grateful to that person. I understand your hesitation but I'll be real with you. No one is going to break down your door if she ends up not paying.

- New Comment: I won't do it.

- New Comment: I agree with most of the comments. This is not a loan application and you are not signing as a guarantor for the money they owe. The sponsor requirement is to show the student's financial plan if they don't have their own funds. The university can't take the student's word that she will do part time jobs to pay the tuition so it is just a formality. If she doesn't pay the tuition, she will be dropped out of school and you won't be liable, this is not legally binding document. So, if you want to help your friend, please do. The only worst thing that could happen is your friend and her girlfriend can see your bank statements. I'm on F1 and luckily I had my own funds so didn't need a sponsor.

- New Comment: It is very generous of you to think about your friend's girlfriend. My husband is a lawyer (not immigration), one thing he taught me is never sign a piece of paper if you cannot keep that word. Especially for others. He will help others but never signs as a co-signer or as a sponsor. In this case, you are not technically obligated but in the worst case scenario, a piece of paper with your signature does not look good in court against you.

Don't do it.

When I came in 2015, my mother is sponsoring me on paper, we don't have a single penny. But there are people who has connections with banks and show that your sponsor have money in bank account by taking x rupees for every lakh they need to show in the bank. (this is not legal but most students use this for those financial documents)

I worked as much as possible to pay my school fee and other bills.

- New Comment: An F1 visa holder here.

And NO, you are not obligated to pay. The bank statement is only needed for school that she and/or the sponsor has the

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ability to pay for school for the duration of her studies and to get her I-20.

Worst comes to worst, and she couldn't pay her school expenses (tuition and everything), they will not reissue her I-20 which will get her kicked out of the school and her visa expired.

There's no legal obligation for you to pay her school. That's on her not you.

- New Comment: Why isn't your friend signing it?

- New Comment: You're not obliged to pay at all even if you sign it but the person is going to have a hard time explaining to the Visa Officer why her partner's friend is the sponsor!

- New Comment: Would you co-sign a 4+ year lease for this person?

I wouldn't do it. Friendships and money do not mix.

Title of the post: F1 got cancelled for working. process to get new F1 inside US?

Body of the post: my status was terminated due to failure to update my physical presence address. so my DSO suggested me to travel to mexico and re-enter my visa was still valid until 2027. but during my travel they found evidence of my work and cancelled the visa. right now I'm in US on a 30 day parole beginning today and trying to get a valid F1 visa being here in US. please help!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: To clarify, you violated your status by not updating your address AND unauthorized work? You'll need to depart the U.S. and try to reapply for a new visa with a new I-20. You can't do that here.

- New Comment: You can not apply for a new visa within the United States. If you leave the United States the likelihood of obtaining a new visa after unauthorized work is very low. It is a very serious offense.

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- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Visa can't be issued in the US. You can try your luck applying for a new F1 status but that's extremely unlikely. Unauthorized working is a serious offense.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: You said ?during my travel they found evidence of my work and cancelled the visa?. May i know what travel ? Are you traveling domestically and then who cancelled the visa ? Immigration officers or dso ?

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Planning on going to india even though i got h1b approval

Body of the post: As the title says going back to India, I feel like America has just been unfair to me. You know, even though I got approval for h1b, I am just sick and tired of my job. It is taking a lot. The company I work for is very toxic and it?s just mentally draining. I know that I won?t ever be able to come back to America but I just missed my parents and I don?t know if this is the correct decision. What would you do in my situation? Should I just toughen it out till December? Or should I just go back to my country? I want to research. I just can?t deal with this culture of toxic America. I am truly confused. I did my masters degree straight after my bachelors degree so this is my first job and it?s just so bad. I could look for a new job, but I already have my H1b selected. I am only 24 and have a lot of life ahead of me, this job has caused a lot of misery and despair in my life. What to do?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Talk with your parents.. let them know how you feel and what?s bothering you. Then decide. Sometimes our own thinking will be clouded we can?t see full picture.

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- New Comment: Toxic workplaces unfortunately happen to be everywhere. I'd suggest deciding based on what would be your plan after moving back to India. If you already have a backup plan for that then alright. Else, it's better to take time and figure out in the US.

- New Comment: Jobs in India or abroad can be difficult.

If you're financially sorted and have the privilege to love back + you don't have the aspiration to settle in the US, feel free to move back - it's a very valid reason, wanting to live with family. Money isn't the end all of life.

If you aren't financially sorted and need to pay a loan or would like to settle in the USA, pls consider shifting jobs. Shit jobs aren't worth it.

There are no wrong decisions despite what the comment section would make you believe. :)

- New Comment: I think you are in a bad mental space right now and what I'd suggest is first try to talk to someone. Definitely talk to your parents about this and then look for some counseling services where you can share your thoughts.

I won't say that American work culture is toxic, it's a blanket statement. I don't discredit your bad experiences but what I mean is that if the work culture is a deciding factor, then you should know you might have to face a toxic manager in India too, it's a possibility.

Be patient and give yourself some time. Talk to people you trust and believe can help you. Don't cry in front of your parents though, they'd feel super helpless sitting in India because they cannot do anything. Do tell them calmly however, that you may wanna come back.

- New Comment: Never make decisions when you're too happy or too sad. Wait it out, get to a fairly neutral and rational state of mind - then make your choice :)

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- New Comment: Job market is trash in India, and it's even more toxic with low pay. Plus the quality of life is utterly horrible. I didn't grow up in India, so moving to India was never an option.
- New Comment: If that's what feels right, it's the right decision. Always put your own happiness first
- New Comment: Unfortunately things won't get easier in the US with respect to immigration at least. You can mostly forget about the GC. So what's the long term plan? You can continue working in the US on H-1b, but for how long? Maybe this is the time to take a reality check and decide if going back to India is the right thing for you.
- New Comment: Ask for a company transfer to Europe/UK, they have much more lax work environments, and generally more favourable immigration/time off benefits
- New Comment: Hey man your concern is genuine. We all go through it in corporate. Even if you change countries, corporate toxicity is something omnipresent. If you can chart out better future than this for yourself in India you may leave this dreaded life. You gotta consider factors like earning potential, quality of life, and family or community support in various phases of your life, etc. Think about all the trade offs, talk to your mom and dad, near and dear ones then make a decision. I totally understand your plight. Good luck.
- New Comment: Hey, I am in kind of similar situation, if you'd like you can chat with me about this as I am open to hearing your thoughts and I feel this would give me some perspective as well.
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: I think you should work to pay off your loans (will be quicker here) and then go back! The experience you get here won't hurt back home either.
- New Comment: Take some time. Think about it. No wrong answer my man.
- New Comment: Yea India's not free of toxic workplaces either, and ofc depending on your skills your earning potential will be completely different
- New Comment: You said you know that you won't ever be able to come back to America, well that's actually not true.

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If you already have a valid H1B and haven't used up enough time and still have about 3-4 years left on H1B, you can comeback anytime during your whole life as long as you can find an employer ready to take you and sponsor a petition. You don't have to go through the lottery again as long as you can prove you haven't used up 6 years of H1B. It's called H1B recapture.

Just take the time and go back if that's what you want, the hard part is already done.

- New Comment: Your boss or the firm or even the people in your firm won't give shit if you die tomorrow, but your parents' lives will be devastated

I know a lot of other things have to be considered as well, and the statement above may sound a bit narrow-minded, but it all comes down to what makes u happy, that is the essence of life

- New Comment: Hey OP! It's totally okay to be confused. Being in your 20s is very hard. I am also an international student in the US who just graduated. I got only one advice for you. Choose happiness. No money can make up for inner peace and happiness. You are only in your 20s. Follow your heart and take risks because you won't ever regret prioritizing your mental health and well-being.

- New Comment: If you are born in India you will be stuck in GC backlog, best to get out of it now and have a decent life in India. Or then try other countries like Australia or Europe.

- New Comment: Try not to make big decisions if you feel depressed. I'd suggest that you try to seek help and make bigger decisions like such with a clearer mind. Toxic work culture is not only endemic to US; it can happen anywhere. And you may find a better job for yourself here eventually. You can H1B transfer later to a job.

- New Comment: What are your short term & long term goals? Same situation as you only lucky have a good manager

- New Comment: Find better job in the US

- New Comment: Man the fuck up

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Title of the post: STEM-OPT and getting fired

Body of the post: I am dealing with an extremely toxic workplace that I am desperate to leave. My boss is in the process of trying to terminate me and I want to resign and leave first. Does he have to fill out anything on my I-985 or can I just report end of employment to my ISSO? I have been on STEM-OPT for less than 12 months. I'm worried he'll not sign my documents.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I know it's tough but you should find a job first. And how is he gonna burn you when you leave for another job that has nothing to do with that guy

- New Comment: What I've done in the past is recommend students get something in writing. On your I-983 you've listed your supervisor's info. Send them (and HR) an email asking for the final evaluation to be completed if you decide to leave the employer and if they don't respond within a reasonable amount of time- send them a follow up "hey I haven't heard back" or "I understand we aren't leaving off on the best terms but it's a requirement for employers to both report material changes in my employment with an updated I-983 and report end of employment within 5 days to my DSO within 5 business days." You can refer them to the following USCIS [link](<https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/optional-practical-training-extension-for-stem-students-stem-opt>) under the STEM OPT Employer Requirements and Responsibilities section

That way if it /were/ to affect you in the future you can show that you attempted to do your part.

Also are you out of unemployment days? You have 90 for Post OPT and whatever you don't use rolls over to your STEM OPT period- plus an additional 60 days.

- New Comment: You and the employer have to complete and sign the final evaluation section of the I-983 any time you end a job during the STEM OPT extension authorization.

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- New Comment: Wait for him to fire you so that you can get your severance. And yes you'll need your manager's signature to submit the last form for end of employment. You can also check that on your university issc portal. Do minimal work and take a break before going on the grind for job search. I was in a similar situation. I was glad when I was laid off but tried my best to maintain cordial relations with my manager cuz I did need him after my end of employment. He wrote me a letter of recommendation too. Job search ain't going to be a bed of roses though. I've been on a job search for a while and job search is a full time job too, it's extremely exhausting. Companies are picking up hiring but the bar is still high. So weigh in your options well.

- New Comment: Number one rule in corporate America: Never quit, let them fire you.

Start looking for a new job now and do the bare minimum for that awful job. Way better to have shit job with a paycheck than no paycheck and unemployment clock ticking.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Whats the process of switching companies on stem opt ? Is it different from opt?

- New Comment: Id say stick and see if you can workout this job. Market is bad and its better to stay in a toxic space for a while than being unemployed for a long time. Try to find common grounds.

- New Comment: If you are laid off, the filing of the form i-983 is "optional" and not necessary is what my DSO said. You will only need to have a new i983 filled and signed within 10 days of your new job.

- New Comment: Sorry to hear. Are you a PhD, and what's your focus?

- New Comment: When you leave the company for whatever reason, do you have to submit the entirely new i-983 with final evaluation completed or just the final evaluation page with the previous i-983 submitted is fine?

- New Comment: [removed]

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I'm barely on OPT and this sounds awful. I hope you find at least 10 minutes to relax and know that things will be okay. USA Capitalism is a ferocious monster

Title of the post: F1 opt job hunting

Body of the post: I am tired of looking for job. It is really difficult to find a job as f1 student in US. I have undergraduate degree in Civil engineering from my home country. I completed my masters in engineering management in US (dec 2023) . I have give numerous interviews but none wants to deal with opt students. I do have working experience back in my home country as a design engineer but no luck. I am already hopeless.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'll play the devil's advocate. In my opinion, engg. management is a bloated degree with tons of international students doing it for god knows what reason. Many students in that program vie for PM roles which outside of FAANG/software, may not really have much demand.

Have you thought about if that could be the issue here?

- New Comment: Do they don?t wanna deal with opt students cause you asked for H1b sponsorship or they just don?t wanna hire ? You can try to not ask for sponsorship and just start the job while you look for another company that will sponsor

- New Comment: Apply to Vermont, my friend is in the same career path, less experience, didn?t pass the exam (I don?t know the name, the certification one I think) and got a job there

- New Comment: I kept quiet about the OPT and got the offer.

Edit: I kept quiet about the OPT because I, too, was hopeless with time and money running out. I treated OPT like a red flag to prospective employers. I did check that the company has e-verify. I would say keep quiet about the OPT and if

Reddit Posts

your degree is eligible for STEM, you can extend it. I'm sure within these 3 years of OPT, you can try to search for companies with H1B sponsorship.

- New Comment: How many years of work experience back in your country? (If u don't mind)
- New Comment: Which uni did you do the masters from?
- New Comment: Yeah, they don't want to deal with sponsoring or have a new hire every single year ? makes the company looks bad ? I was in your shoes but yeah, international student near impossible to work at a company right now. Couldn't find a job so at the last week to 90 days period, i have to apply for marriage ?

Title of the post: F1 reinstatement

Body of the post: My F1 reinstatement was approved yesterday. This has been such a torturous and difficult time for me. I am grateful this process is finally over.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you could elaborate why you needed reinstatement? Did you go from B1/B2 to F1?
- New Comment: Congrats! I am still waiting after 6 months!
- New Comment: One of the toughest periods of time for any f-1 students! Glad you made it through. Go have a day to yourself and celebrate it.
- New Comment: Where is your service center?
- New Comment: What was your priority date
- New Comment: Hi, I'm in similar situation.

I have decided to file online! While i was preparing for filing online i came across some questions!

Reddit Posts

1. What date are you requesting your current or requested status to be extended until?

2. evidence for reinstatement

explanation letter to USCIS!

What other documents will help the process !

Please let me know if you have suggestion ?

Thank you!

- New Comment: Its ask for proof of pay!

I have a family member here, they have supporting me with financial, can i just put the bank statement or explain about it!

Do we have to provide all the i-20s and transcript from previous colleges or just the one graduate from! ??

- New Comment: You're welcome! Hope i will also be able to share my positive experience soon!

Best wishes to you !!!?

- New Comment: Hi! Just sent you a Dm. Can you please check and respond.

Title of the post: Is it worth putting money in a 401k?

Body of the post: Considering h1b is not guaranteed and having to return to our home country is a real possibility, do you guys still put money on a 401k? Would the money still be accessible if we leave the US for good?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It's definitely worth it if your company matches your contributions and if you don't have financial

Reddit Posts

discipline to save. Any withdrawals from 401k is taxed at 20%. If you withdraw it before you turn 59, you are required to pay an additional 10% as penalty, thus increasing the effective tax paid by you to 30%. Consider your income is 100k. Suppose your company has a policy of matching 100% of your contributions upto 5% of your income. If you contribute 5% i.e. 5k per year, your company contributes another 5k, for a total of 10k a year. If you withdraw it at the end of the year, you pay 3k to the IRS, and are left with 7k. That's still 2k of free money. It also reduces the personal tax you pay. So you'll now end up paying taxes on 95k instead of on 100k. It's really a no brainer decision to contribute if your company matches. Plus, if your 401k account is managed by some financial companies, they invest it in a diverse portfolio and fetch good returns. I personally got 13.2% returns on my 401k account last year. I would have never achieved such returns if I personally managed my portfolio.

My employer matches 200% of my contributions upto 5% of my income. That's like 10k of free money for every 5k I contribute.

And yes, you can still withdraw it anytime you want even after you leave the US. You can also take loans against it when you're in the US for cheaper interest rates.

- New Comment: I started putting money once I got my h1b, my company matches 3% so I put 3%. It's free money and you can take out if you want for a penalty or wait until retirement.

- New Comment: I did at the start then stopped to have some cash for buying a house. Then started again and now stopped to buy another.

- New Comment: You can also look up how a Roth ladder works to start converting funds from your 401k to Roth after you leave the country. Oversimplified explanation would be every year you convert up until the lowest income bracket threshold (and pay the tax on the converted portion) and after 5 years you withdraw that contribution penalty free and repeat every year.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I am putting money in 401K mostly to reduce my taxable income and because of the employer match. I want to put money in ROTH IRA but I'll wait to see if my h1b gets picked up.

Till then I am investing on my own, as it provides me the liquidity I need. Otherwise too much money 401k +ROTH gets locked.

- New Comment: Yes, you should always contribute to 401k or 403b(non profits) especially if your employer also matches. Money in 401k also grows year over year based on your allocations, but you can typically easily get 8-10% returns YoY on your 401k.

401k contributions also help you reduce your tax burden as contributions you make are pre-tax, and your taxable income reduces.

If you leave the US, you can encash whatever balance you have in 401k. If you withdraw money before retirement age (you can also withdraw money penalty free for certain situations like buying your first house etc.) , you pay a 10% penalty and the money is withheld at 22% federal tax rate. But the money itself is only going to be taxed at your normal tax rate, so if your blended tax rate is less than 22%, you will get money back as part of tax refund.

- New Comment: I would suggest better keep your 401k like 6% and not max it out. Remaining pay taxes take that amount and put on something else like ROTH IRA. Reason is you never know what your tax % might be in future and maybe when you want to take 401k amount in your 60 you might end up paying 55% of tax based on tax system at that time.

Title of the post: To stay or to go? Decision-making help!

Body of the post: Hi everyone, let me start by apologizing for having such a pessimistic view of my situation. I'm really sorry in advance I understand that I am very blessed and should be grateful of the opportunity I have before me, but I

Reddit Posts

can't help but feel dread around it too. I just want to know if anyone has been in a similar position and what things you had to consider before making a decision.

My situation is that my STEM OPT is about to end in June 2024. Just today, my employer informed me that we can discuss sponsorship when they have been very dismissive the past two years since they're a non-profit and I was told "we don't do that here".

Anyway, in the past few months, I've come to terms with the fact that I am just not a strong enough candidate to be considered by other employers, or that finding an employer with sponsorship is very challenging at this time, and that my current employer won't offer it. I honestly did not struggle to accept this (except the fact that I'm not employable) because I've always wanted to go back home, but the pressure from my family to stay and make it work weighs me down so much.

Back home, I have a boyfriend who I've been in a long-distance relationship with since 2019. I want to achieve new milestones with him. I have friends who may have connections and job opportunities for me. I will never earn as much as I do in the US, but my quality of life would be very different.

If I am offered the work visa, and choose to accept, I'm not sure how I can progress in my personal life given that my current employer is a non-profit, and I am severely underpaid. Even if I stay, I will still not be able to afford to live independently with my current salary. If I end up marrying my boyfriend and for some miracle, I'm able to petition him, and he can come here, I don't know what our lives would be like if I'm the salary maker and I get paid \$46k a year in New York City and he won't have a job right away because we have very different profiles.

If I choose to go back to my home country, I will leave my family behind here in the US. I will, yet again, make another jump and restart in my home country and figure out what work opportunities would be there for me. I may find better jobs

Reddit Posts

now that I have an MA, but I'm so jaded, I don't know what to think anymore. I also still have to pay off my tuition to my sister who sponsored my education, it'll take me longer to do that if I don't earn USD.

I don't want to sound like I'm whining about these good options that I have... I am very grateful, but this journey has truly been a constant mental and emotional battle. I wish a lot more people knew about our struggles as international students and the decisions we have to make.

Sorry for the drama. A heartfelt thank you to anyone who can share some wisdom and advice.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Your thoughts and concerns are totally valid, looking at your situation I feel like you have nothing to lose if you apply for H1B. If your employer is willing to sponsor it for you there's no harm in trying because you have only one shot anyway and it's a lottery. I know people who didn't get it on first try but got it second try. If you are already considering moving back home, there's literally no harm in applying for work visa. I hope your situation gets better and remember that you are not alone. Many international students on this subreddit are going through same problems you are facing right now.

- New Comment: i don't have any advice for you but i wanna share a bit of my thoughts on this cuz i'm more or less on the same boat as you right now.

when you said ?i wish a lot more people knew about our struggles as international students and the decisions we have to make? i resonate with that a lot. i've sacrificed so many important things in my life that not everyone would be willing to do so. i ended my 6 year relationship with my boyfriend to focus on getting my degrees and then i moved to a smaller town in my state (so far away from my friends & everyone i know) due to a better job ? and ofc not to mention all the money that we've spent on tuition, housing, etc.

Reddit Posts

my OPT ends next august and thankfully my employer has expressed their will to sponsor me, but obviously with the lottery system i don't even have that big of a chance to obtain a work visa. i remain optimistic & am prepared with backup plans in case the work visa plan doesn't work out, but i wish more people would get how devastated i would be after sacrificing so many things in my life just to get beaten by a lottery based application. i'm hopeful that wouldn't be the case (again i'm optimistic) but i just know i'm dealing with a beast right now and it isn't easy to go through it alone.

the decisions that we make may be different, but i know how it feels to have to make tough decisions as international students here. career vs love life, education/school vs social life, quality of life vs family. it's a lot but i want you to know you're not alone. best of luck to you OP and i hope you'll come to the right decision for you :)

- New Comment: I'm an international student myself and I totally get the frustration. I've completed my first year of OPT and have applied for STEM OPT. I've thought about the US vs Home scenario in my head a lot of times as there are high chances that I'll have to make that decision sooner or later. I chose home because even though I'd earn significantly more money here, I think I'll be happier there. I understand that this might be a tougher decision for you considering your parents are in US and you're in a long distance relationship with someone from your home country. In my opinion, the question comes down to what makes you happy. If you take the H1B route, you'll probably get approved and if you get married to your SO then he would be able to work here, but again there are a few things to clarify before this i.e is the SO okay/cool coming and working here, are you okay with working at the non profit, where do you love living more, here or your home country. If you decide to go back to your home country, you'll probably need to again answer some things, i.e. is it okay for you to stay away from your parents, it okay with you that you'll probably need more time to repay your sister, is it okay with you to start kinda from scratch again. All I can say it will narrow down to the things you're comfortable compromising with. All the best! :)

- New Comment: I skimmed through your post and I apologize if I missed something.

Hang in here until June 2024. There's no harm.

Reddit Posts

Worst case - you enjoy the summer

Best case - you get a great job

Things back at home will stay as is. I'd insist you start exploring other countries as options - Middle East, Europe, etc., i.e. places that might be more inviting talent at the moment. At the same time, look for options in your home country.

I am from India and I always say that if I'm paid 25% of what I make here in Indian Rupees, I'll go back home. Unfortunately, my skills aren't advanced enough to demand that salary at home.

With that said, take it easy. Think of the next 3 months as make it or break it. If after 3 months i.e. march 2024, you don't have anything to look forward to, plan an exit strategy. If you have something, invite your boyfriend / family over to the states and have a great summer. Remember, you're at a WIN-WIN situation

- New Comment: I think for non-profit you are exempt from lottery so you will get h1b regardless with the non-profit. However, when you switch to a profit company they have to do the whole lottery thing with you

- New Comment: IMO, if you could, take the job offer. The value thing is that you could have more time to gain exp + save up some money. You could also look at transferring to another company after you get your visa. experience would make you a better candidate whenever you decide to stay, U.S or your home country. You could also try actively looking for a company that have branches in your country, get job there and asked for transfer if possible. As for your bf, if he's really want to be with you, there are a lot of different way he could do, don't just take all responsibility on yourself (I've been in long distance relationship since 2014, when I came to U.S and still actively trying to get my SO here with me). Look at other options like you both go to Canada as married couple studying for postgrad, or F2 sponsor if he could get B1/B2 visa, or he can come here and study post grad/ undergrad as well.

You could also try to look for job at other state as well, your job might be more valuable in somewhere else

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I am also on stem opt and international student. I am struggling to find job and working with a startup at the moment. I understand what are you going through because my startup barely have any funding
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: I would suggest wait if you could switch and apply for work visa via profit employer otherwise if you're applying via non profit afaik there are some restrictions that you can switch only non profits which will have salary restrictions. And always aim to fly high and not get restricted. Coming back home is not easy but definitely if you've enjoyed working here then things shouldn't be tough considering the flexibility you have. At the end of the day it's a personal decision on where you see yourself living a good life :)
- New Comment: Get your H1B, get rid of your loan and then think about next step. You may find peace once you are done with your financial burden! Once you leave US, you can't undo things
- New Comment: I'd say, take a pencil and white paper, and using old school method list all PROs for your staying in US vs going back home. I totally understand the money factor here, but think about trade offs as well. Wishing you best of luck !!

Title of the post: OPT expires next Tues. Both potential job offers did not happen :(

Body of the post: This is just a vent post as I am seeking comfort from those in a similar situation. My current job does not qualify for STEM OPT extension so I had a few months to look for a different job. I had 2 potential job interviews that I had high hopes for and today got the news that I didn't get either of them. While I am fortunate enough to be able to apply for permanent residency via AOS, I am still shattered that I will not be able to financially provide for my family for the next however many months. Ugh. Not to mention I feel incredibly under-qualified, despite my graduate studies.

Life sucks today but hoping it'll get better. To anyone out there who is in a similar boat as I am...keep your head up.

Sending hugs bc I def need a lot :(

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'm so sorry :(hopefully you get permanent residency through AOS
- New Comment: > Not to mention I feel incredibly under-qualified, despite my graduate studies.

The moment I got my green card, I became the most in-demandest specialist ever with 0 change to my actual qualifications. Not being hired for a job is totally normal and happens even to top people in my industry, is a sign of a healthy job market, and often has nothing to do with how qualified you are. Needing visa sponsorship is a serious barrier to getting employed, even more so than say 5 years ago because of the uncertainty surrounding USCIS timelines, immigration policies, and an anti-immigration president possibly being elected next year. So I guess this is all to say that my immigration journey has taught me that I'm only human and so many things are out of my control, no matter how prepared or capable I make myself.

Sorry it didn't work out after all that work you put in.

- New Comment: > I will not be able to financially provide for my family for the next however many months.

Based on firsthand reports in /r/Immigration and /r/USCIS, the approval rate on requests for expedited treatment of Form I-765 (submitted with the Form I-485, along with Form I-131) for an AOS EAD card has seemingly been significantly higher in recent years than in the past.

So you may want to really review materials in those subs, in VisaJourney, on attorney websites, etc, to see how to best prepare for that approach.

- New Comment: Hey man, praying for you to get through this. Good luck??
- New Comment: The second you get granted permanent residence is when these problems will vanish/be greatly reduced. I'm sorry about your finances.

Reddit Posts

Sorry I can't relate more, I won't be granted permanent residence in my lifespan (going by theoretical calculations) so can't relate much. I hope your family is doing OK. Please post again when you have something in hand to provide for them!

- New Comment: What did you study?

- New Comment: You said your current job doesn't qualify for STEM OPT, is it because they are not an e-verify company or something else? I'm in the same boat as you with my OPT expiring next month and my employer has offered to register e-verify for me, so maybe that could be an option?

Whatever happens remember that you are going to end up exactly where you're supposed to be despite all the setbacks. This immigration journey is a tough one so don't let it weigh on your competence. Praying for you.

Title of the post: How do most international students afford college in the US ?

Body of the post: Just out of curiosity, I'm wondering how most of you who came to the US on F1 visas can afford to go to school paying out of state tuition fees in many cases without having a meaningful work authorization. Did you have a scholarship? Did you have an out of state tuition waiver? Did you get a loan from your home country? Or did you just have rich parents? Or some other way?

How do most international students afford to go to college in the US?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: To be blunt... For undergraduate education poor and even middle class kids do not study in the US except in very specific or extraordinary circumstances.

Reddit Posts

Or those middle class families and even upper middle class families take on tremendous debt so their child can study in the US.

Graduate school comes with significantly higher likelihood of scholarships or Assistantships being offered.

- New Comment: Some colleges are very generous with financial aid to international students (depending on where you're from & your financial background) and are need blind, rare but it exists. I got a good amount of financial aid and I was able to pay the remaining with my on-campus jobs by working the full 20hr/week.

- New Comment: Undergrads: Rich parents for the overwhelming majority

Master's: Mixture of rich parents, loans, on campus employment, and scholarships (government and otherwise)

PhD: Typically through on campus employment or scholarships

- New Comment: Each student has a different way of funding their education. You shouldn't be surprised that all of the options you provided are actual answers.

Some unis provide scholarships, some professors fund MS students from the get go, some students have a lot of savings to help them not take a loan and some just go by loan. There are multiple students who come from different backgrounds and experiences so there isn't one right answer to this.

The most cost effective way would be to get a TA/RA by contacting a professor early into the admissions process, so that takes care of tuition reimbursement!

- New Comment: I am talking for most of the folks from India (not all but most).

So a large number of f1 students come from very humble beginnings with the family's economic tier being lower to upper middle class.

Reddit Posts

For all these bands, education in united states is extremely extremely expensive. So much so that their family's decade's of savings/real-estate investment would total it.

So students do the following

- try to get great scores in order to score a scholarship
- put the family's wealth, includes jewellery/real-estate of parents/extended-family's assets as a collateral and get an education loan (in recent times, the paperwork around it has reduced by a lot)

When they come to the states, they try to reduce expenses

- by sharing apartments and not spending much on coffee/outside-food, etc
- & increase the earning
- by working on the school offered positions (TA, library person etc)

Along with that, they have this understanding that their parent's life's earnings are dependent on them securing a decent job so they try and stay away from distractions. This necessity adds the required discipline to get into good firms.

From their on, the immediate goal is to get rid of the education loan. As we usually have just 1-2 years of allowed work permit. So they save more, pay the loan off in that amount of time. Some lucky people get picked in h1b lottery and then they can stay for 6 years.

Post that if company ever decides to apply for a green card (requires a lot of money) and it gets approved (takes around 2 years), they get in a queue. And they can then extend h1b beyond 6 years until they get the green card. Sadly, this wait time currently estimated at 60 years

So eventually, they go back home. But they don't fail to contribute to the US economy and usually are very grateful to the people and the country in general that they were able to get this work experience and also get the financial benefit

Reddit Posts

out of that.

- New Comment:

> Did you have an out of state tuition waiver?

* Out of state tuition waiver. There was only one semester where I was denied (too many people applied so the program ran out of money). One semester with a partial waiver (again too many applied). I considered the in-state tuition rates to be dirt cheap.

* Income as a TA or RA. The university offered the positions; I never sought the jobs. The INS officer at the port of entry was unhappy and nearly revoked my status. Meanwhile he had his side kick in the customs department tear my car apart. They both said I was being impudent?.

- New Comment: Depends. I had a full merit scholarship from my home country, that paid for my engineering degree and living expenses in the US (a total of \$300k+) ?????

I know people who have partial scholarships, and their fam pays the rest, some ppl are funded by work.. not all international students are wealthy, but many have supportive families who assist regularly

- New Comment: All of them. I got a 75% tuition discount, I got a loan, and kept my remote work from my country, which I eventually changed for an on campus job, but these don't pay that much and are not that consistent. My country has a bad lack of scholarships for people doing graduate studies abroad, but at least there's a good government lending institution with a really low fixed interest rate, I'll be paying like \$600 for like 15 years, but at least is in my national currency, so it will be less and less money with time.

Some people do wait tables and stuff like that, it's not legal, but it's also not hard to get those.

- New Comment: I met 2 classmates that work in a restaurant (yeap I know it is illegal for international students). but

Reddit Posts

they were able to pay the tuition and other expenses/

- New Comment: 1. Wealthy family

2. Loans

3. Paid OPT

4. Scholarship

- New Comment: Sugar daddies help

- New Comment: Simple. Mostly rich parents.

- New Comment: Athletic scholarship

- New Comment: 1. Rich parents (Majority in CA, NY, Boston undergrads)

2. Athletic scholarship, usually represented their country sports

3. Academic scholarship, good grades and resume, extracurriculars, non profit, businesses

4. College fund savings (10 yrs in the making)

5. Loans from home country

​

Since your question is "How do most international students afford to go to college in the US?" number 1 is your answer for private schools and high ranked universities. the higher ranked ones have a mix of 1 and 3

- New Comment: In my case my parents paid for my tuition, they had a college fund for me and payed for the rest from their savings for me to study two years in the US. I don't consider us rich tbh just two very hard working parents that kinda knew university is pretty expensive.

- New Comment: Need based aid

- New Comment: Family pays for my tuition & living costs?.Even though I received a scholarship ship from my university,

Reddit Posts

my family still has to pay 75% of the tuition. Also, I went to community college for the first two years. The tuition was way cheaper ?

- New Comment: I studied in a US high school and got strong GPA and SAT. The undergrad I applied for gave a really good merit scholarships to those with good grade/scores regardless one's citizenship status.

- New Comment: Applied to a need blind school and on campus work study

- New Comment: I had an athletic scholarship but they were paying half. The rest was coming out of my pocket while working part time. I must also say that I went to a community college first in order to save money. My last 2 years was at a CUNY. It was tough for me but you have to make a decision on whether you want to go to a school that cost a lot or to a school that charges lower fees

Title of the post: F1 Visa Experience Delhi

Body of the post: [F23, Indian and about to pursue my masters degree.]

My interview was on 11th June 2024 (I'm a bit late to the party with posting late and all but anyway).

Interview time : 8am

But I reached there around 6:30am because a day before, I was overwhelmed with the how bad traffic in Delhi could be ?

But even at 6:30am there was a big crowd of people right outside the Embassy. There were a lot of people at the interview. Around 7-7:30am we were asked to form a line and enter the US Embassy. We were called one by one in front of different counters initially to get our biometrics verified (which was done by Indian officers) and then formed another line for the actual interview.

Reddit Posts

When it was my turn for the biometric verification, my DS-160 form was kept with the officer (who was indian) and they asked me to sit aside which made my nervousness get even worse. I thought something was wrong with my form and that I was totally screwed and never getting my visa but I asked one of the interns there and they said that I was a transfer case which meant that my DS-160 had a different consulate address because I initially booked another consulate before I rescheduled my consulate to Delhi. I let out a huge sigh of relief after realising it wasn't anything else. Though I had to wait for like 15-20 minutes and people who were behind me in the line were done with their interview before me but I didn't mind that much.

After the Indian officer confirmed that my details have been transfered from my initial consulate to Delhi consulate, I was made to stand in the line for my interview. Though I was feeling queasy, I tried not to think about it much. What I observed about interviewees before me getting rejected was that their answers sounded really really scripted and mugged up. Keeping your tone natural and actually having a conversation with VO might work better in your favour. This isn't to say you shouldn't prepare your answers beforehand. But don't sound like it.

I was made to stand in front of counter numbered 18 or 19??? Idk I don't remember. But it was a young American man, probably in his early 30s who was my VO.

I saw three people before me in line getting rejected with made it harder for me to keep calm but I tried anyway. So this is how it went :

(I tried to maintain eye contact to the VO though he kept his gaze set on his computer screen almost the entire time.)

ME: Good morning, Officer.

Reddit Posts

VO : Good morning, please hand me over your passport and I-20.

ME : Here you go.. *hands them over*

VO: *He reads my i-20 for a while*

So what is Information Technology (the name of my course) ?

ME : Well, Information Technology is yada yada yada yada...(I said 2-3 lines and kept it short and simple)

VO : When did you graduate?

ME : I graduated in May 2022.

VO : And what have you been doing since then?

ME : Well since then I've been working as a xyz where my job role is to analyze abc with the help of technology for better decision-making and now I want to pursue this degree to understand the finer aspects of technology as well as business.

VO spends around 5 seconds quietly typing something on the screen.

VO : Who's funding your education?

ME : My parents are funding my education. They have savings of around xxx rupees and I've taken out an education loan of around xxx rupees.

Reddit Posts

VO spends another 10 seconds typing aggressively and gaze dead set on the screen. At this point I was freaking out on the inside because the 10 seconds of silence has never been louder and longer for me..

VO : (while still looking at his screen) Approved.

ME : (I HAVE NEVER FELT SO RELIEVED) Thank you so much Officer.

And then I scurried out of the building before getting lost inside the embassy and taking another 2 minutes in search of an exit.

They kept my passport and I received it after 3-4 days.

The entire interview barely lasted more than 1.5 minutes. Now that it's done, I now wonder what was I even worried about in the first place. But I understand that weird overwhelming anxiousness you get until it's finally done.

Tips that helped me :

1. Keep it short, simple yet crisp, cohesive and persuasive. The VO is NOT there to listen to your entire life story and so, do not ramble (which is a problem I had to deal with). It might irritate the VO when you talk on and on without a point in sight esp when they have like 30 people more in line to interview.

2. You lead the interview with your answers: If there are any loopholes in your answers that do not knit an easily

Reddit Posts

digestible and sensible story of what happened to what you currently are doing to what you will do in the future that makes getting the visa a crucial stage in your life then the VO might ask you a question you have no answer to. Have a tight knit storyline in your head for you to follow according to the question asked. Sit down, think and make notes about why your background is relevant to what you are currently doing and how it would affect you in the future. This will help you shape your answers in a cohesive and persuasive way that is unique to your situation and could help the VO understand why you need their approval.

3. Make eye contact and try to appear confident in your answers and reasoning, even if you feel like you are peeing your pants. Trust me, it works.

4. Make a list of all the potential questions that the VO might ask and then frame, polish and enhance your answers accordingly. You don't have to learn your answers by heart, line to line before enacting it before the VO but you must know the content you're gonna say if a certain question is asked.

5. I can't stress this enough, keep the tone conversational and natural. Like you are having an actual conversation rather than sounding like a tape recorder. This isn't to say that you keep it informal but I think that goes without saying.

6. I think it's obvious and everybody here knows it already but do not display intentions of being a potential immigrant.

I think that's all the info I had. If anybody has any questions, I'd be happy to answer!!

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'd like to add - Do strike a conversation with the ones in front and behind you in the line. It helps you divert your mind off the stress and also helps in passing the time. Can't just stand in the line for an hour imagining situations that might never happen.

- New Comment: I had the exact same questions.

Like exact but in Islamabad, Pakistan

- New Comment: Same experience with mine. He asked a single question then suddenly approved my visa. I already received mine after 3 days

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hey.

Congratulations.

Did you receive your passport?

If yes, when?

- New Comment: Hey were the people in front of you who you said were rejected, also seeking F1 visa?

- New Comment: Didn't ask the infamous *do you plan to return home after completing your master's degree?*

Title of the post: Feeling low

Body of the post: I am feeling low because of no luck in job after searching for an about a year. I am planning to leave US as my STEM OPT is coming to an end. I don't know how to deal with this feeling. I know I will be closer to my family but this feeling of failure won't go away.

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Nationality and major?
- New Comment: did you get laid off and were you able to clear your student debt?
- New Comment: Try searching for roles in your local. Also, I found less spam in Glassdoor job search. Keep trying until you have your time here.
- New Comment: Be detached at the same time as you are attached
- Hindu Sctiptures
- New Comment: Don't feel low or you lost. Happens with a lot of people in different phases of life. Good thing is you cleared student loans. Once you go to India and get a job there, you will be free of immigration tensions and can enjoy happily.
- New Comment: How were you able to stay without a job for a whole year?
- New Comment: F1 visa program was never meant to be a path to a job in the US. It is an opportunity to study abroad and potentially bring the skills and knowledge back to your home country. I know quite a few people doing very well since they went back.
- New Comment: Please seek professional help such as therapy. As Indians, we are so much against therapy and don?t understand the actual impact that you will have from it. The link is a non profit where you can pay on a sliding scale.

<https://openpathcollective.org/>

One thing that I can say is ? never keep all your eggs in one basket?. Even though F1 visa is for education purposes only, we are in America and we can have hobbies and other interests that can turn into business ventures or potential

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job opportunities.

Are you worried about not making money on a monthly basis (with some kind of job) or not having a job in the field of your education (because you spent all this money on this education) ?

- New Comment: Return home and make India great again

- New Comment: You should apply to analyst roles, maybe.

- New Comment: If it involves sponsorship then everyone is on the same page, but I think it's easier to get interviews for analyst roles compared to data engineer roles. This is my personal opinion. But the issue companies nowadays are preferring citizens over international students for these types of roles.

- New Comment: Look at people lower to you. There are people with 10 years experience and a family with no job in sight and also leaving back to India. Here you are not the problem, the market is real bad. Go back, upskill, become a family and think of coming here directly on eb1. Remember, Its not the end of everything.

- New Comment: How are you on STEM without paid income?

- New Comment: Hey, I can understand the feeling of having to leave the US. I have been there in not one but two separate occasions and I know very well how the feeling is. Looking at your current situation I am not sure what sort of jobs/companies you were primarily targeting but I wanted to also ask whether you had checked any of the Indian recruiting companies for your situation. I know few people who had used them mainly for the ease of getting a placement but this was almost 10 years ago. I do realize some of the shady practices that these companies use but was more of thinking whether would be a viable option given the imminency of your visa dates. Anyways I do understand what youre going through in terms of jobs and more than happy to talk to you in DM if you feel like it. Best

Disclaimer - Not an agency of any sorts, as stated have been in somewhat similar situation trying to see if I can be of any help.

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- New Comment: Not sure if you explored the consultancies. They should be able to help. Across board its tough market. Please hold the ground till your opt expires . At least give yourself time.

- New Comment: I've seen a lot of my friends on F1 having an incredibly hard time getting a job despite having good grades and a high in demand major. So you're definitely not alone. You've cleared your debt so that's fucking wonderful. You have a degree, some experience in the US, and most importantly ALMOST NO DEBT. Go back home, do something else with life. My STEM OPT expires next year and if I don't get my H1B, it's like I'm almost back to square one. The point being, this anxiety surrounding visa and employment is endless. So, go back home, start over, do something else with your life. In 5 years, it won't even matter and being close to home is so peaceful.

Title of the post: Didnt get H1B.. on Stem OPT extension

Body of the post: Second time applying through my company and I didnt get the H1B this go round. My Stem Opt extension is up on February of 2025. My company will file again for next year and they have started the green card process as well for me (I think its still at the PERM phase).. What are my options really?

Because who knows how long the green card filing is gonna take and the h1b results dont come out until a month after my STEM OPT extension expires.

Feeling real hopeless right now ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Similar situation. OPT expiring Feb 2025. H1b didn't get picked up on the last chance. Are you from other countries or India/China? Asking my company to start the GC process now, but I have no idea about the timeline, or if the EAD extends during the application process.

- New Comment: Sorry, I?m a bit confused. Can someone please explain how can we start the green card process

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without h1b approval. I'm in a similar position.

Thanks!

- New Comment: EB2 GC process currently goes like this- PWD (6 months) + recruitment (2 months) + perm (1 year) + I140 (6 months (15 days if premium processing)) + I485 (6 months). Think about when your company filed the GC petition and figure out how much time you have. My thought is unless you're in the late stage of PERM, your GC process will not be done by February 2025.

- New Comment: Same boat, I'mma just go to grad school and study something real quick

- New Comment: Since you're from the Bahamas, you should apply for the diversity lottery visa later this year when it opens. The odds are low but it doesn't hurt to try.

- New Comment: What green card process are you starting?

Eb visa?

O visa?

- New Comment: Have you considered EB1B? The queue is current for people not from India/China.

- New Comment: Maybe you can try masters, grad school, mba etc? I've heard that people do that if they can't get selected for H1B so after another couple years of school you can get another STEM extension

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Sponsor or No Sponsor

Body of the post: I am an international Student with a STEM Degree. I have successfully landed 5+ internship while answering no to the "Do you require sponsorships now or in the future questions". They even signed my CPT letter saying that it's all fine if I am an international student. One of the employer (F30) job description even said that they won't accept F-1 visa, but then eventually agree to my CPT since I did well in the Hiring Manager interviewing round and

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I they would like me to work for the company. So my question is, if I don't have a return offer for my next internship and apply for a fulltime position, should I answer yes or no to the sponsorship questions? Last year I said yes and did not land a single internship, but this year when I said no, I have 5+ offers that accept my F-1 CPT authorization and have intern for both spring and summer semester. LMK what you guys think.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you say ?no? employers won?t bother filing H1-B petitions for you, so they?ll be more amenable to offering you employment while your CPT/OPT is current. However, once that expires, if you don?t have sponsorship or another way to maintain some sort of status/EA, you?ll have to leave.

How employers instantly turn away from people requiring sponsorship is a little bit scummy, but it is what it is.

- New Comment: It's just \$3000 for H1B application, don't understand why US firms are getting more reluctant to hire international students lol. Definitely not a budgeting issue imo.

- New Comment: how did you bring it up to the hiring manager that you needed them to sign the cpt paperwork?

- New Comment: I did this back in 2016/2017. Well I didn't answer no, but rather I networked with recruiters who assumed I was American as I present myself that way (accent etc). They were surprised to find out I needed CPT. I had two summer internships this way but did not get a return offer for a full time job after graduation.

- New Comment: Well answering no is the correct question since the company doesn?t have to sponsor you. Thats a great tactic for internships but you will have to move to another role asap so they can file H1b for you.

You have around 10% chance of getting picked each year.

Title of the post: USCIS Announced Updates to OPT I-765 Processing (For Once, Not Bad News)

Body of the post:

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: this is amazing. wow!

Edit: u/mallow_magi.

- New Comment: So my STEM OPT technically starts 15 Feb 2021. And I have yet to receive any approval from my I-765 application which was timely filed within the mentioned period. If it perhaps gets approved say like Apr 1, will my 24 month STEM OPT start Apr 1 2021-2023?

- New Comment: Is it recommended to file i765 online even though I already sent my application through mail? Is it risky to do that?

- New Comment: Wait to request a end date correction in the EAD, you have to mail back the original EAD. How are you supposed to work then?

- New Comment: Does this means that my 90days Unemployment clock will start running on the date of approval for I-765?

- New Comment: Hi u/GRRAWorld -- forgive me if you're not a DSO, I assumed you are based on your history of knowledgeable responses in this sub.

I have a question about this relatively old announcement, from back in late February.

Do you happen to know of any students who successfully obtained a date correction, based on this new USCIS protocol of granting the full 12-month recommended period? Do you know of any who initially received their < 12 month EADs before this guidance was announced?

My case: I applied for (and was approved) for my EAD for post-completion OPT in the middle of the pandemic, at the

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end of August. My EAD expires on July 2, which is almost two months shorter than the 12-month period that my DSO recommended on my I-20. Do you think (or know if) I have a shot at requesting a correction, even though my EAD was issued prior to the guidance?

Title of the post: No Job offer on OPT, unemployment days getting over.

Body of the post: I got my EAD card, but I don't have a job yet. I want to stop the clock but trying to find something. I've heard we could volunteer for 20 hours to stop the clock but all the NGOs I've found are related to service like distributing food on the field or smg which I believe I cannot put. Any suggestions for NGOs would help a lot! Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Get in touch with the professors in your University. They might have some research positions.
- New Comment: Check out Students Recover. They're currently accepting interns for the fall.
- New Comment: Research nonprofits, ngo, volunteering orgs . Also look for open positions in your university, working in research labs as RA for a short period of time till you find a full time job could be useful. They don't pay much but still better than nothing.
- New Comment: Go to Volunteer match and search for ngos looking for roles you are interested in. Try crowddoing.
- New Comment: Check out Bright Mind Enrichment. You can directly mail them regarding your desired role and they'll take you in if they have something similar.
- New Comment: The non profit does not need to be trusted to your field of study.

Your role needs to be related to your field of study.

- New Comment: Get an unpaid position somewhere; just make sure they can cooperate with a background check
- New Comment: Try part time roles in small companies that are even remotely related to your degree

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Title of the post: F1 opt just lost the job

Body of the post: I'm on my opt and lost the job few days back. When is the best time to upload the unemployment in usics? Also I may get my job next week as I have been giving interviews daily

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You gotta update job loss/new job within 10 days from happening. The sooner the better.

- New Comment: You have to update to your SEVP portal within 10 days.

Also, if you are on initial OPT, email your professors for an unpaid volunteer position ASAP to stop OPT clock.

- New Comment: Within 10 days of you losing a job

- New Comment: Don't you have severance? Not sure if you need to update anything until you roll off from the payroll.

Title of the post: Almost 6 months of Job search on OPT- no luck??

Body of the post: Hey guys- I know that securing a job on OPT was not going to be easy so I did everything in my power to make sure that I am qualified for an accounting role. Just graduated with an MBA and I am also on CPA track. I have both public accounting and industry internship experience (12 months in total)

I would get interviews but then asked about sponsorship etc given that my Internship experiences are overseas. I think that this is holding me back. Does anyone have any recommendations or success stories! I've applied to over 100+ positions, I even call the company directly to speak to a recruiter and send over my resume. I worked with my career advisor to ensure that my resume is on point. I don't know if it's worth applying.

Edit: my OPT period starts June 2024

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The problem I guess is with your OPT. You've an MBA, so I assume non-STEM and hence ineligible for STEM extension. That would give you only 1 shot at H1B. You have already utilized 6 months of OPT, and that leaves you until Nov/Dec, so you cannot apply for H1B in 2025. Companies will be discouraged to hire you since you can work for only 6 months now.

- New Comment: Even citizens face hard luck with MBAs. Plus the market, can only send best wishes your way!

- New Comment: I applied to 1000+ R&D positions on Linkedin and got 5 interviews. 2 are still in progress. Trust me, 100+ are not enough.

- New Comment: I had planned for master's in USA and Germany. But seeing the market sooo F'ed up, I decided to stay back n India with deadend job, upskill for good and make a switch. Although this is killing me day in day out, I kinda feel better knowing us is terrible now.

Buddy, I would have been in same position as you and I can see how it is from your shoes already. You have taken the risk and achieved MBA from US. I'm pretty sure you'll land a job too. Good luck man!

- New Comment: How?re you still in the US on OPT unemployed for 6 months?

- New Comment: I have a friend who has been working for EY. Did you try applying to EY, your CPA definitely makes you a solid candidate. EY has positions in Canada as well.

- New Comment: unfortunately the job market is really bad rn and having only 12 months experience with a master's isn't the ideal situation for US employers. it's more common here to get a master's after you've been working full time for some years. it's not so much whether you're qualified or not, it's that there's plenty of qualified entry level candidates who don't come with the hassle and uncertainty of work sponsorship. but keep trying. you never know why someone might like you.

- New Comment: Remember 1 thing Citizen>=green card holder>h1b>stem opt>>>>>>>> opt

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That is where you are standing visa issue is way bigger than resume qualification

- New Comment: Jackson Hewitt has jobs starting in November. Maybe volunteer while searching to stop the clock?
- New Comment: I think there's not much you can do right now besides keep applying for jobs. You might want to start looking for volunteer opportunities or a part-time job asap so you won't be limited to 90 days of unemployment during your OPT.
- New Comment: Generally I don't think there's much more to suggest other than keep applying. A lot of employers prefer to not hire candidates that require sponsorship in the future just because it is (literally) a gamble on whether it will be successful or not. You will need to apply to A LOT of jobs, likely in the hundreds.

Here are some extra pointers I can give you:

- Utilize any connections you made during your studies (friends, professors, etc), that is imo the most effective way to get interviews.
- As someone mentioned here, unpaid opportunities and/or volunteer work are eligible forms of employment under OPT (as long as they are directly related to your field of study). You could look into volunteering with a local non-profit.
- If you are eligible for STEM extension (check with your DSO on your degree's designation) be sure to mention it during your interviews. You will need to educate most prospective employers on how your visa works. Most simply do not have the understanding on student visas.
- I believe Contract work, aka 1099 employment, is allowed under OPT (again, check with your DSO). I'm not sure how popular this option is in your field, but it is an option you can explore.

Reddit Posts

Finally a reminder that a student visa is not an immigrant visa. Always have a plan for yourself back home. Good luck!

- New Comment: I can?t really say much other than hang in there. You?ve probably tried everything you could. I was in your shoes too 6 months ago.

But i guess the only advice I can provide is to not limit yourself to just one role.

Btw is your MBA STEM or not?

- New Comment: dude mbas are always useless unless you had a career before doing the mba

Title of the post: Chances of my PhD F1 visa being rejected after staying in the US for 7 years?

Body of the post: So I'm going back to school after finishing my bachelor's in the US and then working for 3 years on OPT/STEM OPT. I know that the US consulate will evaluate my ties to my home country amongst other things. Given that I've been living in the US for the last 7 years, realistically, my ties are weaker than ever. Would that create any issues while applying for a new F1 visa? Do you think I have a chance of my visa being rejected? The university I'm planning to join is legit and in the top 20 + they offered me the stipend, so it shouldn't look suspicious from this side. Let me know your opinion and experience regarding transferring your F1 visa after staying in the US for a long time. Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I think you'll be fine since you've demonstrated that you can maintain status and not overstay. My situation was similar when I took a year of academic leave after being in the US for 6 years and the interview was easy and fast.

- New Comment: I did this in 2014, you should be fine. Couple of things, is your current permit expired? If not you can apply for change of status while living in the USA.

- New Comment: Hey OP,

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I would also look into getting an interview waiver so that you don't even have to appear before a visa officer. You can Google "Interview Waiver \$YourHomeCountry US Embassy" and should find out whether you are eligible or not. Where I am from, the requirement was that my F1 visa shouldn't have expired for more than 4 years.

Are you still in the US? If yes, what status are you? If you're working in STEM OPT, you could simply transfer your SEVIS from Bachelor's to PhD by contacting your University's DSO, and need not even travel back for an interview. If you're in some other status, you could also look into filing Change of Status to move to F1 Status.

I hope this helps.

- New Comment: If you're currently on an F1 visa, then you don't have to go through the interview process at all. Once you're admitted, your current school will just transfer your SEVIS ID to the new school and you can continue to live in the US without any additional paperwork. You only need the Visa if you're traveling outside the country. I was in a similar situation to yours and did not have any issues renewing my visa when I traveled to my home country after being in the US for 7 years.

- New Comment: I visited my country in 2014 and finished up my bachelor's and PhD. I literally went for my F1 visa in Netherlands as a 3rd country nationals. They did comment that i stayed in the US for long and asked when my last visit to my home country was.

In the end, my visa was approved. You will be fine.

- New Comment: OP. You should be good. You may have the option to just dropbox renew like someone else said. If you're not planning to leave the US, you don't have to renew at all. May I ask how you're going from Bachelor's to PhD? I've done my Bachelor's here as well.

- New Comment: You should be fine? i have had F1 since high school (2009) and no issues with renewing for PhD in

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2021?

- New Comment: 95% rejection, you lived too long.

Title of the post: May 2024 grads

Body of the post: Hi all

How your job search is going who haven't landed full time yet, what is your plan for OPT period

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Graduating grad school June 1. If there's no job until July, going home and applying from there. It's cheaper to be unemployed there than in the states

- New Comment: it's very much looking rough out there. Still applying and still hoping

- New Comment: Keep grinding and keep applying. That's the plan.

- New Comment: Still grinding applications, require sponsorship so that makes it even more difficult. Start Date in July

- New Comment: No idea ?

- New Comment: No idea ?

- New Comment: Apply for roles at your school if you have to, it can open doors. Don't be too proud or think it's lame

- New Comment: Well I'ma just keep applying until I land a solid offer

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: How are you looking for volunteering opportunities ?

- New Comment: Can anyone please suggest volunteering organisation apart from professors?

- New Comment: Bro am done with this sh!t

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No interview calls man literally 0

Idk what I will do, my 90days counter will start from June and I don't see jobs opening soon too.

What's your plan OP

- New Comment: Fairly fucked. The RA idea is decent but the professors often take advantage of such students (from my experience, especially the Indian and the Chinese professors) and make them work like slaves. YMMV

- New Comment: Rejections all the time. Still moving forward with applications until I get one

- New Comment: Are you on STEM OPT?

- New Comment: Don't know, I'm in the same boat. I keep getting rejected and it's really destroying my mental state. Every day seems like torture and I am truly losing it. Feel like I am cursed since everyone around me is able to find roles and I'm just stuck.

- New Comment: Graduated in December without any job offers, and finally secured an offer through a staffing company. Staffing firms usually pay peanuts but if you really want to stay in the states and buy some time, you might want to consider them. It's fairly easier to get an offer imo.

- New Comment: Applied for OPT on Mar 31. I'm a Master's in Comp Sci student graduating with a thesis option, not sure if I'm going to defend or not in time for May graduation but I'm trying my best.

I've been off the job hunting wagon for a month now and I'm planning to slowly get back to it once my thesis is over.

I've requested a July start date for my OPT, so hopefully, that gives me some time to find a job. Looking to stay at my college town for now (full time offer) and get some type of job until I'm able to find a better job in a bigger city.

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- New Comment: Can I get self employed on EAD and work in another country. And as I will have the EAD valid for a year look for job in USA from outside. Once I land a job in USA get back here. Is it possible???

- New Comment: Real question, I see a lot of ?keep my head down and grind? answers.

Has your schools not taught you anything other than basic cover letter, resume and LinkedIn profile?

Title of the post: refund as f1 international student

Body of the post:

hey guys, i'm curious what is ur average tax return as international student? i filled mine with sprintax just to see the average and my refund fed + state is about 250\$...

my total income is 12k and abt 2000 was automatically deducted like state tax, medicare, social tax and etc.

i just want to know what could be the average cus there's no way i'm getting only 250 out of 2000....

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Ah, you are not supposed to pay FICA taxes (SS and medicare). But the IRS doesn't stop you from paying them and it is close to impossible to get those taxes back. I've given up on mine.

- New Comment: Following! Cuz my wages were \$11,115 but all I got back was \$144 which is so weird. I worked for just 3 weeks in 2022 and got \$17 back and I thought at least \$300 for a whole year. I think I'm going to recheck and amend my Fed Returns?

- New Comment: Are you from India ? If yes then you can claim standard deduction and pretty much get all of it back . If not , then you should be getting more but can't say much . You shot yourself in the foot by paying for FICA(social security and Medicare) as we are exempt from it.

- New Comment: Also reach out to your company and let them know and they might be able to return you the fico taxes if its not too long ago. This had happend to me and the company was able to refund it to me most of it and the remaining

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I was told to go through IRS and have them refund me since we were entering in the new year and the company could only refund to a certain extent

- New Comment: Ideally refund should be 0 because the amount of tax withheld should ideally be equal to the amount you owe, but if you have multiple jobs then it might be less or more

- New Comment: Refunds these last couple of years is horrible

- New Comment: my refund was -\$175? I be owing after filing, never understood it

- New Comment: I made 32k through my summer intern, my expected refund shows up as ~3k. Does that sound right? I did not pay state tax (TX) or FICA (exempt)

- New Comment: what did u end up receiving? sprintax is telling me to pay 612\$ lol!

- New Comment: update:

I had SS and Medicare taxes withheld because during summer & had no credit hours for SUMMER 2023, so Summer wages had the Social Security and Medicare taxes.

- New Comment: F1 students don't have to pay the FICA taxes. You can get it back and based on the treaty between your country and USA, you can get the standard deduction. In my case it was about \$10,500.

- New Comment: During covid, i received about \$2000, and after covid, it went down to \$900 lol

- New Comment: \$2700

- New Comment: Did you already receive your refund ?

Title of the post: How hard is to find OPT job?

Body of the post: Ok so I'm 17 and planning to study CS in a average state university (T100 in US). According to my estimates as long as i can find an OPT job it's better than studying in Europe (Even if company doesn't sponsor) so my

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question is how hard is to find OPT job that doesn't sponsor H1B? (? will graduate at 2028 so job market would probably better) (i will probably have lot of projects and leetcode experience when graduate and internship if i find one)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: How can we predict that bro. 2028 a long time away.

You can have another recession, AI boom, or hell even Covid-28.

- New Comment: Don?t forget to factor in immigration. What country are you from?

Greencard is 10+ year wait after approval for India, China etc

You?d be in the US for 20 years including undegrad on a visa, which is mentally taxing with out permanent status

- New Comment: Network like crazy. That?s the only good way to work for sure. When people know you they?re willing to take a chance on you rather than risk with you

- New Comment: Anyone who tells you its easy is misleading you. Its almost impossible for international students, heck even US citizens are having a hard time finding jobs these days. I went to a target school in a STEM field, and 99% of my international class went back to their native countries. Trump especially made it very hard for US companies to hire international students and those rules have stuck. Stay in Europe, get your free degree, and work in a nice local company. If you can get transferred to the US later on, that's a more reliable option. Only exception to studying in the US is if you got a full ride, in which case take the free degree.

Just keep in mind that a US degree is 1 year longer than a Euro degree, and when you go back to your country (which you most likely will), you will be 1 year behind your peers and have absolutely no university network/career fairs in place to help you get a job. Will be a stranger in your own land. Also speaking from experience US degrees no longer have

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any value abroad, countries almost always prefer their own graduates as they are more familiar with the local systems.

Your US degree will instead be a hindrance.

- New Comment: Stay in Europe. No one gives a shit about you unless you're super smart.

- New Comment: Do all the things people tell you to do for job hunting (projects, networking etc). Everything else is in the hands of the universe i.e out of your control.

But please, as an international student, remember that going back home is the most likely option. Don't stress yourself too much over this.

- New Comment: It's pretty damn hard. Thankfully though I think CS would get you a stem opt extension. I have one and it helped tremendously

Even though tbh, main reason I got a job is thanks to my dad's contact but I know few people who got OPT in business

Just requires you to apply to half a thousand job applications

- New Comment: if it's an average state university, I would just go somewhere else tbh

- New Comment: I had a very long academic career (some due to uncontrollable factors such as recession, some due to my own procrastination) spanning from 2007 through 2016. I did my masters (non-CS) worked for a year using my OPT, couldn't get a job in an e-verified company to extend my OPT for two more years, so went ahead and pursued Ph.D. studies which I finally finished in 2016 and got on OPT again for the second time with a higher degree and used it for three more years before getting on H1B.

Anyway, based on my experience, U.S. is a land of opportunities with definitely lesser competition compared to countries such as India or China with huge populations. Especially, more so, in STEM fields where there is a definite lack of available local workforce. Majority of American citizens don't even attend college, especially in STEM fields, as they deem it expensive and tougher to finish. This is where the immigrant intake has helped sustain the U.S. in spite that lack of local STEM workforce. That is why you see a lot of immigrants in STEM fields. There are definitely ample

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opportunities for CS majors if you develop the right skillset and good communication skills. Securing an internship will definitely help secure a full time job eventually. People like to work with people who they LIKE rather than who has more skilled. Human decisions are largely emotional rather than rational! If you get into a good school (say top-50 in U.S. News list), job fairs happen every semester where the FAANG and many Silicon Valley companies are regularly in attendance. Now the next decade would be AI adoption by many of these companies, so improve your ML and AI knowledge by taking relevant classes.

One advice I will give is to get an assistantship whether it is during Masters or Ph.D., that way you're not mounting any education debt and will also get paid for your part-time work as a graduate assistant along with health insurance coverage. I never amounted any debt all through my nine years of academic journey and always had an assistantship which paid for my living expenses as well. So essentially, even if I left US in 2016, I would have been debt-free.

If you don't believe me, just believe the data. There are about 4.9 million people of Indian-origin who are U.S. citizens whether they immigrated or natural-born citizens to Indian-origin parents. Additionally, there are about 2.7 million Indian people who are currently on green-cards and other various types of visas. If at least half of those 4.9 million made it through the same process as you and I, and majority of this 2.7 million is currently working to make it through, what's our reason to complain?

- New Comment: You're not structuring the problem correctly. The key question isn't how hard, in a cardinal sense, it is for any person to find any job, but how many lucky breaks must occur on your path to residency. The US immigration system has a lot of uncertainty. I know many very smart and credentialed people who did everything right and ended up going home because they got unlucky: graduated under the wrong president or into the wrong job market, got laid off, had a lazy or incompetent company lawyer, or, banally, lost the lottery 3 times. I know far more people who were worse than average and did everything wrong and are now legal residents.

In my opinion the expected value of this strategy is such that it's not worth it. But if you have a high risk tolerance, why

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not?

- New Comment: Put your OPT one month away from graduation day if possible, that gives you extra time

Edit: good thing you want to prepare, I literally started learning everything in my last semester lol, you can!

- New Comment: 2028 will be a good time to graduate . The coming recession of 2024/2025 due to rate hikes in 2023 will clear out by then. Also interest rates are going to cool down from the current by 2028 for sure .

It's highly unlikely you'll see another Covid in your lifetime. The last such thing of this scale was the Spanish flu over a 100 years ago , they are not common.

My guess is 2028 will have a booming and recovered economy, also don't forget it will be an election year ? and the economy will be in great shape .

Good luck

- New Comment: Well! Never let an employer or a recruiter know you are on opt. They'll cancel you right away. Just say you're waiting for your green card and you do not need sponsorship (which is not a lie if you're thinking of getting married someday) . H1B is reserved for PhD with exceptional research abilities to help the US community. It's not hard to find a job on OPT. Just don't shoot yourself in the leg by telling everyone you are international. Nobody gives a fuck. This is America. Where you laugh hysterically in front of the terrible jokes of your white supervisor:)))

- New Comment: OP another point why your country of birth is not fully irrelevant.

If you study well and do research in a lab , and get your name on a couple of papers ? you can potentially do eb2- NIW without an employer upon graduation. Once accepted you'll get your green card in a year or so if not born in India or China .

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So it is not as bad a question as you think ;)

- New Comment: Varies a lot. Based on comments here my university seems to have a very high job placement rate.

- New Comment: What do you mean by OPT job that doesn't sponsor H1b?

The market is abysmal right now. But if you're doing a bachelors degree it should be relatively easier to get internships during the summer. Unpaid part-time or remote internships count as well. If you complete 2-3 internships your chances to get a return offer will double exponentially

- New Comment: An average state university education isn't free. You'll be in debt and face the potential of working maximum of 3 years (if you're lucky to not have any delays between school and jobs) before being kicked out of the us.

An average dev job minus US student loans debt is not a better deal than average EU job.

- New Comment: If you are good at coding and got some work experience than you might find a position, its kind of a risk so just calculate all the risks associated with it like are you gonna take education loan or your financial conditions good enough to pay fee, try to get in to a university which offers co - op also try for scholarship.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: CS job market is very turbulent

as for OPT job, be sure to check OPT requirements - has to be clearly related to you degree program and max 12 months (can be extended for STEM OPT). A full time job is less likely to accept this without approving H1B than say, an internship because they don't want to hire you knowing you can't stay. In that case a focus on Canada would be better.

As for Canada (as a Canadian with US degree), Canadian top universities have a very strong reputation as opposed to

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even some top US schools. I'd recommend looking into Canadian programs as well, which integrate co-op into the degree

- New Comment: I came to the US at 18 and have been here for 13 years, and I've lost count how many people I know counted on H1-B visa, didn't win the lottery, and had to leave the country. I would have a back up plan. No one knows that will happen years from now, but it has always been quite challenging to even find a secure OPT job as many companies won't even consider someone who might require sponsorship in the future.

Depending on your school's visa office, doing a summer internship while studying can even subtract time off your post-graduate OPT, but you need work and internship experiences to be sufficiently competitive. My university didn't allow us to do internships as part of CPT, so I couldn't even do summer internships while in school for my degrees, as I wanted to keep max time for my OPT after graduating.

Title of the post: Mod Reminder: Illegal Advice Gets you a Ban

Body of the post: I have had to ban several people today for posting illegal advice.

****I want to be 100% clear.**** Illegal advice gets you a permanent ban. Full stop. No appeals. No warnings.

Bad, incorrect, or illegal advice will be removed. If this becomes a pattern, you will also be banned. No appeals.

I took over r/f1visa several years ago to address the constant bad advice for F-1 students. As we have substantially increased subscribers, I want to post this as a reminder. Additionally, as some of you may have noticed I added /u/GRRAWorld as a moderator to help with the increase in traffic.

Reminder: If you do not know, do not post.

We are looking for informed answers only. No illegal advice. There is enough bad advice out there already and

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individuals taking money from F-1 students and giving them bad advice. There are enough misconceptions out there and individuals who try to make sense of items and come up with weird ideas and concepts of how immigration works.

Finally, if you see bad advice, bad spots, etc. please report it using the report feature. We want this to be a strong community supporting F-1 students.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Also as a Post Script:

If anyone is interested in bringing together a FAQ for r/F1visa I would appreciate it. Between my real-life job and my personal life, I do not have the time to gather posts. If you are bored/free this summer and want to try and help let me know.

Title of the post: Does anyone suddenly feel out of place?

Body of the post: Not sure if this would be appropriate to post here. Mods please let me know if you want me to delete it.

I've been studying in the US for 5 years now. On track to graduate next year with a degree in Computer Engineering. This entire time I have been extremely focused on academic trying to get the best grades possible and get the the best projects to put on resume, which hopefully will lead to job prospects in the US. In retrospective, I have also missed out a lot when it comes to experiencing new cultures and trying different experiences that I would otherwise never get in my home country.

And more often than not, whenever I take my mind off of school, I suddenly feel really out of place. My surroundings doesn't seem real to me. The questions I keep having in my head when this happens is why am I here? What is the

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point? Essentially, I question stuff that I have done over the years if they would mean anything. When I was in that state of mind, I feel left behind, confused, and lost. Maybe this is reality and I'm not a part of it.

Just wondering if something similar has happened to anyone?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Uprooted solidarity.

- New Comment: Take some time to explore your surroundings and familiarize yourself with the culture around you, what's there to do, nature, maybe check out some towns nearby; there's lots to do and explore and lots of crazy people to meet with lots of crazy stories. You're more than just your degree

- New Comment: Try not to get too laser focused on your academics and aim to have some kind of balance between academics and social life. Involve yourself in student organizations - there are a ton out there if you're at a sizable university. I involved myself with a social organization and was able to find a close network of friends from other cultures. The first step is to put yourself out there, and the rest will follow.

- New Comment: You are not alone?

- New Comment: I'm from Mexico and I started feeling like that once I moved to the south to work on OPT, everybody out here is white and the culture is completely different from what I was used to when I studied at my university in a border town. Back then it just felt like I was in an upgraded version of Mexico. It's been helpful that I've found people over here who are friendly and have helped me lessen the culture shock. When I feel too overwhelmed I take trips to my homecountry and feel a sense of renewal. Maybe that could help you too

- New Comment: You might benefit from a session with a therapist. Sounds like anxiety to me.

Title of the post: Scam ICE agent phone call

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Body of the post: Hey! Just a warning for other people not to get scammed like I was. I am currently on F1 OPT.

Got a call from a pretending ICE agent, the number was really from an ICE office; they also called me with the number from the police in my city to pretended they had a warrant against me. The ICE agent will pretend that you have to do the immigration bond and send the money before getting arrested. That I couldn't tell anyone about this while I was getting investigated otherwise it would show that I have bad intentions and it will be against me in court. I know I should have seen it sooner but he didn't ask for money just at the beginning, he was really pretending to investigate me and asking a lot of questions about my intention in the US and so on... I spent maybe 3 hours on a call with him and the police calling me continuously to scare me before I sent the money. He showed me the papers, the Immigration Bond form and explain it to me and let me read through it. Even after he got the money he still played the game that he would see me the day after with the papers done, and I still got in call with him for a few hours after he got the money for sure. So I didn't sleep well because I was still thinking of being arrested and going to court. But in the morning when he said that there was a possible bank account in my name (then he waited maybe 1 hour so that his chief can check everything), then that I might have been a victim of identity theft and that's why everything was happening in the first place; then he asked me for more money (because the police had a new warrant because of the bank account that I didn't report) but that got sketchy when I told him I had no money left and he told me to ask someone in the US and I could just send him as much as possible (I was like "but wait the amount is not fixed? " and he told me that he will just advance the rest himself), and that I could even use target cards (he was still trying to make it official by showing the p6 of the immigration bond that you can use "coupons") but he also told me not to call the police because he was still trying to prevent them from arresting me... I am quite alone here so that's why I got scared and was ready to do anything not to go to a detention center.

Well, that's just a part of the story. Anyway, I lost a lot of money like that and maybe he stole some of my information. I already did everything I could to limit the damage now and I won't get my money back but I just want to let my fellow F1 (OPT or not) aware that 2 phone numbers that look like official phone numbers don't mean anything.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Thank you for sharing this experience man, it must been really tough. I had a little different experience but I want to share with you. I actually might got my SNN leaked through a spam email, and I haven?t had anything bad happen Yet. But I didn?t sleep and worried the whole week like crazy. I called all the banks and did everything I could like you. I understand how hard is it to deal and talk with officers and legal institutions because we have no idea how everything works here. I live alone too without any family or cousins here, so it was a fucking shitty experience. But don?t worry and go too hard on yourself, living here is already hard enough. You?re not alone. I hope everything works out the best of best for you.

- New Comment: So sorry this happened to you! I just received the same call 10 minutes ago and the phone number matched the official numbers as well! I suspected it was a scam because I requested to have the process done over mail or email and pretended that I had a hearing dissability and they insisted that I had to be alone. Then I asked to speak to a different officer and he just immediately had the police department call me. When I was on the phone with the "NYPD" I told them that they weren't allowed to arrest me under an ICE warrant because of new york states laws she went silent for a second. Then I knew for sure they were a scam. But the phone number part was definitely scary!!

- New Comment: I know this is a quite late, but I had something very similar and I sadly fell into the same trap as you did. I understand it must've been tough getting through this. I think they pulled off this call so elaborately such that it caught me off guard. I was legitimately scared when they were acting like real law enforcement and didn't mention about asking for money not until the second number stepped in. That was when I was caught off guard and did what I was not supposed to do.

- New Comment: Hey, just wanted to let you know that I also almost got scammed (and was told to drive, for "security," to a Sephora of all places) but started getting skeptical and Google/Reddit searched and saw this post which confirmed for me it was a scam and I didn't send any money. Really sorry the scam got you but I'm grateful that you posted about it anyway because it prevented me from getting scammed and I hope it helps others too!

- New Comment: [deleted]

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- New Comment: Oh my God, the EXACT same thing happened to me last Thursday!!! I'm so sorry you went through that too. I've been feeling so isolated and I'm still in shock.

Can I ask what (if any) action you've taken?? My banks, university, etc. are all taking it quite seriously, recommended that I file a report with FTC (in case of identity theft) and also a police report. 1st police officer I called took it VERY seriously and asked me to come to the station; by the time I printed all my evidence the (different) officer who received it just did not care at all. Not sure if it's worth my time! (Even if I don't get the money back; I would really love if they could trace these people down so it doesn't happen to anyone else like us)

- New Comment: Sorry about the experience. I've just experienced the same issue and I'm wondering if you have filed a fraudulent report or a police report regarding the incident and if there are anything I should do to protect myself. I didn't really send any money but did give them some general infos.

- New Comment: This exact thing just happened to me as well. I lost money too and am currently trying to get the charges reversed. What a bunch of absolute scumbags.

- New Comment: Hey thanks for sharing

A friend of mine received a call claiming to be ICE, and phone number matched. He said a lady with a thick accent introduced as Daisy Brown and said the same thing

Title of the post: Looking for affordable cities for recent grad with low living costs

Body of the post: I'm a recent grad living in Boston, and still on the lookout for a job. The rent here is super expensive, so I'm thinking about moving to a different state with lower housing and overall living expenses. Any suggestions for a good city that's affordable and has a young crowd? Also, I don't own a car, so I'm looking for a place that's walkable or has decent public transportation.

Thanks in advance for your help!

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'd suggest Chicago if your budget is \$1000 per month for rent and groceries!
- New Comment: Almost every city in the US is cheaper than Boston, as most sources show it in the top 10 most expensive cities in the US. You should look at other criteria that are important for you - can you handle the heat? Freezing temperatures? Do you care about sports or concerts?
- New Comment: Upstate Ny
- New Comment: Look into midwestern cities. They fit your requirements.
- New Comment: If you have relatives. It won't hurt living with them till you find a job. Especially if it's immediate family, saves so much money and stress.
- New Comment: Hey I'm in the same boat hmu if you wanna search together!
- New Comment: Atlanta is pretty walkable because of Beltline.
Living cost wise midwestern cities are the ones. St. Louis, Louisville etc.
- New Comment: !remind me in 2 weeks
- New Comment: Richardson in Texas has really good transportation and connectivity, you can get a 1 b for about 1000\$.
- New Comment: I used to live in Rochester NY. My 2 bd costed around 700 for me
- New Comment: Brooklyn. If you look hard enough, you can find a shared apartment for around \$800-\$900. Superb transportation, diverse food, people, and very stimulating. Can go to Manhattan any time. Great for meeting potential employers for coffee chats.
- New Comment: Cheaper rent + good public transportation? It's hard to get something like that in US. Best would be if you shared an apartment. Other than that nothing else is feasible
- New Comment: Look into state of Indiana. It has a rapidly growing tech sector and the apartments over there are

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affordable.

- New Comment: Go to a smaller city in the Midwest if you can handle living there.

- New Comment: If you wanna continue living in Massachusetts: Northampton. The PVTa system is very decent and if you just show them a student ID, transportation is mostly free. It's also a cute town and not so far away from either NYC or Boston.

- New Comment: Twin Cities, MN

Very underrated city but is home to various banks, insurance companies, and giants like 3M and Target. Public transport is one of the best in US I would argue - at least in the metropolitan area. Rent is relatively cheap, so are groceries and utilities. You get the small city feel with some big city events with a good food and cultural scene.

Only con is that winters are very cold. But if you can bear through that, it's worth it.

- New Comment: Atlanta is the best of both worlds.

I lived in a shared apartment and the rent at tops was 500ish. It has decent public transportation in the form of MARTA. It's an even better city if you have the budget to splurge more on literally anything. It's a tier-1 city of the US but offers everything for just about anyone from low to high income people.

- New Comment: Go to college towns somewhere like further from Boston, New York. Even on the south west, mid west. Have a roommate.

- New Comment: Kirksville, Missouri

- New Comment: I think study in USA is wrong decision. No jobs available there, too costly study and living both. Visa things are totally uncertain. Companies are not taking OPT students. Hence total wastage of money, time and efforts.

- New Comment: You could come to Houston. What's your major?

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- New Comment: georgia !

Title of the post: Changing employer when STEM OPT application is pending with USCIS

Body of the post: Hello everyone, I wanted to share some information that might be helpful for a few of you here. I am currently on an F1 visa and have recently completed my OPT. My STEM extension application is pending with USCIS. During this time, I changed my job, and I had to go through a specific process to do so. Here's a step-by-step breakdown of the process:

1. I obtained both the evaluation and final evaluation section in my I-983 (last page) from my previous employer, ensuring they were filled out and signed correctly. I then reported this change to my university within 10 days.
2. I filled out and signed a new I-983 training plan with my new employer. This form was submitted to my university within 10 days of the job change. After reviewing the documents, my university issued a new I-20, which included my updated employer details, along with a letter from the Designated School Official (DSO) addressed to USCIS. This letter outlined the change in employment and provided my new employer's information, including their E-Verify number.
3. Following my university's instructions, I uploaded the new I-20 and the DSO letter to the evidence section of my USCIS STEM application via the myuscis account.

Satisfying I9 requirements for the new employer:

When I had to show documentation for satisfying I9 requirements, I gave them a combination of my I94, receipt notice for STEM application from USCIS and a copy of my expired EAD card. You can also show the authenticity of your documents by referring the "Automatic Employment Authorization Document (EAD) extension" section of STEM OPT receipt notice that mentions the documents that satisfy the requirements for I-9. Once I shared these with my HR, I was good to go with my I9. Hope this helps. Here is an additional link that might help you:

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<https://www.uscis.gov/eadautoextend>

Note: When I informed my university about the employment change, they took care of updating my SEVIS portal with the new employment information. However, I was still responsible for updating my personal information, such as my address, within the portal.

I hope this information helps anyone in a similar situation or who may face these circumstances in the future.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Thank you for sharing this. Does one need to submit the evaluation form if one has been with that employer for less than 6 months ?

- New Comment: Even I'm in the same situation. I have applied for Stem OPT with previous employer and then changed to new Employer during my last 90 days of OPT period. I have provided the latest offer letter to my DSO along with 1-983 from my new Employer. The latest i20 which DSO shared has my previous employer ended in OPT section whereas in STEM OPT section, I have both my previous and current employer in the I20. When I checked with DSO, he said he can't remove previous employer from STEM OPT section in I20 since I have applied STEM with previous employer and can be removed only after the approval decision.

I haven't uploaded my latest I20 and DSO letter as evidence to my STEM application. Its been almost 95 days and still waiting for decision

- New Comment: I am in the same situation but I notified after 30 days. My DSO updated the employment records. So how many days will it take to show up in SEVP portal?

- New Comment: Thank you - this is super helpful!

- New Comment: Thank you. I am in a similar situation and had doubts about satisfying I9 req for employer. Very helpful.

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- New Comment: Thank you. This is helpful. I would like to know how I can proceed if my employment ends with a current employer and I'm still looking for a job, while my STEM OPT is processing. Does the gap count as unemployment days? Let me know if anyone's got information on this :)
- New Comment: Thank you. I'm in a similar situation too. However, is the letter from DSO mandatory? I have obtained proof of e-verify from my employer but not the letter from DSO
- New Comment: How did you report your expiration date in I9. Did you put the ead expiration date or did you add 180days and put that date.

Title of the post: Sevis Terminated

Body of the post: hi, so i just found out like a few weeks ago that my status was terminated when i tried to extend my i-20. Fall semester, i took 10 credits instead of the required 13. My advisor and I had planned the classes I would take but there was one that was filled up. I ended up picking another class in replacement obviously but my advisor said I should still contact the professor if he can manually add me to the class. I contacted him and a few days later and he said he has added me to the class and looks forward to working with me. Since I got this confirmation I dropped one class cus i didn't want to take too many classes. The class was one of those classes that starts at the last half of the semester. I could not see the class on my portal but i wasn't too worried because sometimes it takes a while to show

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Aren't DSOs supposed to notify the student via email/ mail that they dropped below the allowed amount of units required to maintain legal status? That's insane simply terminating a student without any prior warning
- New Comment: ****Continued**** so long story short I contacted him saying I couldn't see the class and he told me to go to the tech center, nothing was wrong then i asked my advisor and she said that I wasn't added by the looks of it. I have applied for reinstatement and I have evidence of our full email conversation showing that he assured me that I was added to the class. Should I be worried?

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- New Comment: Can't believe tomorrow DSO didn't confirm with you before terminating your status.
- New Comment: For my Masters degree, full time was 14 units and above, so it varies by school and program
- New Comment: Are you an undergrad or a grad student?
- New Comment: Please contact an immigration attorney because they can give you a very feasible solution. The DSO is so inconsiderate and seems like they don't know what they're doing. Check out avvo.com to get in touch with a lawyer. I did the same for my termination.
- New Comment: I have been at the same school for six years and have never left the country under my F-1 visa. However, I have two SEVIS numbers (two records). As a result, my F-1 status became inactive, and my new I-20 was denied. Should I file an I-539 for F-1 reinstatement? Do I need a lawyer? Can anyone refer one?
- New Comment: I had a very similar situation but after taking advice from a lot of people, I had gone to Mexico(I live in Texas) to reenter the US and got my new sevis activated. I heard that the reinstatement process is very long and can't assure an approval.
- New Comment: Isn't 9 credits the required? What degree are u on?
- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: STEM OPT layoff seek help

Body of the post: Hey everyone. I'm currently on my STEM OPT (B.S in Business Analytics - expire 7/2025) and I got laid off few months ago. I have until 6/2024 to find job but the journey has been hopeless. After submitting hundreds of applications, I barely pass the resume screening.

What jobs should I apply for to stop the unemployment clock? Is there anyway to lengthen the time so I can look for more jobs? I don't really want to go back to my country at the moment. My family nudged me to talk with lawyers to see if there are options that I can lengthen the time to search job here but I feel like the lawyer will just tell the same thing

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that I already know like trying to apply for jobs or look for a master since I don't want to sign up for a random master just to lengthen the time here.

If anyone knows anything, please give me some pointers since I'm kinda desperate with this job search journey. TIA.

Edit: my uncle has filed gc for my mom 10 yrs ago (still waiting) so I don't want to do anything illegal that will affect my potential gc

Edit: I have secure a job at a small startup now. Thank you for your support everyone.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No, with STEM OPT there isn't a way to lengthen the time.

Once you run out of unemployment days, you lose OPT and must leave the US (no grace period).

You can try to find a job, especially H-1B cap exempt jobs, from abroad -- but the odds are really poor in this market.

- New Comment: The only way to maintain your F-1 status stay in the US during STEM extended OPT is to not exceed the 150 days of unemployment. Unlike post-completion OPT, you can't volunteer in your field. The position has to be paid. It has to be over 20 hours per week. It has to be in your field. It has to be for an E-Verified employer. It has to have an I-983 completed and submitted, and you have to have a position with a supervisor to sign off there on your training.

Otherwise, your F-1 student non-immigrant status comes to an end immediately upon exceeding 150 days of unemployment. There's no waiver of those requirements.

- New Comment: [deleted]

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- New Comment: I hope you'll find a job soon - from a fellow vietnamese (unfortunately im not based in the US)
- New Comment: Let connect. I am Viet too and I was laid off in my initial OPT. Actively looking for job too.
- New Comment: Go phd
- New Comment: What is your nationality and your masters ?
- New Comment: Can I dm you? I?m somewhat in the same boat. MS business analytics and my uncle also filed for my mother?s green card..
- New Comment: which uni did you go to if not a secret
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Did you complete your bachelors or masters degree? Also which university did you study in?
- New Comment: There are accredited universities that offer Summer admission for master?s degree in stem fields. Try looking for those. Even if the deadline for summer has passed, you can still apply for Fall, go back to VN and come back to the US for Fall.
- New Comment: Let connect. I am Viet too and I was laid off in my initial OPT. Actively looking for job too.
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Take admission at Computer Systems Institute located in Boston and Chicago that have day 1 cpt programs and have weekend classes.
- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Can I work as background actor while on OPT?

Body of the post: Hi all, currently on my first year of OPT (will have to get STEM extension soon) and there is casting for extra in my area (part-time gig)

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Told them I have work authorization, but I am still not sure if you are allowed to get paid for multiple jobs while you're on OPT.

Edit: Called the casting lady, explained to her that my authorization is only for my current day job and I can't work with them, but she kept repeating about them being in union with SAG or sth. Anyway, seems like not a lot of people is aware of how f1 visa work in the theatre industry.

Edit 1: Contacted my DSO and she said it's fine as long as it is under 20 hours (which does not qualify as another OPT job) and I can get paid too :>

Edit 2: Damn, I didn't pay much attention to the post over the weekend. Anyway, yea, I had to call my DSO again this morning to double check before going forward with the casting and it seems that it is unlikely I can go forward with the gig

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Unless your major is acting/theatre (which seems unlikely since you said you'll be applying for STEM extension), you cannot do an acting gig since it's not related to your major of study.

- New Comment: Your DSO is absolutely incorrect. You can only work in jobs related to your major, even if under 20h.

There will be consequences (including denial of future visas/STEM extensions) if you do this and USCIS finds out (e.g. through tax). "My DSO said it's okay" won't be a valid defense, and your DSO won't face any consequences for this either -- it'll fall on you.

- New Comment: [deleted]

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- New Comment: In your edit your DSO is _very_ wrong. Your OPT authorization _only_ allows you to do practical training in your field of study. There is absolutely no exception related to working fewer than 20 hours. Your DSO was either drunk or you understood them incorrectly.

This is the type of bad information online that can get a lot of people into trouble quickly.

- New Comment: No, do not do it. I know it sucks. Side gigs can definitely be fun and a cool opportunity, but if it's not related to major then you cannot do it, whether it's paid or free.

- New Comment: Unless it is related to your field of study, you cannot do this. The only exception would be if you apply for and are granted compelling circumstances employment authorization.

- New Comment: Don't do it

- New Comment: Even if you do it for free. Do not get it documented. Employment is still employment regardless if it's paid or not.

- New Comment: If you are not a theater major, then this is a NO GO for OPT. Yes, it sounds fun, but don't risk any long term plans in the US by doing this. USCIS will always find out.

- New Comment: I don't think the first year of OPT is very strict - if so, I studied computer science and I am a teacher - currently! I am not sure of the whole situation but maybe find out

- New Comment: Honestly, I really don't know the answer. But it sounds like a fun opportunity regardless. Good luck.

- New Comment: Glad you received an answer from your dso! So technically we can do small gigs not related to our degree like acting as long as it's under 20 hrs right?

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: My F1 OPT is expiring soon and I am unemployed. What are my options?

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Body of the post: So basically the title. For now I am doing unpaid job at my university so my unemployment days are safe. But what to do after OPT expires? And what are my options to avoid going home?

Also are there any consulting companies that can help me?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you are eligible for STEM OPT based on your major then you need to find an e-verified employer that will offer you paid job before your Current OPT expires. You need to apply for STEM OPT before your current OPT expires, otherwise you will fall into the 60 day grace period to leave US.

Other than that if you did Bachelor's then you can enrol for Masters and if Masters then you can consider PhD but remember you can only use OPT once per degree level.

- New Comment: How are you surviving my friend?

- New Comment: > Also are there any consulting companies that can help me?

Personally have never done that, and I won't recommend it. Lots of scamming has happened in that space, and if you're not vigilant, you will get the short end of the stick. Job searching is more than just a numbers game these days -- you need to stand out.

> But what to do after OPT expires? And what are my options to avoid going home?

- work visa like H1B if you find a company that's willing to sponsor

- self-employment if you're motivated enough; find a company if you're ambitious enough, and eventually enough

Reddit Posts

credentials might lead you to an O-1 which is a great work visa for talented individuals.

- Postgrad degree to become an F1 again -- it's just a temporary measure to potentially wait out the economy but also gives you time to improve your profile.

- New Comment: well too late for h1b i think unless u get a job tmr and do sponsor / even that is lottery + non stem i guess since u are not talking about extension going master is only option when is your end date ? unpaid jobs should be avoided at all cost since it really doesnt help much your resume nor salary expectation + using parents money good luck op

- New Comment: Come back home my dear son! We are waiting for you ?

- New Comment: What was your major?

- New Comment: I think for STEM OPT Extension you would need a full time job that actually pays and has e-verify number, so I don't know how to help you. Do you have a romantic partner who is a U.S. citizen?

- New Comment: Go back to school. Day 1 cpt is an option too.

- New Comment: Cant u extend your opt...by doing volunteer or working unpaid in the university?

Title of the post: Lack of interviews and going forward. Please help!

Body of the post: I'm in a desperate need of a job. I recently got laid off and I'm on my STEM OPT. I don't have a masters yet but I've applied to over 500 apps with 1 year of experience. Every time I mention that I need sponsorship, my interview stops and the process finishes. I feel like companies coldly reject me because I need sponsorship for H1b. Should I lie that I don't need sponsorship while applying online and continue the job hunt? I really need experience more importantly. I was laid off in November. I have some 3 months left with unemployment days + grace period. Any tips to get a tech job with 1 yoe that needs sponsorship?

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: I was in the exact position a few months ago, and omitted the information that I need sponsorship.
- When my new employer decided to hire me, I brought it up in the final interview and they had no issues with it, since it was an investment worth for them.
- Target small-midsize companies and look at consulting firms too.
- Tailor resume to include keywords aggressively, every application that seemed a good fit for my experience I catered my resume to the role description to the best of my abilities.

Lastly, do not lose hope! Wishing you best of luck

- New Comment: Pay attention: if you use up your unemployment you don't have a grace period. Plan accordingly.
- New Comment: I would plan for back up like going back to school just to be safe
- New Comment: I could recommend a company. Dm me
- New Comment: With Stem OPT, you are allowed to work anywhere in your field without sponsorship, at the current time.
- New Comment: Try day1CPT. Dm for referral
- New Comment: For spite, I am plucking former colleagues out of a company/dept that I know they hate as much as I did. When I get a call from a recruiter, I tell them that I'm not currently looking--but that I know someone who is...and I request a \$2,500 finder's fee. Since I left I have been successful with getting two of them out (mainly to piss off my previous director). However, one guy, who I know is a really experienced professional, and is dying to get out--peeks the recruiter's interest--until I tell them that he's a Canadian citizen. It's happened at least 3 times. I asked one of the recruiters why that's not feasible, and he told me that it's just expensive for companies to sponsor.
- New Comment: .
- New Comment: Cfbr

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Title of the post: Why is my f1 expiration day so early?

Body of the post: I applied for an f1 visa for going to college on 29 january. However when I looked at it, it says the expiration date is on 16 january 2024. What does that mean? Does that mean i should leave before that date or does that mean i should arrive before that date? Or what does it mean? Thank you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Last day for you to enter the US is January 16th

You definitely should arrive before that day!

Keep in mind flight delays and so on.

I'm curious which embassy you applied at?

And is your visa single or multiple entries?

- New Comment: Different countries have different F1 Visa timings, the highest I've seen is 5 years and the lowest I've seen is 90 days. As long as your Form I-20 is up to date you'll be okay. The passport visa is only to enter the USA

- New Comment: Visa validity period (and the number of entries you're allowed on it) is actually based on the reciprocity tables listed

[here](<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country/Madagascar.html>). Unfortunately for you, OP, the reciprocity table for Madagascar means you get 3 months to use the visa and a single entry. Most countries get a multi-entry, 5-year visa, but there's definitely a LOT of variation (mine was 4 years as a Brazilian for example; Russian students get 1 year; Senegalese students get 3 years, and so on)

- New Comment: That's interesting. I thought F-1 visas had 5 years of validity but I guess it varies by country.

- New Comment: I'm from Chile and the treat the US have with my country regarding student VISA have this short period of time. For some reason, I don't know exactly. My wife is from Brazil and she got 5 years. But I second the

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comment of @SomePersonalData. You only need the VISA to enter the country. It can expires and you?ll be fine, BUT, if you go out at some point, YOU HAVE TO RENEW THE VISA if you want to enter again!

- New Comment: A visa allows you to enter the US. That?s pretty much it, your status on the other hand is decided by your I20. Meaning even if your visa expires, as long as you are enrolled to full time studies you are fine. IF you need to leave the US, you will have to apply to a new F1 regardless. As it is stated before, F1 visa dates wildly changes depending on the country of origin, in your case, considering the rejection rates to countries from Africa, lucky to even have the visa in the first place.

- New Comment: I have the same situation, if I leave to go back to my country for my vacation, do I need to apply again for a visa and pay for the appointment again?

And is it guaranteed I get approved or?

- New Comment: It?s the date you before which you are allowed to enter the US

Check ur i94 after enter it should be D/S

Title of the post: I had my F1 visa interview today

Body of the post: I am writing this post for people who have reservations and are very scared to go for their interview.

I made a post on this sub a couple of weeks ago (deleted) about going for an F-1 visa whilst having a pending approved I-130 petition, and the advice I received was that it is impossible because I?m showing immigrant intent and F-1 is a non-immigrant visa. Yet, I was approved and the VO did not ask about my green card situation.

Ultimately, please take the advice on this sub with a grain of salt including mine, only you can decide how to approach things, so trust your gut and have some faith.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Your I-130 was not processed and in the system. This is why you were able to be approved.

With it in the system it really comes down to the Consular Officer and their call. Technically it should be a denial per the FAM.

- New Comment: Congratulations:) Have my interview coming up and really anxious about it. Success stories help!

- New Comment: Nice. Congrats!

- New Comment: I had the exact problem and even mine got approved without asking questions related to it. Maybe it helped in my case since I was going to US to pursue my bachelor's and I had also gotten a pretty good scholarship from the university.

- New Comment: count yourself lucky

- New Comment: Could you please give details about how it went? The questions asked etc? Would really appreciate it

- New Comment: Can you please tell me what the issue was? whats an I-130 petition?

- New Comment: Btw under what category was your approved I-130 for and I'm so happy for you congrats!!!!!!?

- New Comment: Which consulate was this?

Title of the post: US visa approval. Approved at the consulate on the spot. Status has changed to a

Body of the post: Before it was still showing ?Approved - Your visa is in final processing. If you have not received it in more than 10 working days, please see the webpage for contact information of the embassy or consulate where you submitted your application?.

Now it's still approved but the status messaging has changed to ?approved- The consular officer has approved your

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application subject to final processing by the consular section that is necessary to issue your visa. When that processing is complete, the status will change to "Issued". However, a final screening step must still be completed prior to issuance that could lead a consular officer to conclude that you are not eligible for a visa. If that occurs, the consular officer will notify you that your application has been denied and your status will change to "Refused"

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Also it's odd that the case last updated date hasn't changed.
- New Comment: Maybe ur right about them approving but it's just not printed yet
- New Comment: Hey guys I'm in the same situation can you update if your visa gets issued
- New Comment: I think it's a standard one. Mine was moved to issued later that day and picked up later that day
- New Comment: Visa has been issued!! No issues
- New Comment: Anyone of you all having dropbox appointment and showing this msg pls reply back or DM?
- New Comment: Same status for me. Waiting for Issued status.
- New Comment: IT IS NOT VERY CLEAR WHETHER THE VISA IS NOW APPROVED AND WAITING FOR ISSUE!1 SINCE THE LAST STATEMENT IS CONFUSING??
- New Comment: Hi everyone. I had an interview at the **US Embassy** on the **15th** of **December** and my visa got approved. On the same day, the online status of my visa was Approved with the following statement and has not changed yet.

Did anyone experience the same as I am facing nowadays? It is frustrating.

***The consular officer has approved your application subject to final processing by the consular section that is necessary to issue your visa. When that processing is complete, the status will change to "Issued". However, a final

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screening step must still be completed prior to issuance that could lead a consular officer to conclude that you are not eligible for a visa. If that occurs, the consular officer will notify you that your application has been denied and your status will change to "Refused**".

- New Comment: Hi , I am in same Boat , Gave interview for B1/B2 on 15th Feb 2024 , have the same msg , not received passport yet , What should i do ? quebec Consulate

- New Comment: Mine is currently approved on 04/11th. I'm here waiting when it will change to issued. You guys know how long it takes?

- New Comment: This is crazy, I recieved this message after it showed that my fiance's visa was issued.

The consular officer has approved your application subject to final processing by the consular section that is necessary to issue your visa. When that processing is complete, the status will change to "Issued". However, a final screening step must still be completed prior to issuance that could lead a consular officer to conclude that you are not eligible for a visa. If that occurs, the consular officer will notify you that your application has been denied and your status will change to "Refused".

- New Comment: I gave my B1/B2 visa interview at Delhi Embassy on 29-April-2024. Officer announced my visa is approved. Since 29th April, CEAC status shows as approved. I have not got any updates if Passport is sent to courier. What is the typically wait time from the interview to when visa is issued and stamped in passport. What is the procedure to expedite this ?

- New Comment: My interview @hyderabad consulate was on 20 April, and the status showing approved and the last update is 21 April.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: It's similar status for my sister.

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Case created: 11 Apr 2024

Case last updated: 17 Apr 2024

It is showing approved since 17 Apr 2024 (15 business days till today).

What should be done?

- New Comment: Hello, I wanted to ask if anyone went through the following: I presented my J1 visa interview today and it was conditionally approved while they verify my study documents, I have everything good and up to date, I wanted to know how long it can take for them to verify it for my visa is issued and they give me the passport. Thanks c:

- New Comment: My Status is Approved with the same message since 30 April 2024. Status did not change in between for these days! is there anyone else who is facing similar issue and were interviewed in April at Chennai?

- New Comment: My B1/B2 interview was on 10th may, the status says its approved but it hasn't changed to issued. Its 14th day now. Im worried

- New Comment: I've been waiting 15 Business days now, how long has it taken for you so far?

- New Comment: Hi. I was interviewed on 25 Apr. The status has been stuck at 'approved' since then. It's been 11 business days so far. Does anyone know how to contact the Toronto consulate? Is it the final security clearance or legally mandated review that is consuming time?

- New Comment: After my interview right next day it was approved. It is showing today after 2 days issued.

- New Comment: My interview was on July 2 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, the B1/B2 visa is approved. No Aupdate since then, the status is not changing to Issued. Today 10 work days has past sice the day of interview. My brother got the passport with visa next day.

Is it normal that it takes so long?

- New Comment: Hello Everybody,

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I am in a same boat as all of you. I attended the interview for US B1/B2 with my brother on 2nd of July. The interview was in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The visa for both of us was approved same day. My brother got his passport with issued visa on the 3rd of July, just next day after the aproval.

However I am still waiting for the staus of my visa to be changed from Approved to Issued. It is 18th of July today.

Since the day of interview 11 work days past.

Please share your experice in comments.

Is it normal that it takes so long ?

How many wok days di it take for you to get the visa issued?

Thanks you very much for your response.

- New Comment: Mine shows the same did your visa got denied or issued?

- New Comment: Which university?

- New Comment: Mine shows the same. It was approved on the spot as well.

?The consular officer has approved your application subject to final processing by the consular section that is necessary to issue your visa. When that processing is complete, the status will change to "Issued". However, a final screening step must still be completed prior to issuance that could lead a consular officer to conclude that you are not eligible for a visa. If that occurs, the consular officer will notify you that your application has been denied and your status will change to "Refused".?

When was your visa approved?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I'm getting the same message and it was approved on Monday May 22nd.

Reddit Posts

I checked how long my past one's took to get approved and issued and it was only two day's after approval, it's been technically 5 days and it still show's the same message.

For the ones that got theirs (first of all congrats :)!) how long did it take for the message to go from approved to issued?

- New Comment: Visa gang !!!

- New Comment: Hey mine shows the same message aswell. But I had my interview today ? ik it's too soon to expect that message to change, but when will it get updated?

- New Comment: Had the same status. It changed to "Issued" in a day. Not to worry; just be patient.

- New Comment: Can someone please give me some information on this message please and if your application was approved in the end ?

The consular officer has approved your application subject to final processing by the consular section that is necessary to issue your visa. When that processing is complete, the status will change to "Issued". However, a final screening step must still be completed prior to issuance that could lead a consular officer to conclude that you are not eligible for a visa. If that occurs, the consular officer will notify you that your application has been denied and your status will change to "Refused".

- New Comment: Hi everyone. I applied for interview waiver last week and have this new ?approved? status. The last line is so scary and confusing. Can someone guide me what this means? Does this mean admin processing? Did anyone have issues after this status?

- New Comment: Hello did you get any update?

- New Comment: Hello guys, when your visa was ?issued? - did they write that if at any time additional information is

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discovered that indicates that you may no longer be eligible for a visa, the US government can revoke your visa?

- New Comment: Same situation with my wife n kid, applied via dropbox at mumbai on 3rd Aug, its the same message since 17th Aug, kid passport is dispatched but wife

Status not

Moving from approved to issue

- New Comment: Hi all. My timeline...

Mailed documents from Calgary - 21st Aug

Received by consulate - 24th Aug

Administrative processing (refused) - 26th

Same but the update date changed to 28th

Received an email to attach few docs - 29th

I am waiting for further update.

- New Comment: Has anyone been asked to email more documents (interview waiver)? How long did it take to show "approved" in the status after the email?

- New Comment: Hi I am facing the same challenge with my US visa.

it's been 9 calendar days since my interview, my visa status says "Approved" but status hasn't changed to Issued in last 9 days. This is for toursit visa B1/b2 Anyone faced the same issue? how long does it take for status to change from approved to Issued. I am worried I have an international flight in next 4 days I need my passport :(

- New Comment: I gave interview on 16th nov and on 17th it was updated to "Approved" status. Next it was updated on 22nd nov, but still the status is the same, I.e. "Approved ". It's 6 days already, don't know what to do.

- New Comment: Even I am facing the same issue with a B1/B2 visa. I have tried contacting the embassy 5-6 times via email but didn't receive a single reply. My interview was on Oct 20th, Hyderabad. Is there any way to contact them?

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- New Comment: Mine has 2 months as Approved

Hasnt changed

- New Comment: Same for me. And same message. Ive been waiting 18 days now.

Applied to a B1 for a temporary business trip. I got approved on the spot at the embassy, and when I went to pick up my passport 3 days later, there was no stamp. I was told they are waiting for ?DC clearance?. It actually is administrative processing in some cases. Someone above said it?s not.

For some background, I have an approved green card petition and used to work in the Us with an h1 visa. My theory is that this might be conflicting with this B1 non-immigrant application.

- New Comment: Where was your interview?

- New Comment: I had interview last dec, and my visa got approved for the consular lady, but my visa status is not changed any thing it shows me:

Application received

Case last update: 08-Jan-2024

Your case is open and ready for your interview, fingerprints, and required documents. If you have already had your interview, please check your status after two business days. If no interview was required, please check back in two business days for the status of your application.

What?s the solution?

- New Comment: Did anyone had the ?approved? status for more than 10 business days? Tried contacting the consulate but I?m just told to wait

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Anyone apply for H-1B renewal in Ottawa, Canada and got the same message? How long does it take to get in ISSUED status?

- New Comment: Anyone apply for H1-B visa at Dubai consulate recently and got same day issued or how many days did it take for issuance?

- New Comment: The consular officer has approved your application subject to final processing by the consular section that is necessary to issue your visa. When that processing is complete, the status will change to "Issued". However, a final screening step must still be completed prior to issuance that could lead a consular officer to conclude that you are not eligible for a visa. If that occurs, the consular officer will notify you that your application has been denied and your status will change to "Refused".

My visa has approved. but its already 2 business days. But still status is approved. How many days it will take more to issue... Is this message is normal.??? can anyone let me know

- New Comment: Got an interview for L1 in Frankfurt on May 10th, and first got an admin processing, then the visa was approved on May 16, as of today May 29 - still not issued. Tried to call, and write emails, but nothing is working. Is anyone having the same issues with Frankfurt applications?

- New Comment: My sisters B1/B2 was approved in Mumbai Us consulate on 28th May 2024 and status changed to Issued on 31st May 2024. Till date status is not changed. May i know when her visa will be ready to pick up?

- New Comment: Hi guys, I dropped my documents at chennai on 13th May 2024 for COS from F1 to H1B. It's approved on 14th May 2024 and I don't see any changes since then. Anyone here facing the delays in getting the status changed from approved to issued?

- New Comment: I went for an interview on 29 may and my status remained approved for 8 business days now they had asked me for more information through email and I sent them but nothing changed anyone knows or in same situation

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Same as mine:

Visa Status on CEAC: Approved - May 30th; Issued - June 12; Embassy Email for Passport Collection - June 12th

Just be patient, its a standard additional security checks, 99% of the time, you will have visa issued, unless you have committed some crimes/felony or have been involved in terrorist activities.

- New Comment: 8 months nothing

- New Comment: I just saw this on the CEAC link.

"The consular section has completed processing your application and your visa has been issued. If you do not receive your passport and visa within 10 working days, please contact the embassy or consulate where you submitted your application. If at any time additional information is discovered that indicates you may no longer be eligible for a visa, the U.S. government may revoke your visa"

How long will it take to receive communication on pick up?

- New Comment: Hey I am in this situation where it has been 10 days since my visa got approved. My friends who went after me go their visa. Can anyone shed some light on this?

- New Comment: I just saw this on the CEAC link.

"The consular section has completed processing your application and your visa has been issued. If you do not receive your passport and visa within 10 working days, please contact the embassy or consulate where you submitted your application. If at any time additional information is discovered that indicates you may no longer be eligible for a visa, the U.S. government may revoke your visa"

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How long will it take to receive communication on pick up in Nigeria?

- New Comment: Anyone applied for US Visa from Singapore? I was interviewed on 10th June, my status still says approved! Any idea when will it change to issued? Anyone had the same experience in Singapore?
- New Comment: Finally, visa has been issued on June 20, 2024. It was approved on May 16th, 2024 at Chennai.
- New Comment: I am in the same boat but the difference is that my F-1 visa got approved 15 days ago and the status still shows "approved" instead of "issued". I am worried. Is it normal?
- New Comment: Is it wise to contact the embassy/consulate if it is not changed to issued from approved?
- New Comment: My appointment was 6th June. Its been 23 days and still the same status as approved :/
- New Comment: hi, guys. mine still says appointment. i had to use a different ds-160, but I'm wondering why it hasn't updated
- New Comment: MY visa was approved 2 JUNE 2024 But still not issue, any body can tell me how long take to issue .
- New Comment: My Dad?s B2 visa was approved on June12th and since then no update. Passport is still with embassy. Meanwhile my mom and sister got their passport back. They all interviewed together in Delhi. When can I expect my dad?s passport back?
- New Comment: I had Dropbox appt on June 7 (h1 & h4) and our status changed to approved on June 14, it?s been 3 weeks now (July 8) status is still the same, it hasn?t changed to issued. Has anyone faced similar situation or is in same timeline pls let me know.

Title of the post: What are some of the problems you have faced as an international student?

Body of the post: Hey folks, what are some of the problems you have had as an international student in US? It could be problems related to immigration system/law, cultural gap, finding housing, language barrier etc. Or anything which you

Reddit Posts

felt was more difficult for you as an international student compared to someone who was in state or out of state.

We are two alums from UIUC who are interested in how we could make the lives of international students easier. As we were international students ourselves, we are aware of some problems but are curious to see if the experience of international students has significantly improved and if most problems we encountered were common for other folks or were they unique to us.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Work restrictions - every other grad student in my program has secret second and third jobs because our stipends aren't even close to a living wage. International students are risking deportation, not just a slap on the wrist from the university.

No access to loans - my student health insurance has to be paid in a lump sum at the start of the fall semester (and I don't get paid in the summer). The university's advice is to get a loan. I obviously can't, as an international student. They just do the email equivalent of a shrug.

The anxiety of maybe getting turned away at immigration every time I travel. My husband and child and entire life are in the States.

Lack of understanding of any of these issues by admin and faculty- all of the focus is on like "here's how to not plagiarize and how to hug people respectfully, you foreign weirdoes".

- New Comment: I wish F-1 visa can be renewed within the US

- New Comment: Regardless of cultural background or country of origin, there are difficulties the overwhelming majority of international students face. From my experience I'll list a few:

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- Work authorization:

This in my opinion is by far the biggest challenge F1 students face. Work authorization under F1 is aggressively restricted and any violation, even unintentionally could result in immediate termination. In addition to the regular difficulties just about everyone encounters in the job market, international students have extra difficulties due to the limited nature of work authorization under F1. So many international students end up missing out on wonderful job opportunities they're qualified for simply based on their status. It can be frustrating for most international student because this is a factor out of their control.

- Tuition Fees and cost of living:

A few international students are blessed enough to get fully funded scholarships or assistantships or even out of state tuition waivers which helps alleviate the financial cost of their educational journey. However this isn't the case for most international students who in many cases have to pay out of state tuition fees regardless of how long they've been in the US and are not eligible for 99% of student loan programs within the US. Some international students have found themselves in situations where they've had to drop out of school for financial reasons and dropping out of school as an international student almost always means termination and potentially deportation. Due to financial hardship, many international students end up risking jeopardizing their visa status by getting a job where they get paid under the table.

- Visa renewal:

In some cases, for some international students, a visit outside of the US could be a deadly mistake. There is never a guarantee you will be able return on your student visa in the event your visa stamp is expired and you need to renew. A denial of your visa is always a possibility and hence, some international students come to the US and never go back home even to visit because their visa stamp has expired and they fear it will not be renewed.

In my opinion, so many rules surrounding the student visa need reform. I understand studying in the US is a privilege not a right. However international students deserve better considering how much they contribute. The US has at least 24

Reddit Posts

Billion-dollar companies that were founded by international students. Even Elon Musk was once an international student.

- New Comment: Being allowed to work. As an international student, I found myself suddenly with no financial support. Got divorced in a blink of an eye and had my 3 kids to care for. I was desperate for a job. I think we should be allowed to work as long as it's legit. The whole 20 hrs on campus, or filing for a work authorization for undergoing financial troubles won't do it in dire situations.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Honestly f-1 visa should be dual intent. Since I wanted to only do OPT and still be connected to home and fly back home, I didn't really look much for H1-B sponsorships in case immigration officers think I tried to deceive them. I'm not the only one that's done that. The US will lose a lot of foreign talent that will mainly contribute to the economy through taxes. I don't regret my time here but I wouldn't recommend my friends to come here for education.

- New Comment: The biggest farce is that on my grad student assistantship I am only "allowed" to work 19.5 h per week, so that I am just barely not eligible for benefits. Try to finish a PhD working only until Wednesday lunch.

Needless to say the remaining ~40.5 h my advisor requires me to work are essentially slave labor. (Except slaves get food and housing, which is also not included)

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I'm having a horrible time finding a decent savings/checking account rn

- New Comment: Hi! Sorry for late response here. I'm an international student graduated in US during 2020. Since I couldn't find a job in the US, I had to go home. I didn't even apply for an OPT at that time, because I thought it was impossible to find a job in the pandemic.

I'm still upset even it has been 2 years. I do hope that US will allow us to apply for OPT again once more.

Reddit Posts

People deserve a second chance.

Title of the post: US F1 visa

Body of the post: I gave my F1 visa interview on 7th of June, New Delhi and my status is stuck on approved since then, anyone else facing the same issue?

Update: got issued today

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Today is a holiday, plus everyone one gave interview on 7th June is stuck on approved. So my advice would be to calm down and just wait
- New Comment: Embassy. The new delhi one is an Embassy not a Consulate.
- New Comment: Same
- New Comment: there is some problem. My visa was approved on 3rd of june and I did not receive my passport till now. I emailed them last week , and reply was my passport was stuck in 221g administrative processing. It still shows approved on the site but I am still tensed. This is for delhi consulate. If anyone knows what happens in it. Because they havent emailed me personally stating that there is some problem. They stated when I mailed them from my side.
- New Comment: hey any update on your application? i had my interview on the 6th (New delhi), still waiting for the status to move to issued
- New Comment: I'm stuck on approved since 3rd June dude...
- New Comment: Same for Kolkata also. Been over 5 days now and I have heard people who gave a month back got it

Reddit Posts

within 3 days.

- New Comment: I gave mine on 2nd same issue.
- New Comment: Any update? Mine is still stuck
- New Comment: Same
- New Comment: It's not stuck, if it's approved you just have to wait to get your passport in the mail, right?
- New Comment: Appointment on June 3rd. 'Approved' since June 7th.
- New Comment: Same for me. It was approved in Hyderabad on 7th June. There have been no updates since then.
- New Comment: Has anyone emailed the embassy for an update - 7th June interviewees ?
- New Comment: Any update today?
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: I gave mine on the 12th of June, and I've received my passport as well
- New Comment: I gave my f1 visa interview on June 13th. they approved my visa and kept my passport but when i came back home and checked the visa status. it was showing refused.
I almost had a mini heart attack and they are responding to any phone calls.

Title of the post: OPT Job search and unemployment days from my experience

Body of the post: Been seeing a lot of questions here for OPT and unemployment days so thought I'd give my experience/mistakes here for anyone that may find it helpful:

1. If you do not have a confirmed job offer by the time your last semester starts, then put your OPT start date as late as you can (60 days after graduation). Do not trust any companies that say "we want you to start working as soon as possible". I almost got a job offer and kept my OPT start date earlier because they wanted someone to "start as soon as

Reddit Posts

possible" but they later rejected me because they changed their mind about hiring someone who needs visa sponsorship (even though they earlier said they were okay with visa sponsorship).

2. Save every single unemployment day that you can. On initial OPT, you can work as an unpaid volunteer/intern for your professor, non profit companies, or startups, and even be self employed. I wish I knew this early on because I wasted over 70 days of unemployment not knowing I could do unpaid internships/volunteer until the very end. As soon as you get your EAD, email your professors, or non profit organizations/startups right away for unpaid internship opportunities. If you can't find them, register your own LLC and be self employed. Keep in mind, if you do the above, you can have a little over a year to search for paid jobs on initial OPT. However, this will not work for STEM OPT.

3. Even if you get a paid job, do not think you're safe. You can be laid off anytime, for any reason. I worked for a few months at a company and got laid off even though I was doing well. Do not trust any employer, whether it is your current company or any company you are interviewing with. You could have an amazing interview, have the right skills, be a hardworking person, but they can choose not to hire you at the last moment after weeks of interviewing. I spent months interviewing at companies for up to 4 rounds only to be told that they changed their minds. Always be prepared and have a backup plan.

4. Do not trust any company that asks you to pay money for a job offer letter to stop your OPT clock, or offers "training and placement". It can cause future immigration problems.

5. Most importantly, for evidence of unpaid/volunteering, keep the following:

1. Offer letter mentioning the dates, duties, weekly hours.
2. Employment verification letter mentioning the same.
3. Weekly signed time sheets.
4. Weekly training plan signed by the employer.

I wish I knew all this before, it would have saved me so much time and stress.

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: My OPT starts on July 22. And I still haven't found a job. Does that mean I still have 90 days from the start date to search for the job? Thank you

- New Comment: Thank you. I have a question. Can I travel to my home country and re-enter US on my OPT without any issues if I have a volunteer job offer letter from an NGO?

- New Comment: Two questions

My initial OPT start date was May 15th but my EAD got approved couple of days ago and is not yet delivered. So the start if unemployment days will be May 15th or the day my EAD was approved? And I don't have a job but my professor is willing to offer me a position for the summer so that would not be an issue.

This one is unrelated to the post but still. What happens to my EAD if I start a PhD from the Fall semester. Will my EAD be nullified or will it still be valid?

Thanks in advance

- New Comment: For point 5 all I have is the volunteer contract and the work that I did while volunteering. The organization I volunteered for didn't do timekeeping records. Do you think this will be an issue?

- New Comment: Hi y'all who have been waiting for your EAD cards, how long has the USCIS been taking to process your applications? I am waiting for my school's OPT 1-20 this week, and my hope to get the EAD card is at the end of August. Should I pay for the premium process? & Is it worth paying for it?

- New Comment: Good points that I agree with. Regarding the late OPT start; not sure why you want to delay it as much as possible. If you interview for jobs your last semester, you can have a job lined up by the end of your degree.

Title of the post: F1 visa interview experience

Body of the post: Interview Details

Reddit Posts

Consulate Name: Mumbai

F1 Visa Intake: Summer 2024

Interview Date:5/20/2024

Counter: 30

IN Time: 9:00

Out Time: 10:40

Security checks duration: more than 1 hour

Interview Duration: 30 seconds

Who Took your Interview: Male American

Visa Status: Approved ?

University Details

University Name: University of Southern California

Course and Program Name: MS in Computer Science (Data science)

City and State: LA , California

Dress:

What did you wear for Interview?

Formal top and Pants sneakers.

Interview Experience:

Reddit Posts

?Me: Good morning officer, hope your are doing good today.

?VO: Ignoredd

?VO: how many universities you applied

?Me: officer I applied to 4 universities

?VO: How many admits you received

?Me: I received 4 admits officer

?VO: what is your CGPA?

?ME: 9.09

?VO: What is data modelling

?Me: Answered

?VO: okay your visa is approved, you can collect it after 6 days

?Me: Thank you officer

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: They're asking technical questions???

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: They didn't ask for proof of funding or plans after graduating?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Did you name the universities when asked how many you applied to?

Title of the post: I just got a job offer but i may fail to graduate

Body of the post: As title, i just recieved a job offer today and my final grades for colleges are not out yet. However, one of my grades from midterms do not seem like I can pass the required course for graduation. I'm still waiting for my OPT (delayed to 3 weeks left) and not sure what I can do this point.

1) will my OPT processing be cancelled if I fail to graduate now?

The company wants me to sign the letter within 72 hours and my grades might take a week to come out. My start date of the job is mid-June, but if i fail to graduate, i need to take a summer course until the end of June.

2) Should I notice the company about this situation now or should I sign the letter first and see if I pass the course?

Welcome any advices here.

UPDATE:

Thanks all who commented on this post. Thankfully, professor understood my situation and promised to give a C to pass the course.??

Thank God and Jesus Christ

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If it's a C, not an F:

A suggestion: Sign the offer letter and reach out to your university asking for a consideration. I've graduated like this

Reddit Posts

because I wanted to continue grad school but ran out of cash completely. Since I was an RA they let me graduate.

DEEPLY CONSIDER ALL OPTIONS FIRST

- New Comment: Here's what I would do:

1. Sign the offer letter, it's not binding for you or for the company. I've signed offer letters and reneged on them in the past.

2. If the finals aren't over beg the professor for make up credit citing that you have a job offer and won't be able to graduate. Sometimes they'll give you additional coursework and raise your grade to the min required for graduation.

3. If that doesn't work, reach out to the university for support, as someone else pointed out

4. If all of these fail, tell the company you won't be able to start for 6 months and ask them to consider deferring your start date. There's no need to tell them why, and if they ask lie to them. They don't need to know more than they can independently find out, which they will attempt anyway.

- New Comment: RemindMe! 2 days.

- New Comment: Definitely speak with your DSO. I know someone who got approved for OPT, but failed 2 of their classes and could not afford to retake them. They were able to discuss their options and he was allowed to do part-time OPT as he finished his class. This is not legal advice of any kind, but your DSO is qualified to advise you on situations like this.

Or, like other people suggested, ask them to defer your start date

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: RemindMe! 2 days.

- New Comment: Yeah like others said reach out DSO, few of my classmates failed and had their OPT issued as well.

DSO can suggest you!

Until then check with others who already work in the company if they require transcripts or such. Some companies do not ask for transcripts or grades, if timing is still running accept the offer. Worst case it might get revoked, but do not lose the offer right now I would say.

- New Comment: RemindMe! 2 days.

- New Comment: I'm in a similar situation although I don't have an offer so in my case, it was beneficial to withdraw my OPT application and reapply later. My DSO said I could start working part time while taking the class, and that it was technically okay since its one summer class.

- New Comment: The public debates about this are nowhere close to how a hearing goes on in the immigration court. Somehow lot of people claim to have a lot of knowledge about the risks. Not just a lot of people but almost everyone. So, i will not engage in a debate, but willing to talk to people who approach us in a friendly way. <https://forms.gle/PR4FUbhyKhmW9hyJ8>

- New Comment: RemindMe! 2 DAYS

Title of the post: Sad reality of opt+stem

Body of the post: Biggest problem with opt is that it only allows 3years in total

people who do not have a stem is not even in consideration (company side perspective)

not even enough time to finish gc process even if company wants to sponsor you from day 1 of opt

Reddit Posts

For those who only want to complete 3 years and go back home are fine

But if not planning for those than ... well only actual solution is getting H1B

which as we know its "lottery"

Small tips

1.If you can please do not apply those volunteer jobs (unless its only option to keep opt) since not even h1b but cant apply for stem opt since you need to get paid

2. Do not hesitate to apply for premium if you have job offer

3. Do not miss one single chance of h1b lottery

​

I got h1b lottery this year while stem opt is pending I thought several times

and my conclusion is opt is hopeless, if I want GC and better step up in US

H1B is only way

its really sad reality but what can we do about it law is the law so

Reddit Posts

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well everyone have a great day !

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: F1 visa is supposed to be a study visa, i.e. you study, finish your course and then go home. The US government never intended to have international students become permanent immigrants (although there are lots of valid economic arguments as to why it would be massively beneficial to the US if they made a clear path to permanent

Reddit Posts

residency for international students, but the law/politics doesn't care). They're only interested in the huge \$\$\$ we pay to their schools.

If want a green card, your best option is to organically meet an American during your time in college and fall in love and get married. Lots of people meet the love of their lives during college, so this option is the most realistic.

Or if your parents are extremely rich, then spend \$1 million for EB5.

- New Comment: Another option is sorta what I did. Go for a PhD in a field that US gov considers critical. Not only you can find jobs relatively easily, you can self petition GC. Downside is going through the PhD.

- New Comment: Brother before 2015 OPT was just 23 months and in till 2011 it?s was only for 13 months. My friends who came to US in 2015 for masters some of them go their H1b picked in 2022 lottery. Know the harsh reality of USA.

- New Comment: whats premium?

- New Comment: What is gc process?

- New Comment: OP ?The F-1 student visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows international students to enter the US??

You can?t expect to come on a non-immigrant visa and hope to settle down here.

You might say if you want to make some changes in the H1B process to remove the ?lottery? aspect of it that would be another topic.

- New Comment: If you had \$1m to spend for a visa, why would you choose to be a US tax resident

- New Comment: I missed h1b lottery this year because my company refused and I had no other place, if anyone has any tips please advise :(

- New Comment: Well 3 years opt were enough for people from ROW. Infact before covid you get your ead within 2.5

Reddit Posts

tops. However, those timelines are now close to 4 years for ROW. not to mention for non row, it is several years

- New Comment: The whole system is built so the government can benefit from the tuition international students pay. It is never going to be a pathway to immigration. So it's best to treat it as it is, make as much money as possible in the little time you have, rack up some good international exposure and life experiences and get back home. The country is dying anyway.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: O1 is also a solution

- New Comment: How does it work? If you get picked for h1Bi , can you easily get a green card afterwards?

Title of the post: F-1 Visa Renewal Denied While on OPT

Body of the post: I completed both my Bachelors and Masters in the US and stated working in April of this year. Unfortunately, my father passed away in October of this year and so I had to return home to Nigeria for his funeral.

Before doing this I had to make sure everything was in order so I waited till I received my OPT extension card which begins in Jan 2022, and I made a visa appointment for Dec 14th. After securing all of this I was confident that I could go back, attend the funeral, and return to my job in the US.

At my appointment I was denied because I did not show intention of returning to my home country and this was due to lack of proper preparation. Now I am scrambling to get another date. In the system it asks if I have been denied a US visa before and when I say "Yes" no dates pop up, but when I select "No" a lot of dates are showing up for even January.

I have not informed my employer yet, because I haven't worked for them for up to a year and I am scared that they will likely terminate my employment. But I don't know if they would be able to maybe write an appeal for me or somehow

Reddit Posts

help matters.

I would really appreciate any advice you can give me in this situation, all my things are in the US; my car, apartment and important documents. what do I do??

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Sorry that happened to you.

If you get denied you won't be able to apply for emergency appointment. The only dates would be sometime in 2023 for the Abuja consulate. I know someone whose initial F1 visa got denied and the only dates they could find for interview are in 2023.

Do not lie about the denial, they would most likely find out during your interview (using your passport number).

- New Comment: I'm extremely sorry for your loss and this whole unfortunate situation.

​

Could you try and explain to visa consulate that you are just trying to complete the OPT and then return home?

- New Comment: Sorry to hear this! Can you please explain what do you mean by 'proper preparation'? I'm going to be in the same boat next year and worried that this will be my case. Also is your employment with a tech company (if you don't mind sharing)?

For the suggestion, I suggest talk to your company ASAP to see about H1B process or green card?

- New Comment: My condolences to you, all the best for the process!

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I'm so sorry for your lost! Hope that the process will go well!

- New Comment: Did you get this resolved?

Title of the post: ICE/DHS have rescinded the July 6th guidance

Body of the post: <https://twitter.com/reichlinmelnick/status/1283115985608871944?s=21> as of a district court hearing today.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Any students reading this. Please give your International office a day or two to get out updates.

It will take us a while to get everything in place.

Signed, a DSO (ISSS employee)

- New Comment: Thank god... This will make things much simpler

- New Comment: Thank goodness. Been so overwhelmed but still standing with all the support

- New Comment: Comment:

<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/07/14/trump-administration-drops-plan-to-deport-international-students-in-online-only-classes-361053>

- New Comment: UPDATE: A senior DHS official said the administration still intends to issue a regulation in the coming weeks addressing whether foreign students can remain in the United States if their classes move online
<https://twitter.com/tedhesson/status/1283147067301519360?s=21>

Title of the post: OPT denied? Straight from F-1 to H1-B without OPT?

Reddit Posts

Body of the post: Hi everyone, I graduated in May and have accepted a full time job offer and my employer can sponsor me for H1-B but my OPT got denied because of some miscommunication between me and my school's DSO (so dumb) and I've returned home because of some family matters. My company said they can't start a remote position for me before I even start the job since I'm back home now. So I was wondering in this case, if my company is still willing to sponsor me, how long should I wait to reapply new visa, and if there are any other possibilities regarding this situation? I know I shouldn't enter the US any time soon because my OPT just got denied :(Any help on this would be greatly appreciated! Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: H1B applications are submitted in March every year. If you get picked in the lottery and the company applies for your H1B, you can start working only in October. You'll need to get the H1B visa stamped to enter the US again in this case. Of course, all this will happen provided you get picked in the lottery first.

- New Comment: Apply to a non-profit (e.g. university) and see if you can land a job. Depending on your degree, some positions are hard to fill so they may be willing to sponsor you (H1-B). The upside is that non-profits can sponsor you at any time, but the downside is that the pay isn't that good, and if you ever switch to a for-profit company, you will have to start your H1-B process all over again and go through the lottery system. On the flip side, you can also apply to a Master's program. Those are usually short (1.5 to 2 yrs) and you can start all over again with your OPT. And you will likely be favored over other candidates for a position (depending on what you do). It's not ideal, but it's an option.

- New Comment: What miscommunication please? Also H1B isn't automatic and very competitive

- New Comment: Get Enrolled in a dayoneCPT. I know re-entry is an issue, but you gotta take a chance here.

- New Comment: your time here is done.

- New Comment: SEVP Portal Setup Question After OPT Approval:

I received my OPT approval confirmation yesterday, but it was sent to a different email address than the one I originally provided when creating my USCIS account. Could you please clarify which email address I should use to create my

Reddit Posts

SEVP portal account?the one associated with my USCIS account or the email address to which the approval was sent?

- New Comment: What was the miscommunication with your DSO?

- New Comment: >My company said they can't start a remote position for me before I even start the job since I'm back home now.

Can you ask them if they are willing to hire you as a B2B contractor (you will have to open the company in your country) or work through employer of record like Deel, Remotefirst, Native teams?

Title of the post: Opening a business on F1

Body of the post: I have a problem I think I'm in a fix. My parents wanted to buy an American business and have my name as the sole owner of the business, they aren't citizens or gc holders they are international and so am I, fast forward today, I got a mail from the IRS stating that I own a business and I think this goes against immigration laws right, I don't plan on working there or anything but they just wanted the business in my name. It has nothing to do with my major, it's an elderly home and I'm a compsci student. Am I supposed to report this to USCIS. I'm so confused and panicking. Has anyone gone through something like this? I also want to participate in STEM OPT does this ruin my chances?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: From what I know, you can own a business on F1 visa as long as you are not actively working for or managing the business. Best to consult an immigration lawyer. If your SSN was used without your knowledge, that's illegal and is considered identity theft. Also, things don't seem to add up. Your mom is in the US too on an F1 visa and had an American fiancée 51 days ago, but now your parents are not in the US and are not American citizens nor green card holders?

- New Comment: [removed]

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: As long as your name is signed on any day to day paperwork it should be fine. But you need to consult a lawyer to understand why the tax dog is after you.

- New Comment: I don't think IRS would contact you regarding immigration matter.

I created an LLC while I was on F1 student visa.

- New Comment: On F1 OPT you can fully run a business. On F1 OPT you can be your own employer, you'd have to form a board of directors who would decide on your employment formally, also you'd need to pay yourself a salary of at least 56,000\$.

Title of the post: How to tell employer I am F1?

Body of the post: Hi all,

I've been working at a hospital for a few months now and when I applied I checked that I don't need sponsorship now or in the future.

I was desperate for a job and income. Please don't judge me.

All is fine except now I have to start applying for my STEM OPT extension. How do I approach this to my boss without being a complete idiot?

And should I approach my boss or HR?

Appreciate any help. Thank you.

(Maybe important context but this is my third boss after being hired. They've had a lot of turnover/new hires)

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Will you need H1B in the future? Or do you have another plan
- New Comment: I did this when I got my job. If you don't need them to sponsor most companies don't mind. Just bring the forms to your boss and have him sign. Reach out to HR for the information you need. It wasn't a big deal when I did mine and I got my stem approved.
- New Comment: They have filled an I-9 for you so they know you are on OPT already! Tell them you need to extend
- New Comment: Getting a STEM OPT extension is not requesting your employer to sponsor you. You will still be on an F-1 visa and report to the international office at your school.

Your employer just needs to supply you with proof that you're actually employed there, which is usually done with a job offer letter that includes your employment dates (among other information). Your international student office should supply you with information on what is needed from your employer.

- New Comment: What is your job role? Are you on cpt right now?
- New Comment: If you are applying for stem opt, you need to make clear that the company is not sponsoring you. The I-983 is only a requirement the government does to make sure you are training the skills you studied as your visa is sponsored by your school
- New Comment: You better pray they have Everify.
- New Comment: I would suggest reaching out to HR, who onboarded you. They should be able to help you. If you don't get any help from tour HR, you can contact your boss for further assistance.

- New Comment: Did you not fill out an I-9 form?
<https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/i-9.pdf> I thought you had to show your EAD card to start work. Your HR guys might not be happy about that tbh if it turns out you needed to sign it so be prepared for that awkward question (u should be fine immigration wise, it is

Reddit Posts

employer's responsibility to get it recorded in case they ever get audited which happens very rarely and especially for hospitals, they might be fined, maybe the HR persons are actually bad at their jobs). It is necessary for W-2 jobs, not for jobs that pay through academic stipends.

- New Comment: Maybe kindly tell them that the company needs to be e-verified and convey to them that it's a very simple process.

- New Comment: Just talk with HR first and follow their instructions. They know you are currently on OPT.

Your boss doesn't care about your status. That is HR's matter.

Title of the post: Visa approved

Body of the post: Thank you to everyone in this sub reddit my mom (b2, she's dropping me off at my uni) and I visas got approved.

My advice to anyone interviewing soon is just relax and be honest and personable you got this!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Congrats!

- New Comment: Congrats! Where did you do the interview?

- New Comment: Congrats

- New Comment: congo

- New Comment: Congratulations ?

- New Comment: Hearty Congratulations ?

- New Comment: congrats! may i ask what questions you both were asked? i didn't know it was possible to let your parent come with you since i got denied and haven't seen anyone talk about doing something similar

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Best advice - "relax and be honest and personable you got this" Well done!
- New Comment: Congratulations
- New Comment: Does botswana accept applicants from other countries ?
- New Comment: Congratulations!! it?s gonna get a lot more interesting from now on

Title of the post: What options do I have as a side income on f1 visa in US

Body of the post: Hello you all,

I have a standard job in US and I am on F1-OPT now.

I am good in my profession as a Data Analyst. I am wondering what other side income I can have apart from my job because I have huge student loans to pay.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can work multiple jobs related to your major on F1 OPT (even 2 fulltime jobs!)
- New Comment: r/churning is allowed, and it is pretty minimal work of just opening a new bank account and routing your direct deposit there
- New Comment: With which type of visa side hustle is allowed?
- New Comment: I donated plasma. This paid my rent during most of grad school. No effort at all as long as you don't mind needles. Essentially paid reading time.
- New Comment: Where did you find the data analyst job?

Did you have experience in the field?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: According to my DSO, side hustle is not allow.

However, 2nd job is ok, as long as your company allow it. Conditions are:

- The 2nd job have to relate to your field of study, just like your main
- you have to report to your school and request for new i20, get offer letter, etc. just like your main job
- have to be at least 20 hours, no maximum
- if it's freelance job, you must repeat the process for each customer/ project
- you can work remotely
- if you are on STEM OPT, the 2nd employer must have e-verify.

What I've seen people doing is they do their 8 hours/ day job in the morning, come home and work as consultant for another 4 hours remotely. I think you could do that if the consultant company have e-verify

Title of the post: employer wants to sponsor my H1B visa

Body of the post: when i first started this job the CEO showed interest on sponsoring my H1B visa, and mentioned he?d try the lottery this march, but if f it didn?t work out, we?d just try again next year (since my OPT ends february 2025).

he hasn?t mentioned anything since then but I do believe he just got busy and forgot about it. my question here is: how soon in march is the lottery? and how extensive is the process? should we already have everything ready by now? lol

Reddit Posts

I feel like it's also important to mention I work for a small company, so that's why I get to have direct contact with the CEO like that. He also did mention legal assistance but we haven't circled back on that either lol

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: How are you gonna do it next year if your OPT will expire before the registration? You need to talk to your company and get them to have you registered this year. The registration is not super difficult. The employer/lawyers need to get a USCIS account and register you. If you get selected, the petition will take a lot more work and a lawyer.

- New Comment: The application period starts from 6th March +~ 3 weeks or so. So from 6th to anywhere until 25-26th. That's when you can file. Ideally, you should have all the documents ready (the company should have asked you about this, there aren't many documents needed, just the usual transcripts and passport). Many employers who aren't used to filing (startups, people hiring foreign talent seldom) often forget so it's our duty to remind them, same happened with me. Once I communicated, they willingly asked for documents and said they're gonna be filing. So yeah, reach out asap. Nothing wrong about that. Good luck.

- New Comment: You can reach out to him again, but I would assume he is not really trying to support you as March is very close. Sponsoring H1b takes collaboration with immigration lawyers, so your employer needs to have them in their connection or been working on that.

- New Comment: Reach out ASAP. Maybe he doesn't realize how urgent this first step is. Express to him that this needs to be done now. Don't wait on next year- you never know how things are going to be then. This first step doesn't cost as much as if you are selected in the lottery so he doesn't have anything to lose right now by getting this step started.

Title of the post: CodeTornado Appreciation Post

Reddit Posts

Body of the post: As the title suggests u/CodeTornado thank you for all your prompt and detailed replies, as an international sometimes I get anxious over particular details, but the clarity I've gotten is quite helpful!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Happy to help. I'm not perfect, but I try to get correct and simple information for you all because of how bad some of the information out there can be.

- New Comment: The ?

- New Comment: 100%! Thank you for all your help here!

- New Comment: Thank you so much!! You're the best!

Title of the post: Reentered the US while STEM OPT extension is still pending

Body of the post: Putting this out there as there is a lot of misinformation on this topic. I reentered the US after my OPT has expired and while my STEM OPT extension is still pending.

My OPT expired on Jan 16th and I applied for STEM OPT extension with premium processing on Jan 8th. I left the US for India on Jan 11th and reentered the US on Feb 4th. While reentering, ensure you carry the following documents.

1. Passport with a valid unexpired F1 Visa.
2. I-20 stating that you have applied for the STEM OPT extension. Ensure that there is a travel signature on the I-20 from your school in the last 6 months.
3. Receipt notice from USCIS. This is to prove you applied for the extension before the OPT has expired.
4. Expired EAD card.
5. Employment proof (payslips or a letter from your company).

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It is up to the discretion of the CBP officer (as is always), just because you were able to enter does not guarantee entry to others. When you have to deal with CBP, you want to have all the proper documents and following all rules on your end, so they have much less reasons to be able to deny you. Hence, it is advisable to not travel under these situations.

- New Comment: Thanks for the post my guy! I'm in a similar situation (although with an expired F) and this really helps

Title of the post: Things after graduation

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you have applied for OPT (Optional Practical Training) for working after graduation, then you are waiting for the Receipt notice, then waiting for the approval and the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) Card.

If you have not AND want to work in the US. Talk to your school to get an OPT I-20 for processing the request.

If you are going home and not staying in the US.

1. Update your home address in your school's online Student system.
2. confirm where your diploma is being sent. Make sure it is somewhere you will be to receive it or see if you can schedule picking it up in person. Normally takes a few weeks.
3. Check online when your grades post and order 2-3 copies of your transcripts for use in the future.
4. Let your International Office know you are going home.
5. End your lease, set up the end of other bills like your cell Phone, internet, and let your bank know you are moving outside the US. You can keep the account open with whatever minimum deposit they require or you can close it. Same with car insurance or other payment items.

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6. Did you get a COVID-19 vaccine? Get a copy or make one of your vaccination for your records for returning home.

7. Make digital. Copies of your immigration information (I-20s and such), your SSN, tax documents, etc. You may need them in the future.

Title of the post: U.S. imposes travel restrictions on entry from India. It's not yet clear if F-1 student

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: There was a uniform global NIE applied a few days ago to all countries incl. China, Iran, etc. How could we get a clarification that it applies to India as well?
- New Comment: Is this something to be scared about? I hope I can be there for my next semester
- New Comment: Would NIE also apply for people on OPT?
- New Comment: Has anybody filled in the D S 160 yet? Or should we wait till the embassy reopens?
- New Comment: Hello I have a CPT internship starting 24th May and I have booked a flight for the 17th May, I am a valid F1 visa holder. Am I allowed to enter the United States? Any help would be appreciated!
- New Comment: My program starts in the summer that is June?21, I have a valid F-1 visa, will I be allowed to travel in May? Any info would be great!
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: how can I apply for NIE ?

Title of the post: Awareness Alert: Beware of Fake Job Offer Scams

Reddit Posts

Body of the post: Recently I have received one of the mails from the sender stating an offer letter for Numeric Technologies. I have attached the same for you

I want to raise awareness about a concerning scam where individuals receive fake job offer letters via email. Scammers impersonate legitimate companies and offer attractive job positions, but their goal is to commit fraud. Here's how the scam typically works:

Fake Offer Letters: You receive an email with a job offer from what appears to be a reputable company. The offer letter looks convincing, often using the company's logo and branding.

Request for Personal Information: The scammers ask for personal details such as your Social Security number, bank account information, or copies of your ID. This information can be used for identity theft.

Office Workspace Checks: To make the offer seem legitimate, they send a check for office supplies or workspace setup. They instruct you to deposit the check and use the funds to purchase items or services from specific vendors.

Stay vigilant and protect yourself from these fraudulent schemes. If you suspect you've been targeted, report the incident to your local authorities and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: \$85 ?

- New Comment: I receive at least 2-3 of these scam emails/messages per day. But those always required 3-7 years of experiences, even it is not scam I'm still not qualified for lol.

- New Comment: I got same exact email from ?David Shaw? at a company called ?Kalachakra,? offering \$70 per hour for a junior developer role without an interview. Total Scam

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: What tf is semi-monthly ??
- New Comment: I got the email with similar words from the azek company for business analyst role
- New Comment: Lol i got an offer from the same name ?Lucas Donat? LOL
- New Comment: I legit received the same letter 4 days ago with a \$60 starting offer. I got a check for \$5000 and everything via Google chat. I never was asked for my social security number, just my address and who I bank with. The more and more I research it, the less I find out about them. This was an ultimate scam. Please be aware and do your research.

Title of the post: F1 visa interview experience

Body of the post: Just want to share what I experienced with my F1 visa interview today.

The interview setup in my consulate is that you will talk to an officer in a window while a line of applicants are waiting for their turn. So basically, you will hear the questions asked by the person inside the window.

I dressed appropriately, a formal one without a tie, with a non digital timepiece and bringing a professional looking file organizer. Also, I came 45 minutes before my scheduled time.

Now, this guy in front of me is also an F1 applicant. The officer asked him what can he do about his associate degree after graduating. He replied saying that he will help his relatives by the opportunities that will be given leveraging his new degree. The interviewer asked additional questions about his family, his background and such. After that he returned his passport and I know that the guy's application was disapproved.

I am bothered since I am next to be interviewed by the officer who unheartedly declined an application.

Reddit Posts

When my turn came, I was asked 'Why are you enrolling to [university name]?'

I explained my program underlining its strength that will help me in my career objectives.

He replied: "Your visa is approved, just wait 1 week for your passport to arrive"

Seeing my surprise, he added that 'I made it look easy on the process.'

I don't exactly know what I did correct but being able to experienced a single question visa approval is heartwarming.

Maybe we must make an impression and be confident in our answers. As the previous guy dressed casually and answer questions slowly.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: They guy before you literally said the stupidest thing one can.

- New Comment: Prepare for the festival ?

- New Comment: i had my interview today i almost blew it?? i stuttered a little but got approved nonetheless. i think it was bcs of my strong travel record. Ive had been issued a b2 twice and have been to multiple countries. It also MAJORLY depends on luck imo. Anyways, im super grateful!!

- New Comment: Guess you are in Jamaica

- New Comment: Congratulations

- New Comment: Congratulations! A lot depends on your background, that is, what university/program you are going, who is sponsoring you, your family wealth/background, your travel history, etc. so about 80% of the decision is already made before the interview.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: May I know which embassy is this ?

- New Comment: For me it was quite the opposite, I wore a nice jumper and white sneakers to my VI and my visa got approved. All the people who were wearing formals and went before me had their visas rejected. I'd say the key is to not try too hard to impress the officer and just be confident and comfortable in what you say and even in your dressing. The most important thing which I noticed however was that most of these people sounded very robotic and they had memorised all their answers. Along with that they also wanted to go to T3 universities. A DEADLY COMBINATION!

Title of the post: Stem OPT, Laid off, No job, Running out of time

Body of the post: I was on STEM OPT Extension period, but got laid off 2.5 month ago :(

Since for stem opt extension I can only work for E-verified employer, I was not able to stop my clock. I have about 2 month left (since it's 150 days for stem extension).

I applied for 1000+ jobs already (I studied electronics, so mostly applying for general engineering, hardware, field service, technician, and some low level IT jobs because I don't have much coding experience.). I tried to get as many referrals as possible, but still 0 interviews. Every time after recruiters hear I need sponsorship, they just ghosted me.

I looked into grad school options, but couldn't find any good place that accepts application for August 2024 anymore. Master is also really out of budget for me without scholarships.

I really don't want to go back home (already spend so many years studying and working hard in the US, home employment situation is also way worse than US).

Any advise? Thank you so much!

Reddit Posts

(I know my chances are probably pretty slim at this point, I just really needed to let it out and fighting till the last sec)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Remember it's only 150 if you never used a single day in regular OPT. However many you used should be subtracted.
- New Comment: One thing you can do is apply for COS to B1/B2, then you will have 6 month to stay in the US. During that time you can look for jobs that sponsor H1B visa, or apply to grad schools.
- New Comment: Keep applying, and if an employer is not E-Verified, they can become. It takes a few hours to become E-Verified and it is free.

>I really don't want to go back home (already spend so many years studying and working hard in the US, home employment situation is also way worse than US).

In the US, the current situation for people who need sponsorship is horrible. Most likely worse than most countries.

Just be prepared to have other plans if you can't find a job.

- New Comment: Construction can't get enough electricians. Are you certified to sign off on paperwork?
- New Comment: What do you mean by sponsorship from employee?
- New Comment: What do you mean by sponsorship from employee? Do you mean housing and other utilities being covered aside monthly wage?

Title of the post: Are full time OPT employees meant to accept worse offers than than the market price?

Body of the post: I heard through my recruiter that there's some kind of cost to hiring me because I'm on F-1. As a

Reddit Posts

result, I find myself having to accept a contract job instead of an FTE SWE position for eight months until I prove myself.

The reason I take issue with this approach is that I've just graduated with my masters and their offer is worse than what they've hired for historically for undergrads that just graduated.

Frankly, I'm not sure what to think and I don't want to suggest the median salary as an hourly value in case that ends up upsetting them or something.

I get that the market isn't great right now(then again when is it), but I'd still appreciate some insight on how to approach the salary negotiation process. Thanks.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >I heard through my recruiter that there's some kind of cost to hiring me because I'm on F-1.

Complete and utter bullshit.

OPT Records are unattached to the employer and supervised by the F-1 students school. Employers have ZERO cost beyond normal hiring costs to bring on an F-1 on OPT

>As a result, I find myself having to accept a contract job instead of an FTE SWE position for eight months until I prove myself.

Nothing to do with your F-1 OPT status.

>The reason I take issue with this approach is that I've just graduated with my masters and their offer is worse than

Reddit Posts

what they've hired for historically for undergrads that just graduated.

Then walk away. Recruiter is either misinformed or trying to abuse your status. Regardless you don't want to work for them.

- New Comment: The only cost that I see a company incur when hiring someone on OPT is when they sponsor a candidate. Now that your employer clearly mentioned you'll need to prove yourself before you get converted to a FTE shows there is nothing for them to lose while you might eventually not end up getting converted in 8 months (around March of 2025) and having to find another employee who's willing to sponsor immediately which is least likely considering the current market situation.

I know beggars can't be choosers but it also doesn't mean we eat food out of the garbage bin!

Cheers!

- New Comment: Currently on OPT and that's not true. There will be extra cost down the line when the company wants to retain you as a full time since they will have to pay for your H1B paperwork but there is no difference between an F-1 and any other person. I negotiated my salary with my OPT employer and it did not upset them one bit.

- New Comment: There will be small companies that will try to take advantage of OPT students and pay them low. Yet, larger corporations usually don't incur in these activities and pay fair wages. Also, keep in mind the market is poopie right now

- New Comment: This is BS of the highest quality. They are either trying to get you at a cheaper rate, and/ or they might leave you high and dry when it is time to sponsor your H1B. For all purposes, as long as you are legally allowed to work in the US good employers don't usually distinguish between someone on their H1B vs F1 vs Green Card. Yes, some companies take issues with F1 because only a small category of F1 students are eligible for STEM OPT extensions, but in those cases where you get 1 year of Post Completion OPT, most good employers try to enter you in to the H1B lottery

Reddit Posts

pool and proceed from there. If you are eligible for STEM OPT then employers are even more relaxed because they get you for at least 3 years, but you have to be careful that the employer is e-verified otherwise you cannot work with them on your STEM OPT.

The only cost that I can see here is that they do not intend to sponsor your H1B (application for which is about USD 10) and petition IF your picked in the lottery (\$700 but contingent to you getting picked), and since you might not be eligible for a OPT extension/ they are not e-verified they might lose you after your current OPT expires. All in all, try to dump them. You do not want flaky employers especially given how precarious H1B and F1 situations are right now.

As far as negotiating your salary is concerned, all I am going to say applies only if you are a good candidate. Companies/ teams typically have an approved budget range for every position. I resort to classic haggling - I start out with an ask that I know has a high probability of being rejected. I then work my way from there and stick to a lower bound for myself (see below note how I calculate a basic lower bound). This fails in some cases sure, but try to stick to your narrative. I have had decent success with this and I continue to do so. But foremost, you need to abandon your fear of them being upset. Getting hired is a transaction, which many people fail to realize. They need you as much as you need them. Yes they pay you, but you work for them and drive their revenue. So, forget about upsetting someone and focus on getting what you want, because that is what they will focus on too.

****For how do I set my salary lower bound****

Determine their pay range: They cannot offer you below the approved amounts because otherwise there are repercussions to unused and approved budget (essentially they will never get that money again and they cannot lure better people with better pay). Based on the number of years of experience, work expected, hours, commute, expenses, and any other things which you think are related to your job, I try to come up with a monthly figure which I have to spend. Factor in even the tiniest expenses, even something like food (it adds up).

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Look at their pay, and see how much will you end up saving. If everything that you have to spend is more than 40% of your NET salary (post tax), negotiate for higher pay. You can of course choose to be greedy and have that spend percentage around 25% of your post tax salary, but this is where you have to play with them to see how willing are they to give you what you are asking for.

E.g. if the pay range is 75-120k per year (based on the number of years of experience of a candidate they hire), that gives you a monthly gross pay of 6250 to 10000 per month pre tax. Here is where you need to do a bit of math because you will need to calculate how much you pay in federal and state taxes (for this amount somewhere between 18% - 33% effective tax rate). This gives you about 5000 - 8000 per month post tax (I have not factored in health insurance which in most cases is deducted from your pre-tax income). Don't spend more than some percentage acceptable to you, and then work your way from there trying to maximize the amount you have left in your bank account at the end of it.

This of course is not financial advise in any form, and neither am I the best planner. Take all of this with a grain of salt. If anyone has better ideas, feel free to write them below - would be nice to see other plans and incorporate some of those!

- New Comment: Utter nonsense ?

- New Comment: Giving your employer the benefit of the doubt, they could mean something along the lines of ?We sponsor our F1 students for an H1B, which results in additional costs?.

This is the most generous interpretation of their words though, they could very well be exploiting you.

- New Comment: Not don?t accept less pay

- New Comment: doesnt mean all opt students are in same situation but if u change your pov it make sense american or green card holder vs you who would u hire considering all skill and talents are same, unless you are more wanted candidate it is most likely moneywise not good to hire opt + most opt student wants sponsorship for h1b which cost

Reddit Posts

money while visa status can easily fucked up

- New Comment: Why are you telling employers that you're on OPT? Don't mention that, you're like any other!

They're not allowed to refused your EAD the day you fill your i9

Title of the post: Didn't get picked in H1 Visa lottery this cycle, one last attempt in 2025 left. Please

Body of the post: Hello,

Here's a little bit about myself: I am an international student from India. I graduated with my undergraduate degree in Finance & Actuarial Science in 2022 and have been working in finance since then. Unfortunately, I wasn't selected in the H-1B visa lottery this year, and my STEM OPT expires in July 2025, leaving me with only one more attempt. I am starting to consider a backup plan in case I am not selected in the lottery next year, to avoid scrambling for a last-minute resort between April and July.

I am aware of Day-1 CPT universities, but I am unsure if that's a viable option for me, as I aim to eventually pursue my MBA from, hopefully, an M7 university. I am concerned that after participating in Day-1 CPT, I might not be eligible for CPT/OPT during my MBA.

Another suggestion from my manager is to apply for a position in one of our global offices, but this is not a guaranteed solution as it depends on business needs and fit.

The final option I am considering is applying for an MBA this fall. However, I am not sure if I am ready to pursue an MBA just yet?I'll have three years of work experience by Fall 2025, but my biggest concern is funding. I was supposed to take the CFA Level 3 exam this August, but now I am wondering if I should postpone that and take the GMAT instead.

I am seeking advice from folks who have gone through this or are currently navigating similar situations. I am open to

Reddit Posts

relocating to Singapore, London, or another location until I can return for my master's on my own timeline. I am just not sure what to do!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: MBA seems like the way to go? plus OPT/CPT resets with each degree level

- New Comment: Avoid Day 1 CPT. It can cause immigration problems later.

I think if you want to stay in the US, you can go for an MBA. Another option is if your company has operations in Canada or any other country, you can request a transfer and see if they can get you back to the US on L1, then you could work for your current company without going for a masters.

- New Comment: My 2 cents - Work hard for 3 years till the end of your stem opt ? build your profile in the mean while?

write gmat exam ? get into M7 or any good mba college. You will get extra 3 years of opt after masters graduation.

Never get into day1cpt ? not even a single person who joins in those universities has intention to study ? all of them are there to get extra chances in h1b and also it poses lot of risk if you travel out of country.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Learn German a1 you can immigrate to Germany and it's easier to get a job with exp and masters degree

- New Comment: A lot of you didn't notice that OP is mainly concerned with funding when it comes to an MBA. I am in the same exact boat rn and trying to see what my options are in funding. My company does cover \$30K in tuition. I'll prolly have \$60K saved up by the time I start my masters. Is that enough? Should I consider private loans? When and how should I apply for scholarships/fellowships? Please advise!

- New Comment: Come back to home country best backup ever

- New Comment: Try to renew OPT I saw this on Reddit idk if it works but hopefully it helps somewhat

Reddit Posts

<https://www.reddit.com/u/StratConsultancy/s/rj8PNXJrw0>

- New Comment: I'd go back home personally
- New Comment: And what after h1? Have you given thought to that? GC wait time is decades for Indians.

Follow this instead:

Work out. Get buff. Establish good hygiene. Marry white girl. Get green card. Love happily ever after.

- New Comment: What's with this weird h1b obsession? You've worked 3 years . What makes you think you won't find a good job back home ?

Title of the post: F1 employment violation, what to do?

Body of the post: I'll keep this short, a friend of mine worked last semester without work authorization (CPT), they said that their employer ensured them there would not be any legal repercussions, but received a W-2 form earlier this year.

Tax season is ending, thus far nothing has happened yet. Should they be lawful, report the W-2, and risk it? Or is it better to wing it and play dumb like the mail never got to them...

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I don't think you should mess with the IRS.
- New Comment: Not a legal advice, but I think paying the taxes is the better option, Im also pretty sure CBP are out of the picture, they can't just "be notified" because a person filed a W-2. Just don't talk about it and definitely don't tell your DSO

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: >they said that their employer ensured them there would not be any legal repercussions

The employer is correct. There would be no legal repercussions for THE EMPLOYERS as they are not violating the law.

Your friend however did.

>but received a W-2 form earlier this year.

Yes, because not doing so would be a crime.

>Tax season is ending, thus far nothing has happened yet.

Why would something happen?

>Should they be lawful, report the W-2, and risk it?

Should they follow the law or commit a second crime? They should follow the law.

>Or is it better to wing it and play dumb like the mail never got to them...

Ignorance is not an excuse and the repercussions are the same if not worse because of breaking other laws.

- New Comment: The IRS already has your W2:

?Your employer first submits Form W-2 to SSA; after SSA processes it, they transmit the federal tax information to the IRS.?

Reddit Posts

<https://www.irs.gov/faqs/irs-procedures/copies-transcripts/transcript-or-copy-of-form-w-2#:~:text=Your%20employer%20first%20submits%20Form,tax%20information%20to%20the%20IRS.>

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: You can't un-ring a bell..... As a DSO, I'll tell you that this can come back to you in the future. NEVER listen to an employer or ANYONE apart from your DSO who "guarantees you" that an activity off campus is no risk to you. Been there, seen it, heard it.

- New Comment: I know someone on an F1 visa actively doing 1099 work (Uber, Doordash) and will file taxes. How screwed would he get?

- New Comment: Pay the taxes because it's better to pay which would be doing the right thing

- New Comment: Well, I guess answer would be depending of whether he was paid in cash, check or direct deposit.

- New Comment: I mean eventually it will catch up with your friend when trying to re-enter the United States or applying for a change of status (F1 or perm).

Also if there is anyway that the DSO finds out through an old offer letter or something they are required by law to terminate your sevis record

Title of the post: job offer rescinded - 3mo left to apply to OPT extension. need advice

Body of the post: hey guys,

Need some positivity and motivation after i had a job offer rescinded after the organization said they can't accommodate for OPT. for this opportunity, i ended the fellowship i was doing early. my EAD expires 5/31 and currently im on day 2/90 of unemployment and need a job in order to apply to the OPT extension. Now im really really nervous about finding a job.

Reddit Posts

ive been emailing my connections about the situation, have linkedin premium, cold messaging recruiters, and applying to jobs everyday. but honestly, i dont know if that will be enough given this job market recently. i know to apply to the extension, its harder than the first year OPT due to the form and being e-verified. also cant volunteer or self employ but part-time is allowed. any advice, tips, success stories would be appreciated :').

UPDATE: my previous job was able to offer my position back and i was able to get the STEM extension! :)

Since my role is a contract though and ends next month, I have 1 month + 120 days to find a new role.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I know it can be overwhelming, and I really hope you find a job soon. There is just so much that we can do as international students and unfortunately it is out of our control. Don?t close yourself to just the US, maybe explore other countries? That is what I am doing, just detaching my self from the idea that I have to work in the US. The job market conditions are not in our favor and the stress and struggle, for me is not worthy. But I?m sending good vibes, cause I?m also looking for jobs since I graduate soon with my masters.

- New Comment: In the same boat as you. I got my EAD because I signed the offer with them and I my clock has started ticking.

I was fully honest about my status. But two months in when more paper work was required to be filed they retracted it.

I?ve reached burnout and wait for replies everyday to hear some good news. This is also impacting my sleep.

Haven?t yet given up because it will be hard.

Reddit Posts

I can be your accountability partner and we can help each other in some way if you'd like.

- New Comment: What kind of jobs are you looking for? I work in tech, let me know if you need a referral

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I'm in a similar condition although I'm still working but teaching computer science in a high school, I'm just hoping that position will be eligible for stem extension

- New Comment: same situation!! Let's all create a group and help each other in this hard time! I have been actively applying for all and I see some of them reply, I think if we share which job posting is actively hiring then maybe we can at least make it to the interview stage and get ourselves chances to prove our candidacy.

Title of the post: My student visa ended and I can't return to Ecuador bc of the armed conflict. What

Body of the post: I know I have two months to leave the country however I have a legal case pending so I have to stay for one more month. But my situation is getting more and more complicated since I got fired from my job. My country is in an armed conflict so I am basically trapped in the US until the situation gets better.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Well I hate to be the one to say it but if the lawyers have spoken, then I guess that's it. I doubt a bunch of Reddit folk would make a difference. You can scramble to get another job on OPT but that's a stretch tbh especially with this market. You could look into Canada. I would suggest voluntarily leaving if you ever hope to come back legally or maintain good standing.

- New Comment: Contrary to your post, Ecuador is not at war or involved in an "armed conflict" True, the crime / security situation isn't good, but there is no legitimate reason you cannot return. The State Department's Safety Travel Advisory only lists Ecuador as 2 out of 4 on danger level. Do NOT overstay - this will affect all future possibilities of a visa.

[<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/ecuador-travel-advisory.html>](

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e.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/ecuador-travel-advisory.html)

- New Comment: If you speak English well you can always get a decent job in Mexico
- New Comment: The armed conflict isn't an immediate threat to your life and definitely will not stop you from traveling back to Ecuador. Sounds like you just prefer not to come back which in any case will not give you any leverage with USCIS
- New Comment: Can you afford a master's program?
- New Comment: You got a masters, 3 years of experience and are less than 30? Enter the express entry pool.
- New Comment: It's not that you can't return, it's because you don't want to return
- New Comment: The situation is not good in Ecuador from a job perspective. But you CAN go back and will be safe. Keep applying to jobs! Even if you have to go back you can keep applying since you have work experience in the US. It will be easier.
- New Comment: Airports are working fine and there is no war in Ecuador. Your status will be illegal in couple months. It is what it is.
- New Comment: I have a friend who went to Ecuador and back - no problem.
- New Comment: Asylum?
- New Comment: se lo que estas tratando de hacer. solo regresate a ecuador ñaño
- New Comment: Why dont you apply to OPT ? And if ur career is STEM you can also extend your OPT for two more years
- New Comment: If you are a psychology or social work major let me know and I might be able to support
- New Comment: Go for Day1CPT college and start studying again.
- New Comment: How criminal is the case you are facing in court. If the severity is high, you might have a zero chance.

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- New Comment: In 2008 in Illinois, I had unpaid credit cards totaling around \$8,000. Unfortunately, as a 20-year-old, I returned to Europe. Now, after 15 years, I applied for a visa at the Embassy, but unfortunately, they gave me a white slip 221(g) pending. If the case went to court, do I have problems for not showing up, and will it be considered on the USCIS background? Does it automatically go on a criminal record? Since then, no one has contacted me, probably because they didn't have my address. Thank you in advance for your response.

Title of the post: I finally got my first OPT job!

Body of the post: Hello Guys! Hope you guys are doing well! I had a few questions regarding traveling back to America from India on my OPT. I came back to India in May, while my OPT was pending and since then I have graduated in August, got my OPT acceptance and received the EAD card (I have it in hand) and had been looking for jobs ever since. I finally accepted a job offer and I am planning to travel back in less than 10 days!

\- The end date on my OPT card is August 2024 but this job is a contractual job for 1 year with the end date November 2024 as mentioned on the job offer letter. (I plan on applying for OPT extension). Can this cause in trouble while crossing the border?

\- Is it bad when asked, to mention about plans for applying for OPT STEM extension and that is why I accepted this position?

\- Anything else that I should be worried about? Any tips will be appreciated!

Thank you for always being a great help!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [removed]

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Just came to say congratulations ?

- New Comment: >- The end date on my OPT card is August 2024 but this job is a contractual job for 1 year with the end date November 2024 as mentioned on the job offer letter. (I plan on applying for OPT extension). Can this cause in trouble while crossing the border?

No.

>is it bad when asked, to mention about plans for applying for OPT STEM extension and that is why I accepted this position?

No

>Anything else that I should be worried about? Any tips will be appreciated!

Double check you are returning within the 90 days of unemployment. Otherwise you should be fine.

- New Comment: Which uni are you from bud?

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: I would relax if I were you. You have everything you need to go back. First of all I don't think airport security will even think about let alone mention the end date of your job. This is because they only care about whether you can enter or not. But let's say they asked about it. Do you know that you get 540 days of automatic opt extension once you apply for opt stem extension? So you are basically already guaranteed to have employment authorization from

Reddit Posts

August to November by just applying to opt stem extension before your current expiry date.

If you really wanna do everything you can to ensure smooth entry, I would advise you to get a letter from your DSO saying that 1) you are a student maintaining your status. 2) you currently have valid EAD. And 3) you are applicable for opt stem extension as per your major. These letters are generally really helpful, but really it's unnecessary, especially in your case.

Here is the uscis page for automatic EAD extension for reference: <https://www.uscis.gov/eadautoextend>

P.S: I entered the US with an expired EAD and my pending opt stem extension status, in that case the DSO letter was necessary

- New Comment: Congrats!

- New Comment: Congrats OP!!!!!! ???

I'm in the process of looking for my first OPT job as well so hopefully it works out ??

Title of the post: What to do before leaving US after STEM-OPT expires

Body of the post: So I've reached the end of my line with my F1 visa. I've spent 7 years in the US- 4 in college and 3 working. Now my STEM OPT period has expired and 60-day grace period is coming to an end.

I've made my peace with it and I'll be going back to my home country. Maybe I'll come back for a grad degree later but that's tbd.

My question is, what are some things I should take care of before I leave? I've quit my job and updated my DSO. Just want to make sure that I tie up all loose ends so that if I want to come back in the future, there are no issues.

Reddit Posts

TL;DR: Looking for advice on things to take care of before leaving the US at the end of STEM OPT

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: sort saw strong skirt zephyr shrill safe unique liquid hunt

This post was mass deleted and anonymized with [Redact](<https://redact.dev>)

- New Comment: wistful society shelter market books zephyr tart person sugar safe

This post was mass deleted and anonymized with [Redact](<https://redact.dev>)

Title of the post: OPT expired, STEM OPT pending, laid off, job market unstable ? what are my options

Body of the post: As described in the title ? a classic dilemma: I applied for STEM OPT on June 8th, my OPT ended on June 30th, and I was laid off in August. I was counting on using the accumulated unemployment days to find a job, which would have sustained me till January 2024.

My DSO told me to find a job ASAP before USCIS gets to my case (which, at this rate, seems to be mid to end of September). According to them, I'm in a visa limbo and am neither on OPT nor STEM OPT. If USCIS gets to my case tomorrow, I will most likely get denied and have to leave ASAP.

In terms of jobs, I have been networking and applying, but the market's been slow. I am looking into some backup options to extend my time in the USA. I did both my undergrad and graduate studies here and lowkey have little desire to go back to school. Moreover, most deadlines for graduate programs have already passed.

I've also received suggestions to explore Day 1 CPT (is this a viable option for my situation?). Are there any additional

Reddit Posts

routes or contingency plans I should be considering? Please advise!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I've always wondered about this.

What happens when you lose your job in between the time they're processing your STEM OPT?

- New Comment: UPDATE: I ended up getting approved for STEM OPT while still on unemployed status! Not sure if it's luck or mistake or USCIS being generous. I did find a contract job to stop the clock as well, but the approval came before I could update my status. So cheers!

- New Comment: Sorry to say that, but why didn't you file STEM OPT earlier? I recalled that you can file it 3 months before your current OPT expired, meaning that you can file it on March 30th..

- New Comment: ****UPDATE (2024):****

hi, i have been getting a lot of questions, so i want to give an update for folks who came across this post and/or may be in the same situation:

since the layoff, i:

- * used 1.5 months of unemployment
- * got STEM OPT approved (without PP) while unemployed
- * did full-time contract work for 3 months
- * did part-time freelance work for 6 months
- * just started a full-time position and am now applying for O-1 visa

Reddit Posts

?**i don?t have a particular source or agency to get these gigs from**; they were the result of mass applying, interviewing, and contacting every company, contact, professor, friend, and stranger i came across. there are plenty of job sourcing agencies, but i have not had success with them, so i cannot answer questions about that.

what got me through the process:

* **mass apply**: i highly recommend Simplify.jobs

* **check "no" for the ?do you need sponsorship?? question:** this is a gray area and depends on the industry. my field (creative) is picky with sponsorships and hires based on portfolios, so i usually answer ?no? to get my resume through the door. i?m not saying to lie, but be prepared to answer why or how you would technically not need a sponsorship. this could be, ?i have xxx more years to work without needing sponsorship? or that you have plans to secure a work visa that doesn?t require the company's help, such as potential engagement/marriage to a green card holder or transition to a non-lottery, special skills visa (EB-1, O-1, etc.).

* **be flexible:** i clearly state in my 68723648234 outreach emails that i?m open to various opportunities, job titles, pay rates, and onsite or remote work. from my experience, as long as the job is paid, offers a minimum of 20 hours, and the company is e-verified and willing to sign i893, that should be enough for STEM OPT. many contracts or freelance opportunities come with the possibility of extension or conversion to full-time, so they?re valid options to try if you need to buy time.

it took me a full year to finally secure a full-time job that was not short-term, low-balled, or rescinded (yes, it all happened). post-layoff and visa anxieties are still very much present in my life. this is an extremely difficult time to be in the job market, especially as an international, so please know that you?re not alone, and there?s a lot beyond your control. this is a luck + numbers game, so i suggest optimizing your resume and outreach emails, then spamming your heart out. best of luck!

- New Comment: Sometime ago the response was Canada but with scores right now it?s impossible unless you know

Reddit Posts

French or actually move there with a job and work for a few years to meet the cutoff.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Automatic Visa Revalidation Experience (Air + Land)

Body of the post: I used AVR to enter the US from Canada twice, once by air and once by land, since my F1 visa had expired, and thought I could share my experience since it was hard to find specifics online (I managed to dig up some of the more helpful advice on some Chinese forum).

Entry using AVR by air: I had a flight with American Airlines from Quebec City to LA with a transfer in Philadelphia.

Several things to note:

* I have received advice that it is recommended to **book with an American airline** if you are going to use your AVR, because most of the time, the agent at the check-in table will have a hard time trying to bypass the system to issue you a boarding pass if your US visa is expired, and they will have to call their airline hotline to ask, and in my case, the airline hotline had to call CBP to verify, and I presume it is easier for an American airline to contact CBP.

* Fly from an airport with **CBP pre-clearance** (<https://www.cbp.gov/travel/preclearance>), because the staff there supposedly will be more familiar with the rules and will be able to streamline the process. Where I flew from (YQB) does not have CBP pre-clearance and it was their first time hearing of AVR.

* Arrive **before check-in opens** for your flight.

* My experience: I could not check in online due to my expired visa, so I arrived at YQB 5 hours before my departure, explained the situation to the agent at the check-in counter, who was perfectly willing to help, but told me to come back 2 hours before the flight time because only then was the check-in for my flight online for them to print my boarding pass.

Reddit Posts

* I arrived on time and had to wait in line for 15 minutes before my turn, which left me ONE hour for them to figure out how to print my boarding pass. This is the biggest mistake because I could have gained 25 more minutes, which is nearly 50% more time if I had arrived 10 minutes earlier.

* While the agent was willing to let me through, they could not figure out how to print the boarding pass with an expired visa number, so they fumbled for 10 minutes and had to call their superior over. I explained the situation again to the boss, and the boss stood there for 10 minutes trying to help her how to bypass the system but failed, so they had to call the American Airlines *hotline*, which took 20 minutes before it went through (possibly because this was in late June when travel was crazy). The American Airline agent on the other side was also apparently unfamiliar with the process, as both of them had to go through my I-20 line by line, starting from "Department of Homeland Security". The American Airline agent then had to connect to a CBP officer before verifying that I can *in fact* enter.

* After everything, they only had 5 minutes to figure out how to bypass the system and print my boarding pass, which of course they could not, but since the "superior" fortunately had the authority, they could allow some more time, so I finally got my boarding pass 30 minutes before departure and got expedited through all the security checks.

* Entry to the States from PHL was extremely smooth. They took a brief look at my I-20 to enter my SEVIS number and asked where I was heading to.

* What I would have done differently: When approaching the agent for the first time, I would explain to them that this would require them to bypass the boarding pass printing process and ask if they have ever done that before. If not, if I speak to their "manager" and if their "manager" also does not know how to print a boarding pass for an expired visa number, they would have ample time to figure that out with the airline. *It's only a matter of time.*

Entry using AVR by land: I was traveling from Vancouver by the Amtrak bus, and I was mentally prepared for a very long check at the border, but the officer took a look at my I-20, asked what I did in Vancouver, where I was residing in the States, entered my information and waved me through. The process took less than 5 minutes.

Since I'm living close to the border, after those two experiences, I have started planning my travels so that I would cross

Reddit Posts

the border to Vancouver and travel domestically within Canada and vice versa, since the large Canadian airports with CBP pre-clearance are not exactly known for their efficiency.

I hope my sharing could be helpful to some, and I would appreciate additional tips to lessen the anxiety of travelling on AVR ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Quick question about AVR by land that I never understood. When the CBP officer looks at my passport and sees the visa is expired, do they automatically renew my visa or it just allows me access back into the US?

I'm trying to visit my home country but I'm wondering if I could just visit Canada and my visa automatically renewed with AVR

- New Comment: Can you explain how you were able to go to US with an expired visa ?

- New Comment: I actually had an extremely easy experience. I had a domestic flight within Canada (Westjet) and then flew to the US from Toronto (Delta). At check-in the agent just took a quick look at my visa and pointed out that it had expired. I told her that it would be okay because of AVR. She then just nodded and printed all my boarding passes.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hi, how are you? Did you get a new I-94 and a new entrance stamp on your passport every time you enter to the US by LAND ? thank you

- New Comment: Were you on OPT or stem opt at that time? Does AVR apply only for F1 holders while students or also while OPT and Stem opt?

- New Comment: Does anyone know if AVR means your F1 visa is now valid for another year, or it just means you can re-enter the US (as in, if you travel back to your home country do you need to apply for a new visa again after this)

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- New Comment: Thank you very much for your post. It helped me a lot. I have an expired F1 visa and valid H1B status in the US. I just come back from Toronto yyz airport back to the US. CBP and airline (air Canada for me) staff at YYZ airport are very familiar with AVR. The only manual part is that due to my expired F1 visa, the airline's automatic check in process doesn't work so i need to manually check in.

My flight is in early morning. I arrived 3.5 hours earlier than departure and after I am done with everything, there are 2.5 hours left. it's early morning but still very crowded so arrive there earlier is good.

Flight from Canada to US needs check in at least 90 minutes before departure. I do met a woman this morning failed to check in on time because she check in less than 90 minutes before departure and the counter refuse to print ticket and she had to change the flight.

- New Comment: I had a very stressful experience when flying from Montreal to Philadelphia with AVR. I have expired j1 visa in my passport and current i797a with i94 for h1b. I came to the Delta check-in at YUL airport 4 hours prior my flight, I gave my passport with expired j1 vise, i797 and i94 and clearly said that I'm returning to the US using AVR provision to airline staff. After that representative called delta and then cbp. Also she was rashly trying to find something in my passport and i797, without asking me for anything. After talking to cbp, she said that I'm ?denied? and I should go to the embassy. I tried to clarify what?s wrong, she said ?there?s nothing I can do?.

I consulted with an immigration attorney and went back by land with no troubles at all. The cbp officer asked me standard questions: where do I live in the US and what do I for work. Then he let me in.

Title of the post: I THINK I AM FU*KED. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ON OPT I HAVE SIX MONTHS L

Body of the post: I am an International who have lived in the United States for 10 years. I had a longterm girlfriend I was planning to marry but broke. I have a good job in the Bank. My degree is regular Business Management Degree. I want a apply for Green Card. What can I do to keep working here in the United States. All my life is here in the United States, I need help? Any advice ?

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: First, how have you lived in the US for 10 years if you have only completed your bachelor's? Second, if you have a good job at a bank, are they not willing to sponsor your H1-B? From what you have explained in the post and others comments, it seems like your best shot is to get a job that sponsors H1-B, relative who's a green card holder and is willing to sponsor you or get a masters degree. (I am genuinely curious about your situation, if you explain it better people might be able to help)
- New Comment: if you haven't done your master's degree, that's one way to stay in the states because then you can work for OPT again. or if you have completed your master's and OPT, you can also continue getting your PhD and then do OPT again. While at school you can work and save some money before marrying your girlfriend. Also maybe get a program that provides you with STEM
- New Comment: If you have six months left. Apply for EB1 and concurrently file. So your stay will be extended while the application is in process.
- New Comment: Try seeing if you're eligible for EB2-NIW
- New Comment: Ask your employer if they can sponsor you for a H1B or even a green card
- New Comment: Hi Studying PHD on F1 Visa Mechanical Engineering what are my options? I had F1 visa since my associate degree until now under scholarship. I'd want to stay in the US permanently. I'm originally from Jamaica
- New Comment: Try D1 CPT , continue to do the job and complete your masters. Apply for Eb2-NIW to get your green card.
- New Comment: I have been through this route and happy to help. Day 1 CPT will allow you to work full time during the study and getting a Master's degree with Day 1 CPT programs will allow you to have up to 3 years post-graduate OPT: <https://forms.gle/Y135kqUdtcNPLp5PA>
- New Comment: [removed]

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Title of the post: f1 visa India help

Body of the post: Hello incoming fall 2024 students. Yesterday I completed all of my payments and filled all the forms; ds-160, visa fees, sevis fees and tried to book a slot for usvisa (I am in India). The only available slot was in the Mumbai consulate and date is 2 years from now ?. My classes starts on Aug, what am I supposed to do If I can't even get a slot for interview.

Please share your experiences

EDIT ---

As I have mentioned in the comments below, I booked my visa appointment sometime in the last week of may and I noticed that there were so many openings, I rescheduled it three times within a span of several mintues. I did this because I kept on seeing better dates and nearer spots to me.

Couple of people have reached out regrading my interview experience, so wanted to share here :

Interview date: June 08

Location : Kolkata VAC

time: 8:30 AM

(below is kinda shortened answers, in reality I spoke a bit longer but with the same meaning)

My VO was a very cheerful guy in mid 30s

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Q1: namaste! Please come here, how are u doing today ? Please pass me your documents

Q2: why ut Arlington

-> there's good research opportunity; very flexible course structure; provides specialization in Bioinformatics

Q3: what's bioinformatics and why

-> its research in medical field with the application of advances in IT field. I like it because it's impactful and with the recent advances in ai tech there's huge opportunities in bioinformatics and I want to be part of it (I was really nervous and stuttering while answering)

Q4: how are u funding

-> student loans and sponsored by father

Your visa is approved :)

Tips:

- * Try to give Ernest answer which does not sound rehearsed, it's ok to not speak perfect English.
- * Even if you're nervous compose yourself and speak clear and audibly
- * Try to maintain eye contact and show enthusiasm for your course

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Slots for F1 visa will open late April or May. Dont worry.

- New Comment: Wait. You'll get the slot. It's only the start of April

- New Comment: Don't worry. I literally booked a slot on July 15th, 2021. Had my interview on July 27th in Mumbai.

Booked my ticket to USA on August 4th. Left for USA on August 11th and reached on August 13th.

Had my university initiation ceremony on August 17th and will soon graduate after completing my thesis this semester.

You got plenty of time. Just keep an eye out for slots and news about slots everyday. You'll get it.

- New Comment: Sweet summer child....

- New Comment: They'll open in bulk in April-May for June-July

- New Comment: Just keep checking daily for the slots and join some telegram groups for alerts about slots. I did this in 2021 to get a slot.

- New Comment: All of you are going to get screwed. See h1 pick up rate. After 2021 it's laughable.

You'll realize after you complete your Ms program what i am talking about.

- New Comment: did you ever get a slot? im facing the no slots available issue coz i have a b1/b2

- New Comment: Off topic, but to all the folks who are applying for visa, may I ask what is your motivation to get a F1 visa? Coz situation in the US is shit. Students have been flocking like migratory birds and creating scarcity of everything for every Indian. Be it part time jobs, h1 visa, cheap accommodation etc. if your intention is to study and go back, sure. But what if you plan to stay here for work long term ? The chances of getting a work visa here are about 10-15% in 2024 (and getting worse every year) companies have stopped sponsoring work visas due to low chances and Green cards have 40-100 year wait times.

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Just wanted to see whether you are aware of the situation!

Title of the post: My F1 visa experience.

Body of the post: Date - 25th June,2021

Consulate- Delhi

Type - Regular

Status- Approved ?

University- Purdue University

M.S Biomedical Engineering

Appointment time - 2:30 pm

In- 1:06 pm

Out- 2:16pm

There were 20-25 people ahead of me.

Counter 18

VO was bald guy in his early 40?s.

I hold B1/B2 visa went to USA in 2014 and my Brother is PR there.

Me - Good afternoon sir

Reddit Posts

VO- (with a pleasant smile) Good afternoon

Meanwhile passed All passports and I20.

VO- Have you been to USA earlier

Me - yes

VO- how many days?

Me- 22 days

His reaction was this much only ?

VO- which university?

Me- Purdue University for MS Biomedical engineering

VO- ?THE? Purdue University

Me- yes sir

VO- Who is sponsoring you?

Me- My father

VO- what does he do?

Me- cloth fabric manufacturing business

After this there was a awkward silence and he was continuously watching his PC screen and then after went through all my passports and saw Visa of all other country.

VO- when did you visit USA?

Me- 2014.

Then he return back all 3 previous passports to me and kept recent with him and told that you are not allowed to enter state prior to 30 days of your class start date.

Reddit Posts

PS- no question were asked related to funding and he was chill guy and also not about my brother who PR there.

Be calm, Atmosphere inside is very calm.

Be Positive ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Is purdue highly ranked ? Is the the same for all thier campuses

- New Comment: Purdue West Lafayette campus is the main campus and highly recognised among all its campus. Yes, it is highly ranked in different engineering and science streams. You may check it?s ranking on US news. Also, Purdue?s tution fee is comparatively less when compared to its competitive universities. if you need any help, dm me.

- New Comment: Wait if you had this interview is 2021, why are you posting about it now?

- New Comment: Why posting it here?

- New Comment: He said, "how MUCH days"? No one talks like that.

Title of the post: Being sexually harassed at work. What are my options?

Body of the post: Throwaway for obvious reasons. I am a female intl recent graduate and because I couldn't find a job I had to join an Indian consultancy and I've been with them for some months. However my much older male boss is starting to behave reallly creepy towards me. He first started to give me rides back home which I didnt think much of because he would give the other people rides home too but he started bringing up really personal topics like how much I drink etc and then proceeded to invite me out for drinks (He has a whole family and I am half his age). Then we went remote so i did not have to go to office however a few months later he started asking me to come to office during the weekends when there was no HR around even though there is nothing so high priority that it needs to be done over the weekend since I am not even a full time employee. He is starting this behavior again now.

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I know this is a little vague , I didn't want to give out too many details but I am scared because I've been searching for months for another job and if he wants to fire me because of this, he will and I won't have anything on hand and will have to leave since I only have around ~40 days of OPT unemployment left. He's also very powerful in the company and if I tell HR it'll be a he said she said thing and other than the text messages asking me to come in the weekend I don't have other proofs. What can I do?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can report him to the cops and may even qualify for a U-visa (this is for victims of crimes, including sexual crimes and will lead to a green card).

Edit: Sexual Assault qualifies under U-visa, but you will need to report it to the cops and help law enforcement in investigation and/or prosecution.

- New Comment: record him, sue him, look for another job

- New Comment: Im sorry you are going through this. Tell him bluntly that you are only going to work five days a week and not on weekends. You are feeling uncomfortable with the personal questions. My bet is he would be wary once you warn him. If he isn't backing down, complain to the police. They usually give him a dressing down.

And yes, please find for another job and let everyone know his behaviour including his wife and kids.

- New Comment: With the limited info here, I am assuming you are working on a C2C, with a client.

If you do not want to confront your employer, then think about finding another Indian consultancy and move. Since you are still on F1 OPT, you won't have any visa transfer restrictions either.

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Talk to your clients first and ask them if they are willing to work with another employer. One good option would be to talk to your colleagues who are already working at your clients location, and get in touch with their consultancy. Since they are already working with your clients, the transfer should be easy.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: That?s not sexual harassment and just ignore, the more you think about it the more it looks daunting

- New Comment: I am not sure which state you but if your state allows recording, do that please and report to the police.

You won?t safe yourself only but also future victims ??

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Is this a huge consultancy? If yes, check if you have a private group on Blind and expose him there without giving out much of your personal info!

Title of the post: Best time to ask about Visa Sponsorship after interview ?

Body of the post: Just completed a first round of interviews that went really well and got moved to the final round. The company is moving quite fast and wants to make a decision by Friday. I already have my OPT EAD but i wasn?t asked any questions about visa sponsorship. Should I send an email to verify what their policies around H1B is before the next interview, or wait until the next rounds are over before they make an offer.

During the application I selected I was allowed to work for any employer as shown in the image. I?m confused I don?t want to waste their time or mine.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: There?s a website for checking how many h1bs an employer filed.

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- New Comment: You ask after you've received the offer.

If they pull the offer, that's too bad, but at least they won't string you along for 3 years (which does happen).

If they say yes, then that's a lot of uncertainty out of the way.

- New Comment: Maybe start the job and then ask. This will stop your unemployment clock. Meanwhile, look for other jobs that will sponsor your work visa.

- New Comment: This type of situation is always a hit or miss. I had 2 interviews within a week. The first interview was final round and the last question was sponsorship. The second interview for the other company was a final round and I was over confident that I'm getting the job from my previous interview anyway. So fuck it and I directly said my employer on the second company that I need h1b/gc, preferably gc because I do not belong to backlog countries. He requested more info which I provided. I was sure I would get offer from first company and rejection from second. Well, the opposite happened. This was 5-6 months ago.

My recommendation: because the market is very tight, I'd not want to drill a hole anyway. I'd accept the offer if it comes and better if they don't ask about sponsorship. If they do just let them know you will marry your fiancée soon. 6 months in work real hard and prove your worth. Then start telling stories that the relationship didn't work and you need sponsorship. Not ethical but trust me, companies will call sponsorship requiring candidates to in person interviews only to prove to USCIS that they are equal employment opportunity and still reject you because of sponsorship (the first company didn't sponsor any h1b gc nor the company had more than a few POC)

Wish you land this job and break this barrier once and for all

- New Comment: 1. Negotiation always via phone calls or zoom (1on1 and you get a real time reaction), never email which gave them more time and advantage (they had a team of full time employees where you only have you), email to send doc is fine but I always negotiate via phone call or zoom

2. In this climate, getting a job offer is great, hopefully it works out for you. I would accept the job offer then clarify about

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h1b especially if they did file 2 according to you. But if this were 2021 2022, I would have asked about h1b prior to accepting the offer and reject all offers without immediate h1b lottery sponsorship, some places ask me to work 1 full year before sponsor me I rejected them back then.

3. You are doing everything right, if you time everything correctly, you might get 4 lottery, I did 4, 1 at the end of my f1 without advanced degree, 3 during opt with advanced degree cap.

- New Comment: If you have only one year OPT, it would have been better if you chose I require sponsorship to work in this country since you are going to have only one chance for the H1b lottery. :(

- New Comment: I had two times when I almost got a role, and after the final rounds I asked if they could sponsor me in the future. They told me they needed to discuss. After several days, I am getting rejection emails from both of them.

- New Comment: My advice is to ask upfront before the interview process begins. I've tried the approach of not mentioning and asking later but have been ghosted multiple times (one time offer was basically confirmed). Better for both parties to know upfront than waste your precious unemployment days.

- New Comment: So you are going straight to H1B instead of doing STEM OPT Extension? Or is it that your major is not in the STEM field?

I did not mention STEM OPT Extension to my employer until it was 5 months before my OPT EAD expiration date. It took 2 months after for them to decide whether enrolling in e-verify would be harmless to the company before they gave me a green light.

Even if I didn't mention anything about my EAD expiring in a year, the HR knew it because they scanned my EAD card in person on my start day and told me that if I need my work authorization extended I can let them know. I guess it depends on the company.

However, my logic was that I should mention about extending my work authorization after a few months so that the

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company can get the chance to see that I am doing a good job, my character, etc. that would make it easier for them to say yes to enrolling in e-verify and what not.

Title of the post: I earned a little over \$2500 over 7 months this year through PayPal on F-1 Visa. An

Body of the post: I worked on a little gig for fun, a hobby for me to code and create stuff, with my cousin in my home country on a 3D social media platform (sort of like metaverse) and when I came to the US to study, we launched it and I incorporated my PayPal to receive the payments. I didn't realize this was considered as "self-employment," still not sure if it does, but I received about \$2500 over the last 7 months (I only got enough money to buy myself a nice dinner now and then or have a little fun, I'm in no way dependent on that income for survival.) Now that I sort of realize what this means, I did a little research and I think I'm bound to receive 1099-K form. I have since removed my PayPal from the website we made. Am I in trouble? If so, what can I do to get out of this mess without losing my F-1 status.

​

Edit: My PayPal is registered in USA.

​

Edit 2: I'm not actually working for someone or with someone, all the work that I did on this was before I came to the US.

After coming to the US, I only receive payments that makes roughly about \$300 a month.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: **REMINDER: r/F1visa is a HEAVILY moderated subreddit. Bad advice is removed. Repeated bad advice or illegal advice gets a permanent ban. I have had to remove and ban several accounts from this thread. **

Reddit Posts

This is a Grey area and would need a lot more specifics.

This MAY be considered passive so long as you haven't touched, Coded, or managed this website since you arrived in the US.

Example: If your cousin is maintaining the website... Then it's passive. Essentially he is the manager and you are the owner. Making it passive.

The devil is in the details here, but this may be okay. If you want to be sure, go spend one month's pay from the website and speak with an immigration attorney to ensure this is all passive and that you can document it well in case of future questions.

- New Comment: I won't say how fast the consequences will come, but there will be consequences down the line. I've gotten a call from ICE due to unauthorized employment, but I've also had students go under the radar (at first). Eventually you'll need to renew your visa or pay taxes or apply for OTP or a status change ? anything where your record will be under scrutiny, you'll have to explain this eventually.

- New Comment: So anything >600 will be reported to IRS by institution. I recommend working with your DSO on this

- New Comment: Following for fun. Good luck OP.

- New Comment: Your DSO is not your friend. Always remember this. They will terminate your F1 without thinking of the consequences for you. Do not offer information that no one has requested from you. Read between the lines and take the advice

- New Comment: Reach out to DSO at earliest. Gather evidence and keep ready showcasing passive income or passive income from investment prior to F1 visa. This may save a day in future in case queries come out

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Technically it is unauthorized employment. This could go either way. And don't worry you won't be deported soon.

- New Comment: Regardless of what happens , paypal will report it to IRS

- New Comment: The IRS mumbled that again for tax year 2023 they're not ready to pursue the >\$600 reporting requirement.

PayPal probably isn't going to submit a 1099.

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-announces-2023-form-1099-k-reporting-threshold-delay-for-third-party-platform-payments-plans-for-a-5000-threshold-in-2024-to-phase-in-implementation>

- New Comment: It's not the amount, nor is it the method of payment, that is important.

What is important is why you received the money. If it's because people are reimbursing you for things you bought for them (like, paying you back after you make a pizza or beer run), then that's not work and is fine.

If you are receiving the money because you are selling your belongings, for example textbooks that you bought for school and are now finished with, or your old laptop after upgrading to a new one, then that's not work or engaging in business, and you are fine.

If you've been engaging in online sales or trading of goods for profit (trading cards, crafts, etc.), are receiving money in return for services (like tutoring), or have any sort of job or business that is not employment on campus and for which

Reddit Posts

you do not have a permit from US immigration (there are things that are allowed, but you must get a permit), then you will be in trouble if it is discovered.

In your case, you could technically be in violation of the terms of your visa. It would absolutely be considered self-employment and working in the USA. At this point, there's nothing you can do but hope it's not discovered (and if it is, come clean about it and explain why you didn't think it would be considered work at first and stopped as soon as you realized it might be; DON'T LIE).

There's a very good chance that nobody will notice and there'll be no harm done.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Interesting, since the work is not done in US soil, this might not be considered as employment in the US. The potential 1099-k can be problematic, but I am not sure if it is a true violation. Definitely talk to your DSO.

- New Comment: following

- New Comment: Following

- New Comment: What if its yt money, coming in another country?

- New Comment: It's literally off campus work during your F1 study visa. How are you this naive

- New Comment: Following.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Did it come in through a ?business? account on PayPal or just gift from friends and family? Also if I understand correctly you only pay taxes if you made more than \$600 PER month. If you got \$100-300 here and there from a ?friend? over 7 months you should be ok

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Yes you are in deep shit .

It just matter if time when the shit fall on you

- New Comment: Get yourself a CPI letter, establish a US citizen or greencard holder as your partner. Get a letter from your business partner to hire you as an intern and use the CPI letter to show legal income. All legal. You are only allowed to work certain hours on F-1 visa.

- New Comment: So far for this year you're ok- IRS announced this year they don't have to submit 1099.

- New Comment: Issues would most likely show up when you apply for green card or a new visa, I was on an o1 visa and had multiple streams of royalties for the software I created when I was in India. I just declared that as income from royalties and transferred directly to my bank account from my Indian bank account and then filed Schedule E on my income tax report.

I wouldn't worry too much on it. Severity of unauthorized employment is when you actively take a job that could have gone to a U.S citizen. best is you file taxes properly

- New Comment: I don't think you are in any trouble. First PayPal won't file any form since PayPal didn't pay you. Whoever pay you should file the form.

Title of the post: Help! Dropbox for F1 visa status showing refused FREAKING OUT

Body of the post: Applied at Delhi VAC. submitted my application on 2nd May and on 4th May it says refused. My passport is still at the consulate according to the website. I haven't received any further communication from them. Anyone who has been in the same boat. Do I wait, do I freak out or do I plan for not getting it at all. Overthinking spiralling out of control. Please help

Update: got called for an in person interview

Reddit Posts

Update 2: Visa issued below is the timeline

2nd May Dropped off docs

4th May Refusal

9th May passport returned with 221g slip asking to come in for interview any day at Delhi Vac before 10 am

16th May I voluntarily went for interview as I was travelling you can go sooner

Interview was really basic >> why are you going to this university >> where do you want to work afterwards >> whose paying and will any family travel with you

VO said your visa is approved

20th May received my passport in courier

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Don't you guys think it's a little crazy that a number of smart people at the embassy thought it would be a good idea to use the term 'refused' instead of under processing or on hold or anything that doesn't give anxiety to poor applicants

- New Comment: Don't freak out it's same for a lot of people , refused is administrative processing n it will change in due time with proper answer

- New Comment: I don't think they can deny a visa without an interview first. The worst case scenario is they ask you to appear for an interview which is not that bad and you get your visa after

- New Comment: Refused != rejection. They will most likely call you for an interview.

- New Comment: There are two possible scenarios that could happen here atm.

Reddit Posts

1) the status might change to administrative processing and then approved later (I?m assuming this might happen as it changed to refused way too early)

2) You?ll get an email asking you to come to the consulate on a date few days later for an interview or fingerprinting or both (in my case this has happened couple of months ago). There?s absolutely no need to panic, they would handover the passport to you while reaching the consulate and take an interview. It?s very unclear that why they didn?t approve without an interview, but the interview is going to be very basic.

Previous years they used to send passport back to the address with a slip asking you to come to the consulate, however this is not happening very often during this year!

Don?t worry at all, this is a very common scenario and happen to many people.

- New Comment: Hi!

I've received my F1 visa through Dropbox around last week and searched a lot about it so here's what's happening.

Like the other user said the status will either change to Administrative Processing or you'll be issued a 221G slip.

Don't panic. For dropbox applicants, refused is not rejected. Although it may take upto 10 days for you to actually get updated on what's this about but basically if it's not administrative processing then you'll be called in for interview or biometric.

Biometric can be placed if your last visa is too old like when you were a kid, interview can be placed if they require more information of your case.

Reddit Posts

Keep checking the status and your mail for the update. All the best!

- New Comment: Hello All, I want to share my experience with dropbox. Here is how my timeline looked like.

June 24th - Submitted documents at Hyderabad VAC

June 28th - Delivered to post

on CEAC portal:

July 1st - Case created

July 2nd - Refused

July 3rd - They requested for additional documentation via email. I sent them immediately. Status changed to "Approved" on the same day.

July 9th - Issued

- New Comment: Is it mandatory to give the interview in the Chennai consulate? Can we give interview in Delhi or any other state consulate?

- New Comment: Hiii I completed my f1 dropbox yesterday at Chennai but today when I checked it showed "refused"? I read a few comments that it is under administrative process? If any one have same issue please help me out as my flight is on aug 15th and only have 15 days left I don't know what to do ?

- New Comment: Hi, I have been through the same situation. My drop box was refused. Under 221g attended an in-person interview yesterday. The visa stands approved. Can anyone suggest how long will it take for the passport to

Reddit Posts

be delivered to a premium pick up location ?

- New Comment: Is this your first time applying for a F1 Visa? Also when was your B1/B2 issued?

- New Comment: I'm in the same boat - Mumbai consulate. My status is refused and passport is still with them.

The comments really help me get a perspective. I'm just a bit worried since my transition is from h1->f1.

Has anyone done this and can share their experience?

- New Comment: 18th may i got the refusal.

24th May i got my passport back with 211g. The slip mentioned i can come for interview on any working day

- New Comment: OP, thanks for sharing. Very helpful as I have my drop off appointment due next week.

Did you eventually get to know the reason for refusal at drop off?

- New Comment: Hi All,

My F1 dropbox refused 2 days before and received my passport today with all documents but no slip in it.

any one had face similar situation? I don't know how to proceed further. Just drop an email to them and waiting for reply

- New Comment: Same case here! My interview is tomorrow, would it be easy?

- New Comment: My CEAC visa status online shows refused. I haven't received an email yet to tell me to pick up my passport. The CGI portal says my passport is with Embassy/Consulate. My doubt is this: I had a Dropbox appointment in Chennai, but my passport pick up location is Delhi. Whenever I get my passport back, Do i need to go to the Consulate in Chennai or I can go to the Embassy in Delhi for my interview?

- New Comment: Let me pile on with a success story here: I had an F1 application show up as 'refused' on the CEAC

Reddit Posts

tracker after using the waiver program to apply. I got sent an email the next Monday (1 working day later) saying that my passport is on its way back to me, received it on Tuesday with a slip asking me to arrange an interview.

I then got an expedited interview scheduled within a week - the whole process at the Embassy took 3 hrs but the interview itself was less than a minute and very much routine. I got my passport back within 48 hours. This was in London.

As I was going through the process I was freaking out because there was a chance that I would miss my flight (and I was scared about the refusal) - but you can't really explain / understand why a refusal happens. I still have no idea why I was handed a refusal initially. They do process F1s crazy quickly so all you can do is hope for the best. It all worked out for me in the end!

Title of the post: Community Colleges in the US.

Body of the post: Hi guys,

So this is just an informative post. I applied to a community college in the USA and everyone advised me against it, that your visa won't be approved and it'll just be a waste of time and money. I asked my counsellors as well as my cousins, but they said the same thing. That is, however, just completely false. There is nothing that rejects your visa on the basis of community college. My visa was approved and I have successfully started my studies at a CC in the US.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: That's great! I did the same thing, 2 years at CC and transferred to a larger state school. I thoroughly enjoyed my time at a CC, it's a great way to save on costs!
- New Comment: Congrats and thanks for the feedback
- New Comment: Is it HCC in Tampa?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: What did u say when they asked you why community college?

- New Comment: Can you give some tips ?

- New Comment: That?s good to know, congratulations!

- New Comment: I will definitely recommend attending a community college buddy. The first two years are basically the same whether you attend university or cc. First of all, you save a bunch of money and you gonna have a great time. They have plenty of scholarship even for international student and you can have a good gpa to transfer in a 4-years universe, easily.

Think about that. Good luck!

Title of the post: Visa Officer said ?approved? and kept passport, but online status a few days later

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: OP here, update: I got the visa, full timeline:

May 12: Interview, VO said ?approved? and kept the passport.

May 14: Online status check: ?Refused? as shown above.

May 17: Online status check: ?Administrative processing?.

May 19: Online status check: ?Issued?.

Reddit Posts

May 20: Passport with a visa stamp picked up.

So if you're in my position, don't panic :)

- New Comment: Sounds like administrative processing. Can take a few days to a few months. Normally 2 weeks but varies depending on your country and any flags that caused the administrative processing.

Gets sent to D.C. for review and approval. Happens a reasonable amount of the time 1/10 to 1/3 applicants depending on the country.

- New Comment: Same thing happened with me last year. 'Refused' just means that your visa is going through some administrative processing (221g). If they didn't ask you for any additional documents, and just said approved (like my case) then it is just a basic background check, nothing too serious. The status will change from 'Refused' to 'Approved' in a few days or can even take a few weeks, depending on the case. Mine took around 4-5 weeks, this is longer than most cases, mainly because I had a lot of travel history and I did my undergrad in the UK, plus my subject was in the Technology Alert List (TAL).

- New Comment: What is the rejection reason? (Section number)

- New Comment: May I know which place did you apply from?

- New Comment: Hi , Same with my case.my Student (F1) visa approved by Visa Officer but on the CEAC website it is showing that my visa is in Refused . Please let me know you got your visa after this case happened to you . Thank you

- New Comment: My Dad's USA B2 visa dropbox application has been on Approved status since January 3rd, 2024. They have never asked for any additional documents. We tried emailing to the consulate office twice and both time got a generic response stating that his visa is under administrative processing and there is no definitive date.

It has been almost 4 months and we are really anxious. What should we do apart from emailing the consulate to

Reddit Posts

expedite it?

Just FYI, my dad has a previously approved USA B2 visa and he visited 3 times during that previous visa period.

- New Comment: This happened to me last day. My visa was approved at the counter and after few hours i received a call from the embassy saying that it has been refused and that i will receive the passport and the letter with the reason for refusal in it . My portal shows the same pop up as yours though with the same writing. Please has anyone experienced this? Also it was a b1/b2 visa

Title of the post: OPT Processing Delays Megathread

Body of the post: **Welcome to the new OPT Delays Megathread**

Please see the old thread [here](https://reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/kxibo0/opt_delays_help_f1_students)

****February 26 Update****

>[USCIS has announced changes to OPT Processing due to significant delays in processing.](<https://www.uscis.gov/news/alerts/uscis-extends-flexibilities-to-certain-applicants-filing-form-i-765-for-opt>)

> **14-month OPT Period Flexibilities**

> F-1 students may participate in up to 12 months of post-completion OPT, which must be completed within 14 months from the end of their program. Due to the delays at the lockbox, some applicants may only be eligible for a shortened period of OPT within that 14-month period. To allow F-1 students to complete the full period of requested OPT (up to 12 months), USCIS will allow the 14-month period to commence from the date of approval of the Form I-765 for applications for post-completion OPT.

> Beginning today, USCIS will approve applications for post-completion OPT with validity dates reflecting the same amount of time originally recommended by the designated school official (DSO) from their school on the Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status.

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> F-1 students requesting post-completion OPT who receive an approval of Form I-765 for less than the full amount of OPT time requested (not to exceed 12 months) due to the requirement that the OPT be completed within 14 months of the program end date may request a correction of the EAD due to USCIS error. USCIS will issue a corrected EAD with a new end date, as requested, to cover the full amount of OPT time recommended in the original application.

> **Refiling Following Rejection**

> Applicants for OPT must file the Form I-765 during certain timeframes. However, we recognize that due to the lockbox delays, some applicants who timely filed Form I-765 for OPT and whose applications were later rejected are unable to timely refile within the required application timeframes.

> USCIS will accept a refiled Form I-765 for OPT and STEM OPT as filed on the original filing date if:

>

> The original, timely filed application was received on or after Oct. 1, 2020, through May 1, 2021, inclusive; and USCIS subsequently rejected it.

> Refiled applications must be received by May 31, 2021, for USCIS to treat the application as though filed on the original received date.

> Applicants refiling a Form I-765 for OPT or STEM OPT do not need to obtain a new Form I-20 with an updated OPT recommendation from the DSO, as long as they originally submitted an application for post-completion OPT within 30 days of the DSO's recommendation or an application for STEM OPT within 60 days of the DSO's recommendation as required by the regulations.

> Applicants refiling an application should include a copy of the rejection notice to facilitate review of the case.

>

> **Missing or Deficient Signatures**

> Applications with missing or deficient signatures are generally rejected at the lockbox. This policy remains unchanged. However, if the lockbox accepts a Form I-765 application for OPT or STEM OPT with a missing or deficient signature,

Reddit Posts

USCIS will issue a Request for Evidence rather than deny the application, to give the applicant the opportunity to respond and provide the necessary signature or correct the deficiency. We encourage applicants filing Form I-765 to review the form instructions on our website to ensure their application is complete before filing it.

>

****January 14 Update:****

> OPT processing has been extremely slow this year due to COVID-19 and staffing shortages. The Dallas, TX lockbox has stopped OPT processing entirely after Oct 29th applications. The Phoenix lockbox is working on late November applications.

>

> To track the current status of OPTs in the system, we are using the [OPT tracker](<https://opttimeline.com/#ReceiptDateData>)

>

> If you have not yet filled your application, [USCIS has announced that all OPTs need to go to the Chicago lockbox](https://www.uscis.gov/i-765-addresses?fbclid=IwAR1Po7K_XBSA1lh0lpSPfVHrT71YZ5PrPg_x4uwW-Zt-Zw-p2TBHfG38nvU)

>

> Join the [telegram chat](http://t.me/joinchat/Sbf19jKaCzqw_2yC)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Edit: EAD RECEIVED!

My timeline for post-completion initial OPT at Chicago lockbox, I'll keep updating as time goes on:

2/5/21: Delivered to Chicago mailroom via FedEx 2 day shipping

Reddit Posts

2/18/21: Money order cashed (I checked using USPS money order tracking)

2/21/21: Received text message with receipt number late in the evening

2/25/21: Received receipt I-797C at my PO box from Potomac (receipt was dated 2/20/21)

3/23/21: Status showed card is mailed to me ?

3/25/21: EAD received at my PO box

- New Comment: Good news everyone! I checked the USCIS website today and the OPT processing time for Potomac is at 3.5-4.5 months!! Let's hope us Feb applicants get everything in May!

- New Comment: Here's my initial OPT timeline for anyone interested:

12 Nov 2020 - i765 package received by TX lockbox

8 Feb 2021 - i797c receipt generated and check cashed by USCIS chicago

25 Feb 2021 - New card being produced

26 Feb 2021 - Case approved

1 March 2021 - EAD Card mailed to address

4 March 2021 - EAD Card and approval notice delivered

Reddit Posts

While I did contact my senator to explore the possibility of expediting, my case was approved before I could go through with it.

- New Comment: ******FINAL EDIT:** EAD CARD RECEIVED. Total number of days: 97 ****

Here's my timeline for F-1 OPT STEM Extension Application so far. This process required me to file I-765 to the Phoenix Lockbox. I also included the Form G-1145 so I'm expecting a text/ email with my receipt notice.

1. 12/26/20: Phoenix Lockbox received my application sent via USPS (acknowledged through USPS Tracking service)
2. 1/21/21: Requested a 180-days extension from my company with a I-9 re-verification, an updated I-20 that shows a pending OPT STEM Extension application and a valid EAD card (mine expires 2/15/21). My expiry date now got extended to 8/15/21.
3. 1/31/21: USCIS cashed the \$410 check. I got notified in my bank statement.
4. 2/3/21: I received my receipt notice (Form I-797) in the form of a text message.
5. 2/8/21: I received my receipt notice in the mail!
6. 3/25/21: New EAD card ordered.
7. 3/26/21: My case got APPROVED! Saw the update in the USCIS website and [OPT Timeline website](<https://opttimeline.com/>). I'm told that I should be receiving my approval notice in mail by April 10 2021.
8. 4/1/21: Received Approval Notice in mail.
9. 4/2/21: EAD Card arrived in mail! :-)

- New Comment: ****UPDATE : EAD Received !****

****Total Number of Days - 53 !!****

My timeline :

Reddit Posts

Feb 3, 2021 - Mailed via Fedex

Feb 4, 2021 - Delivered (Signed) at the Chicago Lockbox

Feb 18, 2021 - Check cashed

Feb 23, 2021 - Received the receipt number via Text

Feb 27, 2021 - Received I797-C via mail.

March 23, 2021 - Status changed to 'New Card is Being Produced'

March 24, 2021 - Case Was Approved

March 25, 2021 - Card Was Mailed To Me

March 26, 2021 - The Post Office picked up mail containing your new card.

March 27, 2021 - Card Was Delivered To Me By The Post Office

\-----

However, there is a typographic issue, in my address, the state is listed as 'MT' instead of 'MI' . I checked my I-765 application and its an error on their part. But USPS was still able to deliver it to me, I guess because of the zip code and

Reddit Posts

city ..

1. Does this imply that the EAD might have the same issue and it might accidentally go to the wrong state ?
2. Should I try to get this corrected ? Will it impact the processing times ?

- New Comment: Another data point for you guys, will update periodically whenever I get more info:

Used a cashier check

03/04/2021: Delivered to Chicago Lockbox

03/10/2021: Case Received (form I-797 to follow in the mail)

03/16/2021: BIOMETRICS RECEIVED FROM ASC (didn't find out till 4/13/2021, got this info from Emma live agent chat)

04/23/2021: New Card Being Produced (Updated on 4/23/2021)

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: My STEM OPT Extension timeline;

02/22/21 : Mailing to Chicago Lockbox

02/23/21 : Mail delivered

03/02/21 : Money Order Was Cashed

Reddit Posts

03/05/21 : Received Notice I-797C by mail

(Receipt Notice date 02/26/21)

03/31/21 : New Card is Being Produced

04/01/21 : Case Approved

- New Comment: Application Received by USCIS - March 8th.

Receipt issued text message - March 14th.

Will edit updates on any changes.

- New Comment: UPDATE: EAD CARD in 50 DAYS !!!

My receipt for STEM OPT extension was relatively fast. Here goes -

March 19 (Friday) - mailed application to chicago lockbox with USPS 2 days guaranteed delivery

March 22 (Monday) - delivered in the morning

March 25 - Received Text with Case Number, and saying application was received on the 22nd.

March 26 - Money Order cashed.

Reddit Posts

May 12 - New Card is being produced.

May 13 - Case Approved.

May 14 - Card was mailed.

May 16 - Received EAD in mail!!

- New Comment: 4/14/21 - mail by UPS to Chicago Lockbox

4/15/21 - delivered to USCIS

4/20/21 - case received by USCIS

4/21/21 - money order cashed

4/30/21 - received I797-C, Notice of Action

6/11/21 - status changed to "new card being produced"

6/14/21 - case approved

6/16/21 - card was mailed to me

6/19/21 - EAD card received

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I sent my opt application on February 25th to the Dallas lockbox as the new Chicago address wasn't updated on my school website. Should I send out a new application? Am I screwed? Talked to DSO and they said I should just wait, and the Dallas lockbox backlog won't be that bad now. I'm not sure if I should listen to them

- New Comment: My OPT timeline:

Dec 22 - delivered package

March 3 - check is cashed + text receipt

March 7 - receipt mailed

March 23 - card is being produced

March 27: EAD card received with last name misspelled !!! ????? (it's a USCIS error)

I thought i'm done. Now i have to send it back and wait again for the corrected one to be mailed..

- New Comment: Good news for me also! Here's my timeline:

2/25: Mailed documents through USPS express

2/26: Showed as delivered on USPS tracking by USCIS

3/4: Text notification of receipt by USCIS, showed as "received" online and payment went through

4/7: Status of my case changed to "approved", and was told to expect my approval notice by April 22nd

Reddit Posts

So relieved!

- New Comment: Hi everyone! After months of worrying, I finally received my EAD for initial post-completion OPT. Here's my timeline:

March 18, 2021 - Application mailed via USPS Priority Mail Express

March 19, 2021 - Delivered to Chicago Lockbox

March 24, 2021 - Form I-797C notice mailed; receipt number received via text

June 1, 2021 - Card being produced

June 3, 2021 - Card mailed to me

June 4, 2021 - Card picked up by USPS

June 7, 2021 - Card delivered by USPS

Hope everything works out for those still waiting!

- New Comment: My Timeline:

12/16/2020: delivered to Arizona Lockbox

1/28/2021: Received Text Message with receipt number around 9 PM

2/5/2021: Received I797C at PO BOX saying routed to Potomac\[receipt dated 12/16/2020\]

- New Comment: If back in 2020 I received a shortened OPT approval (less than 12 months between its start and end date), am I also eligible to request a correction of my EAD to the full twelve months? Or is this only for EADs issued after the update?

Reddit Posts

(my EAD is still valid until early July)

- New Comment: Post Graduation OPT Process in-progress (will keep updating).

Forms : I-765, G-1145

Delivered to Chicago Lockbox

- March 25th, 2021 - mailed application to USCIS

- March 26th, 2021 - fedex tracking says delivered

- March 31st, 2021 - case received by USCIS

- May 25th, 2021 - status says new card being produced yayyy

- New Comment: I want to keep myself accountable in the process, so I'd start.

4/14/2021- Started application

4/15/2021- fedex delivered form

4/16/2021- My case was received

6/28/2021- my card is being processed

Reddit Posts

6/29/2021- my case is approved

6/30/2021- Card was mailed to me

7/01/2021- USPS picked up the card

7/03/2021- Got my EAD card

Total time- 80 days

- New Comment: My application was received on February 12th in Chicago. I have got the I-767 a while ago. However, my case still hasn't been approved. The average processing for February on the website shows as 47 days. It's been over 70 for me. I know each case is unique and all, and I am patient, but at this point, should I be assuming there is something wrong with my application? How much longer should I wait before taking any action and what actions should I take then?

Also, when checking the case status on the website, if it just says "your case has been received" does that mean it is at least NOT rejected? Or is that not a guarantee?

- New Comment: Here's my OPT timeline:

4/20 - Sent my initial OPT application

4/23 - Delivered by UPS to Chicago Lockbox

4/27 - Got receipt number by text

Reddit Posts

4/28 - Money order cashed

5/01 - Received I-797C from Potomac Center in the mail (Receipt date was 04/27)

06/28 - Contacted USCIS Support # and agent filed an expedite request on my behalf since my original job start date was 06/25 and I have an open job offer. Hope something works out soon.

07/10 - New card being produced

07/17 - Card received!

Entire process took almost 90 days. Apply early and hang in there everyone!

- New Comment: Hi everyone,

​

I applied to my STEM OPT extension back in early February (More specific, my case was received in Feb 2). I'll share my timeline later but first, did they forgot about the cases received in Feb 1st and Feb 2nd?

​

Going by [OPT Timeline](<https://imgur.com/a/7DaBcKV>) receipt date tracker, those two day have very high pending percentages (Feb 1st has 22% and Feb 2nd has 43%!!) compared to the surrounding weeks. The closest day to Feb 2nd with an equal or higher pending percentage in March 10, a full month loop.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: My timeline for post completion OPT (Chicago lockbox):

March 20, 2021 ? mailed application to USCIS

March 24th, 2021 ? package delivered (paid for express to get there by 22nd but post office delays?)

March 30th, 2021 ? USCIS sent confirmation text & received the I797c. Credit card charged.

UPDATE:

May 20th, 2021 ? status changed to approved. Card is being produced.

May 28th, 2021 ? received EAD card in the mail.

Took a total of 65 days between receipt of application & receiving EAD card.

- New Comment: Does anybody have any clue why so many early Feb(Feb 1,2,3) cases are stuck? Or when the backlog might cleared? My start date is approaching soon and I didn't expect my OPT to not be approved by this time lol.

- New Comment: My Post Completion OPT timeline

March 18th - Mailed via fedex to Chicago

March 19th - Receipt Date

Got Text message around 5-6 days after sending the application

Reddit Posts

May 20th - New Card Being Produced

Total Number of Days - 62

- New Comment: EDIT:

April 30th 2021 submitted online my OPT request, application received on the same day

July 26th 2021 request for initial evidence. Somehow i must have forgotten the copy of my passport.

I responded online to the request immediately by uploading a colored copy of both my visa and passport to be safe.

How long do you think it will now take to process my application and receive the card?

I am supposed to teach university classes on August 16th 2021... ?

August 12th 2021 card is being produced. It took 17 days from the day i submitted online my additional information they were requiring to get the approval if it helps anyone!

- New Comment: Hello people

I recently sent my POST OPT packet to Chicago USCIS lockbox though USPS priority express delivery. It was delivered on a saturday to "INS MIXED" . I want to know if this is going to be a problem as it is not delivered to the PO Box I mentioned in the address? Is my packet lost or delivered to the wrong address ? Has this happened with anyone here ?

- New Comment: I mailed my application on Feb 9 by USPS.

Reddit Posts

Feb 12 it was delivered to Chicago Lockbox.

Mar 3 Credit card is charged (19 days)

Mar 5 got a receipt number from Emma.

Mar 8 got a message from USCIS for a receipt number

- New Comment: MAJOR OPT HACK.

On my 100th day since submitting my OPT application (received December 15), I reached out to the live chat people on the USCIS website and asked to get my case expedited since it's outside normal processing times. I got approved within 24 hours of that. Good luck and I hope you guys get your OPTs approved as quickly as I did!

- New Comment: I sent my OPT application in the end of november 2020. Got rejected around february 23rd. With that new policy, i still can refile my OPT application?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: why are so many people on opttimeline talking about biometrics? I was told by my school that biometrics are not required when I applied (last month). What's up with that?

- New Comment: Mar 6 mail delivered

Mar 11 mail money order cashed

Mar 11 received text message with case number and saying official confirmation will be sent through mail

But still I haven't received any mail. Is there anything I have to worry about?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Opt Timeline

Mailed application February 22nd

Application delivered February 23rd

Check cashed March 1st

Receipt received in mail March 4th

New card being produced April 5th 2021

- New Comment: I received my EAD 3 weeks ago and still haven't got my SSN in the mail yet. I can't get somebody speak with me from the SSA office. What should I do

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: EDIT: my OPT timeline:

Sent: April 7th

Delivered: April 9th

Receipt Notice(Text): April 13th

Receipt in Mailbox: April 19th

approved June 28th, received in mail a few days after

- New Comment: Here's my OPT timeline:

3/2 - Sent my initial OPT application

3/4 - Received by USCIS

Reddit Posts

3/11 - Got receipt number by text

4/14 - New Card Is Being Produced

4/19 - Card Was Mailed To Me

4/20 - Card Was Picked Up By The USPS

4/22 - Card Was Delivered To Me By The Post Office (I received the card ?)

- New Comment: STEM OPT Timeline

Application Sent to Chicago Lockbox: 04/08

Delivered by USPS: 04/09

Receipt Number Text Message: 04/25

Money Order Cashed: 04/26

- New Comment: EDIT: Received my card today (May 28)

EDIT: Status changed to new card being produced (May 21). Total processing time was 63 days.

Post completion OPT updates:

Mailed to Potomac Service Center

Reddit Posts

Mailed: March 13, 2021

Mail delivered: March 14, 2021

Receipt notification: March 19, 2021

I-797C was received a few days after the text receipt notification.

Credit card charged: March 23, 2021 (was charged by Chicago lockbox even though my i797 was received from Potomac)

Since then I have no updates. My start date is in the last week of May so I'm really worried if I'll get it in time. *fingers crossed*

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: my timeline, STEM OPT:

3/23/2021: mailed to Chicago lockbox

3/24/2021: receipt date

sometime around here the check was cashed

6/7/2021: OPT EAD expires. 180 days will start counting. case is still "received".

Reddit Posts

6/10/2021: new card is being produced!! ahh! pretty fast!

- New Comment: Anyone applied for a STEM Extension online? I received the receipt of notice back in May 13th and there is still no update.

Title of the post: 401K benefits on F1 visa

Body of the post: Background: I'm in the US on F1 visa and currently on OPT. I don't have plans to settle in the US. I'll get some work experience, good exposure and move back to my home country and have a stable life.

I wanted to know what are the benefits of enrolling yourself in 401k, can someone opt out of it? From my understanding you get benefits of 401k when you retire and since I won't be setting in here, I would be retiring in my home country. In this case, what's the best bet? Should I lower the percentage in 401k? Should I take my 401k when I move back to my home country in a few years?

Please help. Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The only benefit to you is if you get an employer match which is free money to you but only if you put the same amount in yourself. I would say just put the least amount to get the max employer match.

You can either withdraw this money when you are a certain age without penalties or you can pay the early withdrawal penalty if you need it.

You will be investing the 401k amount so you can think of this money as something you can keep invested in the US economy even if you aren't here.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Don't make the mistake I made. Max it out and it will be the best thing you ever did looking back. On top of the match if you contribute to traditional 401k you will save a bunch in taxes which will grow over very long term.

My 2 cents don't listen to any idiot that says don't max it out. Put as much as you can towards it.

Refer: <https://www.reddit.com/r/personalfinance/wiki/index/>

[https://www.reddit.com/r/personalfinance/comments/8dpsvz/just_wanted_to_say_how_much_i_appreciate_the/](https://www.reddit.com/r/personalfinance/comments/8dpsvz/just_wanted_to_say_how_much_i_appreciate_the/)

- New Comment: You can always exchange your USD to your home currency. The money sitting in 401k won't gone after you leave the US. 401k are tax advantaged accounts. Depends on the tax code in your home country you might benefit from the 401k

- New Comment: Max it out if you can!

If you get an employer match this is free money, and contributions are tax deductible, so it will lower your tax bill *right now*.

Beyond this it is great to have your money invested in the US stock market. Very few countries have such profitable retirement schemes.

Once you leave your employer you can roll it over into an IRA account, and you will fall under the same rules as US citizens. Must wait until age 59 1/2 to withdraw penalty free.

To make the most of it, look into "Roth conversion". in a Roth IRA you will pay no taxes on capital gains (to the US. still check with your country of residence, but many countries recognize it).

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: You can opt out of it. Just choose 0% employee contributions. Usually your company will teach you how to set it. If you don't plan to stay in the US, it's not worth the withdrawal penalty.
- New Comment: Are partial withdrawals allowed? If one has an emergency or something very important can they do partial withdrawal and can get relaxation on penalty charges?
- New Comment: I'm in a similar boat, but here's my two cents.

Retirement savings accounts in the US might be a fantastic way to expose your portfolio to US markets when you move back home. Having an account where you can buy and sell stocks without incurring capital gains is awesome.

I understand being uncomfortable about the limits placed on the 401K but once you move back home, you can roll it over into a Roth IRA (pay income tax on the total amount) and then you can take out the principal whenever you want.

Title of the post: Indian student in US sevis got terminated

Body of the post: Hello!

I am one of the international student currently studying at stony brook university SUNY and I got to know that my sevis is terminated because of some unfortunate reason. I am currently looking for universities that will accept my terminated sevis or help me to get new I 20 and new sevis can someone help me how should I get out of this as 16 May is my last day to be in this country.

Thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: May 16 is tomorrow and you haven't don't anything to reinstate your visa? Everything you mentioned in the post will take time. You should leave us first and find a way back in
- New Comment: Yeah you fucked up and you have only yourself to blame.

Reddit Posts

You plagiarised your work, got your SEVIS terminated, and you've waited until the day before termination to sort this out?

Honestly, all you need to worry about is leaving the country, and then figure out the next steps from there. If you begin accruing unlawful presence, wave goodbye to any visa in the future.

- New Comment: >I am currently looking for universities that will accept my terminated sevis or help me to get new I 20 and new sevis can someone help me how should I get out of this as 16 May is my last day to be in this country.

Honestly, you have absolutely no time to do this, at all. I assume you mean your status will be terminated tomorrow. But if your status was already terminated then there isn't time at all.

You need to 1. Apply 2. Be Accepted and 3. Transfer your (terminated) SEVIS

All of this needs to be done in a day or less.

Honestly, you can try to do this, but a lot of schools do not accept terminated records.

You can leave obtain the new I-20 and return, that is an option.

You said you have a tourist visa, but you were not admitted on a tourist visa. So you have to leave and return on that tourist visa to activate it.

You can also file a change to tourist status but the cost would be significant as would the time commitment. It also doesn't really help your situation as you would then need to file a change back to F-1 or leave and reenter the US.

Reddit Posts

My honest recommendation given your significant time crunch would be to exit and reenter the US with the new I-20 for a new school. You have all your personal items, your apartment/house/lease, etc you need to factor in too, but unless you have no F-1 visa it may just be easier to go home and do applications and take a break then return later this summer for the Fall term.

Regarding your question on schools, that's a fairly personal question. There are thousands of options for you. Do you want to stay where you are now? Do you want to move to a new place? Do you want to keep your major?

Unless you have significant immigration or family concerns for not leaving and returning home for the summer, I would leave and return and apply for other schools from home. It will remove most of the stress and issues you have about stability and immigration now and would be significantly simpler immigration wise.

- New Comment: When and why did it get terminated? Did you file for reinstatement?

- New Comment: You need to start reaching out to schools directly to see if any of them would accept your terminated record. Some schools do and will issue you a reinstatement I-20, but some schools won't. Also important that you actually apply and get admitted to another school. Not sure if this is really something Reddit can answer, you should be researching other schools in the area or in an area where you may be willing to move.

- New Comment: You can book a flight tomorrow to Canada and returning tomorrow with your tourist visa, so get more time to find universities, apply for the I-20, and change the status. I knew a person who made it. I hope it helps

- New Comment: speak to immigration lawyer ASAP.

- New Comment: Contact your local community college

- New Comment: My experience is my sevis my termination on December 10, i found a esl that would take me there where 2 options either stay here and file or reinstatement which takes few months or just flew out of the country and

Reddit Posts

reentry the country. So on December 27 i flew to Mexico and on December 28 i came back, the immigration officer did ask me but i know people who were asked and let them in. I personally haven't heard a case where they have not someone in for this. I studied in ESL from Jan till last month April and now i have transferred to a university for a summer classes and so on

- New Comment: Yeah your status is terminated tomorrow, you need to leave tomorrow. If you overstay, it will be recorded on your eventual outbound record, and can prevent you from returning via a visa or any other benefit in the future.

- New Comment: No university will issue I-20 this fast, nor can you make sure they will admit you. Not to mention it's already waaaaay past deadline for most Uni fall semester. Go back to India, then apply for spring semester. Don't overstay because USCIS will blacklist you after the grace period. In the future they will straight deny u entry

- New Comment: Are you in grad school?

- New Comment: Try to join a language school to stay in status

- New Comment: Don't you have a grace period of 21 days after your termination date?

- New Comment: If your SEVIS record has been terminated, it is crucial to act promptly to maintain your legal status in the United States. Here are some steps you can take:

1. Contact your university's international student office immediately and explain your situation. They may be able to provide guidance or potentially reinstate your SEVIS record if the termination was an error.[1]

2. If reinstatement is not possible, you will need to transfer your SEVIS record to another university that is willing to issue you a new I-20 and admit you as a transfer student. Many universities accept terminated SEVIS records for transfer students.[2]

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3. Alternatively, you can apply for reinstatement of your F-1 status with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) if you meet certain criteria, such as having been out of status for less than 5 months.[3]

4. If neither transfer nor reinstatement is an option, you may need to depart the U.S. by the specified date (May 16th) to avoid accruing unlawful presence.[4]

It is essential to seek advice from your university's international student office or an immigration attorney to explore all available options and ensure you maintain proper legal status.[1][2][3][4]

Sources

[1] Words 333333 - pdfcoffee.com <https://pdfcoffee.com/words-333333-pdf-free.html>

[2] [PDF] Toy car mat 3d all over print tracksuits - L'Empreinte du Bois
<https://lempreintedubois.fr/userfiles/lempreintedubois.fr/file/92212994259.pdf>

[3] list - Peter Norvig https://norvig.com/ngrams/count_1w.txt

[4] count_1w100k.txt - Peter Norvig https://norvig.com/ngrams/count_1w100k.txt

[5] ecprice/wordlist - MIT <https://www.mit.edu/~ecprice/wordlist.100000>

- New Comment: What's the reason? You're chances depends on how bad of a reason it was

- New Comment: How did you get your SEVIS terminated to begin with? I didn't know that's even possible. Were you involved in any criminal activities?

- New Comment: Ask to ESL school

- New Comment: Look into mount vernon university Ohio, they should be able to do it

- New Comment: Any university that you get an admission should be able to transfer SEVIS, but that won't change the fact you still need a reinstatement, either by I539 or flying back to India for a new visa.

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- New Comment: Bruh its so funny no matter what school you go to there's always one or two cheating indians per program. In mine they caught 2 indian girls sharing excel files for a quant stock portfolio class. They had the audacity to do it again in the final. Then a day after graduation who do you think is shameless enough to do a cringe linkedin post about completing their education and journey? Back to Mumbai.

- New Comment: Did you actually cheat or was it a false flag?

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Is this real?

Body of the post: I see a lot of posts similar to this and have always wondered if it's real opportunities or it's a scam

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Americans don't use the term "fresher".

Almost certainly some form of Indian Consultancy scam.

- New Comment: It is extremely illegal to look specifically for OPT/STEM OPT candidates.

- New Comment: ? Body shop alert ?

- New Comment: It amazes me how they advertise on linkedin. You'd think they'd do these things discreetly since it increases those candidates chances of getting into trouble with USCIS later on.

It's like saying ?Look at us USCIS, flag us?.

- New Comment: In my experience , if it's an Indian consultancy, it's a scam stay away

- New Comment: I get trauma every time I see these kinda post.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Must be consultancy horrible they are

- New Comment: New fish ?

- New Comment: Nuisance created by few of my countrymen. Sorry for that. Unfortunately, those "few" people post rigorously. So, I see train of posts sometimes on my LinkedIn wall. I wonder what we can do to stop this!? Maybe create a subreddit thread. Post sketchy screenshot of consultancies. Subredditor report them on LinkedIn platform. I understand creating a new profile is easy for them.

But we gotta cleanup the mess. whatever it takes!

- New Comment: This is a common template. Following this template from thousands other indian companies for last 2 months yet no job.

- New Comment: If it's too good to be true, it's probably is..

- New Comment: These posts happen on LinkedIn a lot; quite a lot of them play into job seekers' desperation and once you get in, you almost certainly will get the short end of the stick and be exposed to exploitation. I've gotten similar InMails to these -- they are annoying.

The red flags to watch out for:

1. In some sort of sus recruitment / HR outsourcing firm with a lot of Indian employees.
2. "Recruiters" have sus LinkedIn work experiences

- New Comment: Total scam. Don't bite into it.

- New Comment: This is mainly for stopping your 90-day clock. Nothing else

- New Comment: One of the many things that Indians do here that are illegal. Pls be aware that these companies look for baits where they will charge around 30-40% of salary from these "freshers" for a period of 3-4 years and not apply for legal documents for that amount of time. Sometimes even more than 5 years. Also get ready to feel like a prisoner to

Reddit Posts

them not just by name but also be treated like one for that amount of time. Remember that these companies milk such people until they can with a promise to apply for their green card. I know people who got their green cards after 10-15 years.

In another incident, (again Indian) one of my friends received an email from an Indian recruiting company specifying that they were looking for an Indian origin person for a job. My friend is now suing this company.

- New Comment: Check if location is telengana

Title of the post: Stopped by immigration at layover

Body of the post: Background: graduated in December, EAD approved and in hand with post completion OPT, my I20 shows post completion requested and hasn't been updated to approved.

India to us layover at Frankfurt, layover immigration didn't allow me to go through as I did not have approved in I20. My case is I have it approved and that's why I got the ead. Carrying the current i20 ead i94 and couple of offer letters with me. They booked another flight for tomorrow. Will I have the same problem? I made the airlines services contact cbp and they mentioned no problem with my visa. Did anyone else experience this?

Update: was booked for a flight the next day and document check is successful, just needed another employee to check I guess.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Having form i797 (notice of approval) will help. You can also request and print i-20 again from DSO which will say 'approved'.

- New Comment: Does immigration pay for the new flight or do they just screw you over?

- New Comment: Sorry - ur dso hasnt approved your post completion ? Didnt get that part

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- New Comment: Not sure about other schools but my school doesn't provide an approved OPT until you send them a copy of EAD. Fortunately I was traveling via Singapore and wasn't asked for this. But I did have to go through secondary inspection in US because of this.

One of the reasons I avoid traveling via Europe. One of my friends wasn't allowed to board the flight and was asked to get a transit visa even though he had a valid US visa while another friend wasn't even asked anything.

- New Comment: Sorry to hear your trouble. Wish you get out of this mess soon.

Next time DO NOT travel through (layover) Europe without valid visa stamp.

Most of these countries don't allow without visa. Approval notices they don't care and treat as invalid documents including EAD card. The other issue is each country in Europe has different rules. Even airlines have no clue what documents are needed.

Please? please avoid Europe layover without valid visa stamped in passport. EAD is not valid travel document in their eyes. Hope this changes in future.

- New Comment: When your EAD got approved you need to request for new I20.

- New Comment: Does your school have an emergency phone number for immigration issues ? ... Or try sending an email to your DSO (email addresses would generally be provided somewhere) ... You should be able to request a new i20 from your DSO ... Since your OPT is approved now, you should be able to get a new i20 which has details about your company also

- New Comment: You can get a PDF editor and literally edit the text to say approved.

The layover immigration folks are just super sensitive to words and won't understand the full picture.

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Title of the post: H1b holders to start their own company. DHS open to hear comments - Dec 22 is c

Body of the post: In October, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) published a new proposed rule that removed the downsides of the H-1B specialty occupation visa for startup founders.

“If more entrepreneurs are able to obtain H-1B status to develop their business enterprise,” the proposed rule states, “the United States could benefit from the creation of jobs, new industries, and new opportunities.”

After reading this column, I urge you and others to make your voice heard about the rule. The DHS is accepting public comments on the rule through December 22, 2023. After the comment period closes, the DHS will go through the comments, possibly make changes to the rule based on the comments, and then issue a final rule and effective date, which I’m anticipating will be in place in time for the next H-1B lottery in March. You can submit a comment at the top of the proposed rule by selecting the “SUBMIT A FORMAL COMMENT” link.

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/10/23/2023-23381/modernizing-h-1b-requirements-providing-flexibility-in-the-f-1-program-and-program-improvements#print>

Comments must be made in English. However, business owners and non-citizens are eligible to comment. You can even file a comment anonymously!

Please do this..#workvisa #h1b ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: While technically off topic, This does play to the concerns of many F-1 visa holders and I want to support F-1 student taking every opportunity to make their opinion heard.

- New Comment: I hope this rule is for those who already have an H-1B from a valid employer, and want to startup on

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the side.

Not open to those who will set up fake "startups" leading to open season lottery applications.

- New Comment: This is going to obliterate the h-1b lottery odds.

- New Comment: Abuse central. Stop making rules outside of congressional action. Congress never intended H1b to start companies.

- New Comment: Here is the template answer you can submit

Dear Department of Homeland Security,

I am writing to ****express strong support for the proposed rule to facilitate H-1B visa access for startup founders****. This initiative is crucial for the United States because:

1. ****Job Creation****: Startup founders on H-1B visas are likely to create new jobs, boosting employment and economic growth.
2. ****Innovation****: These entrepreneurs often bring innovative ideas and technologies, keeping the U.S. at the forefront of global innovation.
3. **Diverse Industries**: Their ventures span various sectors, contributing to a diverse and robust economy.
4. **Global Competitiveness**: Attracting talented entrepreneurs ensures the U.S. remains a competitive business hub.

Enabling H-1B founders to thrive without the constraints of control and equity loss is critical for a vibrant,

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forward-thinking economy.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

- New Comment: We are about to change governments, potentially. Does anyone know what happens to all of this if there is a new president?

- New Comment: Did it! Thank you so much.

- New Comment: Any update on this? What happens next now that the commenting period is closed?

Title of the post: My GF fell out of her F-1 status. Advice needed.

Body of the post: So my GF came to the US under F-1 visa 4 years ago. Around 2 years later her parents arrived in the US under permanent residence status, and they started the process to sponsor her right away. During the spring quarter earlier this year, she noticed her tuition fee got adjusted to what permanent residents would normally pay, and this led her to falsely believe her status in the system was already changed to permanent resident for them to do that. She then took the following summer quarter off without going to her immigration advisor for approval because again she thought she was already a permanent resident, big F up yup. She then got an email from her advisor in the fall quarter saying she fell out of status by not enrolling in the previous quarter, this makes her lose her status and will soon be overstaying her visa.

So, what will happen to her green card application her parents already put in for her? I'm guessing it would be rejected now since she doesn't have a status. What should she do in this situation?

Alternatively, I had also wanted to consider marriage with her at some point, even before things went south. Would it be worth it to go with marrying her now so she can update her status and avoid overstay for too long?

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Any advice is much appreciated

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: i think consult an immigration lawyer, this case seems complicated!
- New Comment: DSO here - this needs to be handled by an immigration attorney 100%. There are so many factors you've mentioned and so many mire that might be at play, it's above Reddit's pay grade
- New Comment: She can apply for reinstatement if it's been less than 5 months. She can also apply if it's been more than 5 months, but they'll need good reason on why she did not apply sooner, and she will have to stay in USA. This will give you guys some time to figure out wedding plans if you want to do it. She has to enroll in the university though.

Also, tell her to stay away from any law enforcement at all costs. Should not be much trouble if she is in sanctuary state/city though. Good luck!

- New Comment: Best to consult a lawyer. Also make sure the lawyer works with F1 Visas. Very few lawyers do.

Something that's not clear to me tho, usually summers aren't required (but this might be different for quarter systems). I'd apply for reinstatement right away with the help of your DSO. But a lawyer might be able to assist better since this looks like a very complex case outside of your school's help.

Best of luck!

- New Comment: As an international student, enrolling in the summer semester or quarter is optional. You are only required to enroll 12 credits or more in the Fall and Spring.

Tell that DSO to cross check US gov website before scaring students and ruining someone's immigration record!!

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One of the many universities and colleges that explicitly state summer enrollment law. ?

<https://valenciacollege.edu/students/international-students/maintaining-visa-status.php>

It could be called annual vacation and it's usually taken in the summer. ?

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2019/06/what-annual-vacation>

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: definitely speak to a lawyer about this.

as others have said there is a lot at play here.

things such as her intent to stay (which run contrary to the non immigrant intent on which the F1 is based), the potential overstay etc etc and how this relates to her green card app are probably going to need both their input/advice and potentially their work on minimising the problems this causes

- New Comment: Does she have pending i-485?

- New Comment: Id consult with an immigration lawyer asap. I am not aware about the complexities about your case but in general summer enrollment is optional unless it's your first or last semester. Alternatively, students can file for the reinstatement application with USCIS.

- New Comment: I was a F1 student who got married before my status expired and applied to the green card before graduating.

I received my green card almost a year after being done with school. The way I understood it was that when I applied for the green card my F1 status automatically dropped and now I was allowed to stay in the us until they make a decision on my green card.

In your girlfriend case I believe she is currently waiting for a GC and since they adjusted while she was legally staying in the US then she should be able to stay until they make a decision.

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The problem is that she isn't allowed to work or travel unless they have applied for that for her.

I think sponsoring from parents to kids can take longer so I would check with uscis if she has a case open and that it's in good standing.

- New Comment: Talk to a lawyer ASAP, and congratulations on your upcoming wedding

Title of the post: Job searching while on limited OPT time SUCKS

Body of the post: Everyday feels like a ticking time bomb and I hate it.

Got a rejection email after going through 3 interviews and a writing test with a company that I was really looking forward to because the other candidate had 1 more year of experience than I did. It makes sense and I totally understand but man. This sucks.

Gotta get back to more applications I guess and hope somebody will want to hire me before my OPT unemployment clock stops..sigh

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Remember, you can volunteer in your field to stop the clock during your initial 12 months OPT

- New Comment: Best advice is to start early.

Start job searching the semester before graduation

- New Comment: It's all numbers game. Just keep putting applications.

Tip - if it works for you, check midwest jobs. People are needed here.

- New Comment: Yeah it really sucks but don't give up. Keep on the grind

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- New Comment: Self employed, part time job are ok

- New Comment: You can also form an entity and do self employment you'll find more opportunities for yourself that way.

Depends on how much time is left on your OPT but best bet is to bet on yourself and apply for E-2 once you get enough money from your new venture.

Title of the post: I'm flying to the US in 5 hours and forgot my travel signature in the I-20

Body of the post: I just checked my document and my last travel signature expired a few days ago and I didn't know it, am I doomed? I've heard that it's possible that customs will let you through but I'm sweating my ass off

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: no jk you'll probably be fine contact your DSO asap maybe they can correct the issue before you arrive at customs, and maybe you can have the updated I-20 ready on your phone before passing through

- New Comment: Hey guys, just went through customs, the guy didn't even check the signature so I'm chillin. Lots of love for you all that gave me hope and made my trip less stressing. <3

- New Comment: If your sevis record is active, they'll send you to secondary inspection at most and let you in given you're a genuine student.

- New Comment: Happened to me once. Luckily it was daytime in US and DSO was super responsive. They sent me an electronic copy of the I-20. I printed in the airport an hour before boarding the flight.

Just email them and they will send an I-20. If you don't receive it before you board, maybe you will receive it before the layover. Else, maybe you will receive it before CBP check. Just email them.

- New Comment: Yes. Contact your DSO asap.

- New Comment: I've traveled with my I-20 being signed for couple months ago and they didn't have any problems. On

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the airport they've checked it and explained that for future I should have it with current signature and that's it.

- New Comment: late to the game but you're perfectly fine. worst case is they'll send you to secondary and let you go in like 15 min after they verify you're legit. best case is they'll just let you pass customs smoothly. nothing to really worry about either way

- New Comment: Try to get it emailed to you at least. Electronic ok

- New Comment: Am I the only one whose travel signature has not been checked? Genuine question. Never really checked mine.

- New Comment: I once didn't have my physical i20 whole coming in, and I had it on the phone. They detained me for questioning for about 7 hours.

Nothing short of horror it was ?

- New Comment: Biggest issue might be checking in to your flight. If you get past that you will most likely be just fine, maybe pulled to secondary

- New Comment: Not every border agent knows that they need to check that signature. You might be ok.

- New Comment: Here is some official USG info on the topic that you will find helpful!

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/travel/form-i-515a-overview>

- New Comment: Once I didn't even have the entire document with me. Depends on the officer. Usually its just a warning and nothing happens. Get a digitally scanned signature from your DSO ASAP

- New Comment: I've traveled with no physical I-20 in hand.

They just took me in for a secondary questioning, probably called my school and confirmed my legitimacy and let me go,

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advising me to carry a printout henceforth.

- New Comment: What is travel signature ?

- New Comment: you are screwed

Title of the post: F-1 visa violation, took 2 (4-credit each) online classes and only 1 (4-credit) on gro

Body of the post: I requested an SSN appointment letter for on campus employment and it got rejected as I had only taken 1 in-person class in fall 2023.

I looked deeper into it and turns out that's a f-1 visa violation, however, I didn't hear anything from the university office besides the SSN letter request rejection.

I was wondering what the best way to move forward with this would be and what to expect. (I'm currently back home, outside the US).

Should I reach out to my university asap? Or reach out to them once I return in the fall. Should I expect my sevis to be terminated? Overall I'm really unsure what this will look like going forward and if I will permanently lose my f-1 status, basically want to get an idea regarding how screwed I am, I feel so dumb lol

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >Should I expect my sevis to be terminated?

Based on your description, it should be terminated already.

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>Should I reach out to my university asap? Or reach out to them once I return in the fall.

ASAP because you may not be able to return in the Fall.

>Overall I'm really unsure what this will look like going forward

They should have terminated your record. So they would need to issue you a new I-20 and you would need to pay for the new SEVIS record.

- New Comment: Speak to your DSO...

- New Comment: Reach out to your DSO asap. Btw how did you request appointment letter while being outside US?

- New Comment: Seem like f-1 violation will lead directly to Sevis terminated. Literally any f-1 violation i believe. I almost got 1 for not taking enough class for Spring 2024 then I took educational break and just got a new visa recently.

- New Comment: Don't worry OP. Small issue, it can be solved. Meet your DSO and you'll get a new SEVIS record. Just be careful to read up about the intricacies yourself, our DSO's are capable of making mistakes

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: U down voted me. Obviously I can see it ?.

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: F1 OPT 4 months and still nothing

Body of the post: \[UPDATE - Aug 2, 2024] - OPT got approved this morning. Hopefully the physical card arrives without delay.

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I applied for F1 OPT Authorization on April 4th my case still hasn't processed. Luckily (perhaps) I haven't been able to secure a job until now and I have negotiated a starting date of Aug 26th. I don't know if I should play it safe and apply for premium processing or if I should wait it out. My cheap and broke a** would really like not to as it will be 4+ months.

Has anyone who's applied around that time still waiting on theirs? Has anyone around that time got theirs? How long after PP did you get the EAD in hand? Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: hey one of my friends who also applied on 4th got approved this morning. we are almost there!

- New Comment: I applied for mine on 1st April and got the decision on 29th July. I received an email from the SEVIS portal, while my USCIS portal was showing 4 months.

So you should be receiving your decision soon, keep a lookout for emails from SEVIS as the USCIS portal takes longer to update.

- New Comment: Yes same, i applied on 4th april as well and my portal shows 4 months today. I have a job but luckily my prof is chill with it so I can start whenever I receive my EAD card. Dont worry will get it soon!

- New Comment: I applied to stem opt back on february and didn't heard back until june. Sometimes I check the bulletin and processing time to see how busy they are. I hope you get it soon!

- New Comment: <https://www.reddit.com/r/USCIS/s/pDFzXKcTEi>

- New Comment: I just did pp. got approved July 29. Still waiting on card. I am currently outside USA and need my card to be mailed to me once it reaches my friends place in the US. I have a flight to BOS on Aug 31 so I did PP only July 16.

Goodluck to you???all the best

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- New Comment: So do i have a job or not,am a bit confused
- New Comment: Hey! Don?t apply to premium now. I applied March 27th. I got approved July 14th. I was following the updates on [OPT Timeline](https://opttimeline.com/IOE?CASE_TY=EAD). It seems like they are they are processing April 2nd rn. I?m sure they are processing April 4th this week! So hold on. Just few more days. My opt card took 7 days to arrive lol. However, it usually takes 7 days to be produced and 14 days to ship and arrive (2.5 to 3 weeks).
- New Comment: How long does it take to get the physical card after ead is approved?
- New Comment: I got mine in 2 weeks with premium processing. Ead card within 21 days.
- New Comment: i got my receipt notice on April 11th and still waiting?. I got offered a position but I was transparent with them and now they?re waiting on me. However I heard that ppl that applied April 1st just got approved on tuesday (july 30)

at this point i waited too long and dont think its worth to pay for PP

Title of the post: For anyone travelling internationally without their EAD

Body of the post: I traveled internationally while my OPT was pending and recently returned to the US. My OPT has been approved but my card hasn?t been delivered yet. I gave my passport and first page of my I20 as normal but I didn?t have the updated second page showing my school requested OPT. I was taken to secondary processing but only waited like 5 minutes before I was let in. I was just told to make sure I also carry that second page showing it?s requested or approved. Wasn?t even asked for an ead. So I think you?ll be fine! (This was jfk, I?m not sure about other airports)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It depends on the officers. This is not the official advice.
- The fact that they let you in does not mean that they would let everyone in.

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- New Comment: Yea I never got asked for my EAD when I enter the country, although I deff recommend always having it on you when you travel. It very much depends on the officer you get whether they allow you in or not. But if you have been approved and can show your letter of approval, it deff helps. I would definitely not leave while pending and come back before it's approved
- New Comment: Which country are you from?, I've noticed that the officers are rather picky in this regard.
- New Comment: I had to go for secondary processing because my DSO made some errors on their end. But they asked me to show them the EAD (which I was carrying) and that helped me.
- New Comment: To everyone reading this. Good luck entering without an EAD if you aren't white.
- New Comment: Did you have a Valid F1 visa when you tried to re enter?
- New Comment: did you have a valid visa?

Title of the post: The Requested URL was Rejected on DS160

Body of the post: Greetings,

I'm trying to fill out DS160, when I finish personal information section and try to click next, it show "the request URL was rejected. Please consult with your administrator?"

Has this ever happened to you?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: it's happening since 13 hours and more. but still showing that.
- New Comment: Yes, it has been 12 hours, and the issue still persists .

[This was also posted on USCIS. Hopefully, issue will be fixed soon](https://www.reddit.com/r/USCIS/comments/1drqdkn/is_the_ceac_website_down/)

- New Comment: I am also facing the same issue, any update on this ?

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- New Comment: Hi i am also facing this issue , I am not able to submit my ds160 form and I have my visa Dropbox on 2july 2024. Do we have any other way. Please suggest

- New Comment: I am having the same issue. It's been 20 plus hours.

- New Comment: same problem here did you find any solution !!!

- New Comment: Same issue with me since 22 hr. Any update, anyone?

- New Comment: are you using safari?

- New Comment: still not responding. I used safari, chrome, firefox?

- New Comment: looks like some maintenance is going on on their servers.

Will might need to wait for monday morning. Usually update will be from (friday evening to monday early morning)

- New Comment: Hi guys,

I experienced the same issue while trying to fill out the DS160 form.

The solution that worked for me?

I used the Internet Explorer (now Microsoft Edge) web browser and it worked perfectly well for me. I just completed the DS160 visa application form.

Here is the link to the browser -
[<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/internet-explorer-downloads-d49e1f0d-571c-9a7b-d97e-be248806ca70>](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/internet-explorer-downloads-d49e1f0d-571c-9a7b-d97e-be248806ca70)

I hope this helps.

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- New Comment: I'm having the same problem. I've tried different browsers. I think there's an issue with their server.
- New Comment: Tried edge, chrome, safari as well as different accounts. Same error message.
- New Comment: Hi yes i have been struggling w the same issue and decided to call the us embassy in my country - they seem to say everyone's facing this issue & they advise to wait while they fix it (maybe try every few hours?), use different browsers/devices etc.
- New Comment: Facing the same issue, can we raise some ticket with them. My application might end in a couple of days and I have already booked visa using that DS160 number.
- New Comment: It's working now with hack use internet explorer browser
- New Comment: hi everyone, I also have the same issue of filling the DS-160 Visa form.... It keeps displaying the URL error message only. I tried Chrome and Microsoft Edge. any thoughts?
- New Comment: Internet explorer site compability
 - 1.) allow sites to reload in IE (internet explorer) mode
 - 2.) internet explorer mode pagesAdd the ds160 page link
- New Comment: Almost 11:00PM in my country and still having the same problem since yesterday. I tried all options and none of'em work. Has someone had it fixed already ?
- New Comment: Is the issue resolved?
- New Comment: Its working now.

Title of the post: worst nightmare for an international student

Body of the post: I was on academic probation. I appeal to the school, and they denied my appeal. It was in May.

Reddit Posts

Since then, I have been looking at what can be done. I learned that as long as my sevis record is active, I can transfer it to another school. I emailed the International Office of Affairs, asking questions about what can be done, but I am not getting any response, even though I see a pop up saying this sender is out of your organisation. Yesterday, I talked to the community college, and they understood the struggle I had, and they said they would be happy to accept me. I have been working on it. I added my school international office advisor for further process, It was yesterday, and today, I received a letter saying my service record has been terminated.

I'm not adequately able to process my mind. I'm literally crying while writing.

what can be done ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: When your sevis is terminated, I guess you only have one choice, go back, get a new i20 and enter again. What was your reason for academic probation? In case , if it's medical related you can ask your doctor to provide a letter stating reasons and submit to your DSO.

- New Comment: >I was on academic probation. I appeal to the school, and they denied my appeal. It was in May.

Your record was terminated around this time for the academic probation. It is an immigration law obligation.

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>I learned that as long as my sevis record is active, I can transfer it to another school.

Your record is terminated so no use pursuing this.

>what can be done ?

Get accepted by the community College and exit and reenter the country assuming your visa is valid.

- New Comment: My sevis was terminated last year around March at a four year college. The reason for my sevis termination was transferring my sevis records to a different school that was way past the five month policy that as an international student, you can only start a new school within 5 months to your start of classes, and anything beyond that will lead to complications. I transferred mine on March 15 2023, and my start of classes for my new school was September 2023. Due to this, my sevis was terminated. I was heartbroken and depressed finding alternative options to solve the problem however i went further and enrolled in the fall with my terminated sevis records and luckily my new school accepted my terminated sevis. Assisted me file for reinstatement in July 2023 because I wasn't ready to leave the US and reenter. My reinstatement was approved in October 2023. I know this is a terrifying situation but don't give up. I'd advise you to file for reinstatement than to leave and reenter.

- New Comment: Reinstatement can take longer than a year

- New Comment: I believe if you can get the community college to accept you, you can apply for your sevis to be reinstated.

- New Comment: I think that you can either go out of USA and try to re-enter, or stay in USA and apply for reinstatement of F1 student status. Discuss with an immigration attorney, if possible.

- New Comment: Hi, I have been through your situation. Can you please DM. It's too long to type here. (In my case, it

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was Christmas holidays and they filed my extension late, my DSO sent request to USCIS, but they did not accept it)

In few words, I secured my i20 from a new school and I travelled out of the country(Mexico) for stamping and got back on new Sevis.

- New Comment: Apply for reinstatement with USCIS

- New Comment: Even if you go to community college, can you secure employment? You will face the same issue later

- New Comment: talk to a specialist attorney about this. best of luck my love, i know how stressful this can be. Inshallah everything will work out in your favor ??

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Denied bc of CC

Body of the post: Had My interview today and was refused under 214b for Community College.

I had ample funding, did not say anything suspicious but the VO said ?so you are going to a CC? in a condescending tone.

He simply asked me 3 questions then denied me. Is it worth reapplying?

<https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/s/6kD0pgwT2U> <? more in depth in this post

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Are you from South Asia? If so, I wouldn't recommend applying with a CC, almost never gets approved. Apparently many student from South Asia came to the U.S to study at CC but then left their programs and

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became illegal residents. CC because they're easier to get into and don't have expensive semester fees. If your countrymen have done the same in the past then it may be a factor behind your visa refusal.

- New Comment: that's really strange i was approved f-1 for my CC with no issues. can you tell us a little bit more about your circumstances?

was it possible there were any errors when you filed your DS-160? did they give any reason for rejecting?

- New Comment: While there are people who got approved, it's possible something else might have been seen off to the officer. You should discuss the full story with people who have had approved for CC.

- New Comment: I'm from West Africa and I came in using a community college. I know my country has a high denial rate so I only applied to schools that don't have community in their name. E.g Western College instead of Western Community College. It looks better to the eye.

Option 2 is come in using a uni then transfer immediately before school starts .

- New Comment: Under 214b means , you had a 2 YEAR home country requirement, you wanna share about 214b
bruhhhhhh

- New Comment: Show proof of easily liquidatable funds, preferably cash. A credit card is not one of them.

Title of the post: F1 Reinstatement was approved

Body of the post: Finally after stressful 6 months, it was approved. To my surprise, it got approved in a day after I sent my RFE documents.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Congratulations and i am also in the same boat can you provide little information on the time line

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Did you get to give biometrics?

Did you know which centre the file was processed?

Are you still studying?

What was the RFE?

Thanks in advance

- New Comment: Can you explain what does this means?

I have no clue

- New Comment: Yayy! congrats I got mine too! I applied in feb 2024 and just got my visa approved :))

- New Comment: Congratulations!

I got an RFE too. Could you please check your DM

Title of the post: Can I sell my old clothes under F-1 visa?

Body of the post: I have a lot of old clothes that I wanna get rid of as I'm moving cities. Is it okay for me to be selling them on Depop and receive money for it? I estimate it will bring me in \$1k of revenue if I do, as I have a lot of shit purchased through my years at college

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: At the end of the semester, it's very common for people to sell their belongings and move out.

- New Comment: You can sell your belongings as long you don't make a business out of it. So frequency and volume may lead to issues

- New Comment: Depop will ask for SSN. What I usually do is sell the clothes on crossroads or buffalo exchange. If they are branded clothing you can try a designer consignment shop.

Reddit Posts

The money is little that they won't notice. I do this all the time.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: You can sell any of your personal belongings it's not a business.

- New Comment: This chat is a bloodbath of bans

- New Comment: You might want to check out <https://swapthings.co>, a platform for exchanging used toys, books, games, clothes and more.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Just chill.. it's common sense. No one is going to come after you for this.

Title of the post: Stupid question alert. Why do some universities allow for Day 1 CPT while others don't?

Body of the post: It's pretty obvious how 90+% of the enrollees at Harrisburg University are those pursuing a 2nd or even 3rd Masters simply because they got unlucky with H1b lottery.

Question is why does USCIS not plug this loophole by not allowing Day 1 CPT?

Also, if it's a case of such unlucky students bringing in \$15k/year for the university, why don't more universities get that Day 1 CPT status authorized by USCIS?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 1. because legislation takes a long time to pass and it's not the most pressing immigration issue right now. people coming into the country legally and paying into the economy isn't a *huge* problem for congress.

Reddit Posts

2. in order to have a profitable day 1 cpt program, you have to pretty much accept anyone. most reputable universities wouldn't risk this. even decent universities receive some sort of public assistance and it's not a good look.

- New Comment: >Why do some universities allow for Day 1 CPT while others (most) don't?

Because most programs don't have an immediate academic need for internships. We have a program that is technically day 1 CPT, but we don't advertise that fact because it is ACADEMIC and we place students with the employer. As opposed to schools that do this as a cash grab for students buying time for H1B or other applications.

>Question is why does USCIS not plug this loophole by not allowing Day 1 CPT?

Because as shown above, Day 1 CPT can have legitimate purposes for academics. And USCIS does not oversee this. SEVP does. And SEVP is already reviewing this and the outcome will be horrific for any students involved when it comes down. There will be absolutely no grace for any of those students caught in this.

>Also, if its a case of such unlucky students bringing in \$15k/year for the university, why don't more universities get that Day1 CPT status authorized by USCIS?

1. As stated before USCIS does not in any way shape or form oversee this. SEVP does.

2. Because most schools are not for profit entities and care about the quality of their students and also do not want to risk their SEVP accreditations for a short term gain... As opposed to these otherwise financially insolvent universities that otherwise collapse without those funds.

- New Comment: Keeping immigration laws aside.

Look at Day 1 CPT colleges. They are no name, extremely low ranked schools that accept everyone who applies.

Reddit Posts

Their application standards are like bare minimum. Submit your details, a random plagiarized statement of purpose and you get in.

Take any leagues like Big10, Big12, SEC etc. they have a much higher bar for getting in and it's not that easy. Their acceptance rate would be around like 20/30% or even lower, where as these no name schools have almost 90% acceptance rates.

Example: If UCLA becomes a 'Day 1 CPT' school, the demographic of people attending, quality of education and standards will drastically go down. Why would any good school want that to happen to them?

Day 1 CPT might not be illegal, but students and schools literally walk on thin ice and try to abuse every loophole to make it legal.

- New Comment: The issue with this school in particular (at least when I worked there, maybe they shored this up more) was that CPT wasn't actually required by any program or any courses. In order for CPT to be allowed at the start of the program, it has to be a genuine requirement (meaning ALL students in a particular class or program track are required to have an internship).

HU had a large percentage of students who did not work on CPT yet they claimed it was 'required' for purposes of allowing day 1 cpt. There was no course work tied to it. Super shady, reason why I left working there years ago.

Title of the post: EAD got approved faster than I expected on regular processing

Body of the post: EAD applied: 15th February

EAD approved: 28th February

Reddit Posts

Waiting for the card to be delivered

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I've been doing this for many years, and it is extremely common for wide variations in processing times. Multiple times I've seen them processing in a matter of weeks. Then without any warning it suddenly starts taking them 3 to 4 months to review applications. That is normal for USCIS.

For May 2023 graduates, those who applied in February 2023 were often getting approvals within two weeks. Those who applied in later March and April were taking up to four months.

There was a very similar trend for Fall 2023 graduates. September applicants got a much faster decision generally than October/November applicants.

Also last year in 2023 a new trend developed. Previous to that year it was very common for students from India to apply as early as possible. Then suddenly, all at once, it became a trend at least across multiple universities for many students from India to delay their own application submissions to around the 2nd half of the semester. That population makes up a high percentage of OPT applicants. Maybe with this trend USCIS just has fewer applications to review earlier in the semesters.

Also, don't delay your own application. Apply as early as USCIS allows.

- New Comment: Maybe because it's off season?

- New Comment: Man I wish. Seems like the immigration officer reviewing your case just got a raise / was their best day that day. A 13 days turnaround is insane.

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- New Comment: I applied on 10th Feb and got it approved on 25th Feb
 - New Comment: I thought you can only apply for EAD 90 days before graduation date? I got my OPT requested I-20 from my university on march 4,2024 because the grad end date is May 31,2024. I requested them to send it to me in February but of no use.
 - New Comment: I got the same situation lol applied on the 2nd and got approved on the 19th
 - New Comment: Hi did you get any update regarding processing of your ead card and its delivery ?
- I got standalone approval on 28th February and still haven't gotten a notification about production of the ead card. What about you?
- New Comment: Damn? what are your plans now
 - New Comment: Did you do premium processing?
 - New Comment: What. I applied on 16th but my portal says 2 week?s remaining. Which state you are from. And do you receive email on approval or you gotta check online regularly
 - New Comment: I got my Opt EAD in about one week. I applied in September or October 2022 in a Friday and it showed that it was approved online in the next Friday
 - New Comment: Which states are you guys from? I'm from California and applied on Feb 9th and it says 1 week.
 - New Comment: Same here. It took only three weeks
 - New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Friend just received a mail from their DSO saying that their SEVIS is terminated on

Body of the post: She came to US for Fall 2023 to a University in Chicago. After arriving here, she transferred to a different University and has been studying there since. She had a monthly payment plan to pay the fee. She paid for the

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Fall in full and had already paid for the first month of Spring Semester. She has her daughter back in India so she recently initiated the process of filing F2 visa for her daughter. When they contacted the University for i20 confirmation, they responded with an email that her SEVIS has been terminated due to non payment. She just noticed that the SEVIS ID on her i20 is different from the SEVIS ID that she transferred from her original University. The old SEVIS is paid and the new SEVIS is unpaid.

Why would the DSO not notify her that her SEVIS payment is pending? How can they accept fee payments every month when her SEVIS has already expired? She's been attending classes and doing her assignments all this time. What are her options here?

Any insights would be really helpful. Thanks

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >After arriving here, she transferred to a different University and has been studying there since.

Did she do a SEVIS transfer from the old university to the new one?

>When they contacted the University for i20 confirmation, they responded with an email that her SEVIS has been terminated due to non payment

This would be the new university she contacted? Termination Due to non-payment of what exactly, tuition fees?

- New Comment: >Why would the DSO not notify her that her SEVIS payment is pending?

Bad tracking, processes, or policy

Reddit Posts

>How can the accept fee payments every month when her SEVIS has already expired?

Valid immigration status is generally not a requirement to study at an American university. Termination of a students academic record mid semester for an immigration issue would be absolutely devastating for students and prevent them from easily regaining status. You do not want this to be a policy.

>She's been attending classes and doing her assignments all this time. What are her options here?

New I-20, exit and reenter assuming she has a valid visa. Or have the school correct their mistake of not accepting the transferred record from the other school.

- New Comment: It?s always the friend.hopefully it gets sorted out. Good luck to your friend and you .

So creative with your username lol

Title of the post: What job would you choose?

Body of the post: Advice: I am an F1 student and have received two offers for full-time. 1st offer the pay is 105K but they will not sponsor for H1B. 2nd offer the pay is 70k but they sponsor for H1B

I am eligible for STEM OPT

What would you choose ? Or any advice will be appreciated

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Go for who will sponsor you

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I think it depends on what your longer term goals are. If you want to stay, use your STEM OPT and work for a few years then go to a different country, it makes sense to take the role that pays more but doesn't sponsor. If you want to stay here and move to a H1-B visa, you're better off taking the job that sponsors and having them apply to sponsor you every year and hope to get the h1-b. I guess the third option is to take the higher paying role and then try to change jobs to one that pays well and also sponsors once you have nearly a year of experience - usually a year is helpful and you have the time bc of stem opt, but that's more risky. On the bright side, congrats on your offers!!!

- New Comment: Bring the offer to nego, nego with 70K, can we bump up to 85-90K. here's the offer. obviously dont mentioned that the first company wont sponsor h1b. if you have written offer, its a good play.

- New Comment: If you pick higher salary, there is no guarantee you can find another job nor someone to sponsor you, especially since you have 6 years (2xH1b). So always pick the sponsoring company.

But why such a difference in salary?

If you're low balled on salary, DOL can reject your greencard or h1b application.

I don't think \$70k is low enough to trigger this but i am no expert

- New Comment: Are you STEM eligible?

- New Comment: Take the one with the higher pay! I have a low pay and I can tell you money makes life better. Having someone sponsor you doesn't mean you'd be selected for the lottery. You can always switch/company can change its mind/apply for it yourself (paying lawyer fee). Higher salary is better even if you have to go back home, almost 30k more per year, if you go back home you're going back with a significant amount

- New Comment: I'd take the 2nd offer for the peace of mind in getting an H1b - you can always switch to a job with a higher pay in the future.

- New Comment: Always pick the company that will sponsor

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: The first option, and then start looking for another position where they sponsor
- New Comment: We are in a country with odds stacked against international students w.r.t jobs. The extra 35k wouldn't matter in the long run if there is no sponsorship. Take the 70k offer. Hope to get the lottery and shift in a year or two.

I also heard you can work multiple jobs on OPT. If you have the bandwidth, take up another part time contract role or a full time. The extra ~45k would make sense then. Or ask the 105k company if you can work on contract.

- New Comment: Hmmm interesting question. An extended stay in the US with a lower pay and a better quality of life but you'd only be able to stay 3 years max.

Please consider taxes also into the decision as well.

70k may be a lot less than what you think.

I'd go with the higher pay.

- New Comment: Well this is a good problem to have when many students on F1 are struggling to find a job. Take the first one and leave the second one for other F1 candidates . ?

- New Comment: 105k and start EB3

- New Comment: Sponsor

- New Comment: Here's some practical advice coming from someone who went through F1, STEM OPT, H1B, then finally an employment based green card. If you have ANY desire to stay in the US long term, take the H1B sponsorship. STEM used to be a viable path to an H1B because of the relatively high chance of success. Nowadays, even missing a single H1B lottery will drastically increase the likelihood that you'll be packing up and leaving at the end of your OPT.

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Without an H1B, there is no path to permanent residence (besides family based sponsorship or CPT). So if you want to stay in the US and don't have an immediate relative to sponsor you, go for the H1B. The 30k increase in salary is imo, not worth missing an H1B lottery draw.

Plus, there's always the best case scenario that you get your H1B in one try and can switch jobs afterwards.

If you don't have any desire to stay in the US long term, then choose like an American would (compensation, quality of work, WLB, team fit, etc).

- New Comment: Take second, get the H1B lottery and move to a higher company after

- New Comment: Go for h1b, don't think much about money, it will come later, and a lot of it.

- New Comment: what was your degree?

Title of the post: Re-entry into the US after staying in India for 4 months during 1st Year of OPT

Body of the post: Hey Guys, I am in a very complicated situation. I Graduated in December 2022 and my OPT started on 30th January 2023. I was laid off on 14th March 2023 and somehow convinced my company to keep me on the payroll till 14th April so that I could find something in that one month so as to not use any OPT unemployment days.

I did find a startup for which I started working part time (from Apr 14th itself), but the job is Unpaid. I have been working for that startup till now as well. I came home to India on August 27th and have booked my tickets to go back to the US on 29th of December. During this 4 month period the company has had no work as the founder gave us an off because he is looking for funding (so the slack channel has been dead for quite a while). I told him I would work remotely during this period from back home in India and he was okay with that hence I decided to stay back home and work remotely to save some money. I also spoke to my college international student representatives and they said that as long as the employer is okay with me working remotely and I do not stay in India for more than 5 months, things should work out

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fine. But unfortunately I was not able to contribute a lot and have done only a couple of hours of work during this 4 month period (because of a death of a very close relative in my family and also because of some of my health conditions).

My main fear is that what if the Immigration officers at the airport question me regarding my work or look deeply into what I actually did for my unpaid job while in India then what kind of preparations should I do to make sure that I did at least 20 hours of work per week during this time ? Also, what is the possibility that they would look to deeply into this matter ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: as long as your employer shows proof of 20hrs of work per week you're good brother, get a letter of him saying that, maybe should be mentioned in the job offer too, then they wouldn't care further. What are some related things you can be doing for the position? think about it and be ready just in case but it doesn't seem that bad of a situation to me, i could be wrong tho not a pro at this haha

- New Comment: Honestly, it completely depends. No one can be sure what might happen when you are face to face with a cbc official.

If you haven't done anything illegal, and if you have reasonable answers to all the questions for you at immigration then i don't think they will go deeper into your particular story. Just convey it as reasonably as you can. Get a letter from your company that they were okay with you staying in India for the past 4 months and worked 20hrs a week.

My friend will also be in a similar situation in the future. I'll definitely follow up with you XD

- New Comment: You should be good

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- New Comment: hey OP, I am in a similar situation(STEM OPT), Can you please update the outcome in your situation.

It could help me plan better. Thank you very much.

- New Comment: What if I'm out of the country for 6 months, but employed as a volunteer and is approved by my DSO?

Should I come back earlier?

Title of the post: F1 and I20

Body of the post: I recently arrived to the US after almost a year. A graduated in june 2020 and left in September after receiving a denial notice for my OPT. Now I'm back with a new I20, new sevis number and my old unexpired Visa from my previous program in the same school.

I had worries about being denied entry at the cbp in the airport but it all went great, no issues. Many of you answered my questions regarding using an old unexpired visa and a copy of my original i20 with a different sevis id.

I can confirm, for anyone who's in a similar situation that you can enter the US with:

- a printed signed copy of your original I20 (make sure you sign in though)

- an unexpired F1 Visa that shows a different sevis id.

If you plan on switching schools talk to your DSO about so they can transfer your sevis id, I didn't because I'm returning my old school.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Why were you denied for OPT of I may ask

- New Comment: People still refuse to believe that their visa is not linked to their I20 or school and they're so reluctant to doing it. Glad everything went ok

- New Comment: Just wanted to know why were you denied OPT. Would really help future students.

- New Comment: why your OPT got Denied ?

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- New Comment: Which port of entry if I may ask?

Title of the post: SEVP Announce a Fall 2020 Enrollment Policy

Body of the post: <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/bcm2007-01.pdf>

TL:dr; Hybrid classes are okay, but you need some in person enrollment for Fall 2020 to maintain status. No online only option.

Also, this just came out. Give your school a day or three to announce their plan.

Update: I just received the official email on this from SEVP around 45 minutes ago. So it is likely some DSOs are not aware of this update yet.

1. Students attending schools operating entirely online may not take a full online course load and remain in the United States. The U.S. Department of State will not issue visas to students enrolled in schools and/or programs that are fully online for the fall semester nor will U.S.

Customs and Border Protection permit these students to enter the United States. Active students currently in the United States enrolled in such programs must depart the country or take other measures, such as transferring to a school with in-person instruction to remain in lawful status or potentially face immigration consequences including, but not limited to, the initiation of removal proceedings.

2) Students attending schools operating under normal in-person classes are bound by existing federal regulations. Eligible F students may take a maximum of one class or three credit hours online (see 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(i)(G)).

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3) Students attending schools adopting a hybrid model?that is, a mixture of online and in person classes?will be allowed to take more than one class or three credit hours online. These schools must certify to SEVP, through the Form I-20, ?Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status,? that the program is not entirely online, that the student is not taking an entirely online course load for the fall 2020 semester, and that the student is taking the minimum number of online classes required to make normal progress in their degree program. The above exemptions do not apply to F-1 students in English language training programs or M-1 students, who are not permitted to enroll in any online courses (see 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(i)(G) and 8 CFR 214.2(m)(9)(v))).

Please speak to your school about specific updates regarding your program.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I have a question, why would they say ?the department of state will not issue visas to student enrolled in schools and/or programs that are fully online? when they are already not issuing visas to any new students?
- New Comment: Do you think that this is a hint that the embassies will start processing the visas soon? Keeping this in mind, I think they are working towards bringing back the students.
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Hi u/Codetornado, could you please clarify my following query based on first point?

I am supposed to be starting PhD program this fall, online from my home country. The university is not fully online. For those, physically present in US will be taking classes in-person. So, if end up taking whole fall semester online from

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home country, I won't be issued f1 visa during spring to join in-person? Or, does it mean I won't be issued visa amid fall semester, if embassies resume visa processing (*chances of which are negligible*)?

- New Comment: Well the funny thing here is that can schools simply open whenever they want. I'm pretty sure they would need the health department in their county to grant them the permission to open up first, am I right?

What if the school is not allowed to open till year end?

Please correct me if I'm wrong.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: All my classes are online for next semester, and it's my final semester. What do they expect students like us to do?

- New Comment: So is this final? or does this still need to pass? Any chance it gets overturned?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: what does it mean by "the student is taking the **minimum number** of online classes required to make normal progress in their degree program. "

- New Comment: Currently in undergrad on F1 visa but live with my parents here who are H1. My school is adopting a hybrid model and i have one class that is in-person as of now. But it could change for all i know. Do you think i am safe. Literally no other family outside the US lmao. Ive grew up here

- New Comment: I have a friend who's currently attending classes outside the US.

I don't know the limitations of undocumented residents and how VISA cards work, but I'm wondering what are the implications of this? I'm guessing he won't be allowed into the US without a VISA card, but he can still attend classes right? And can he get the VISA card back if he takes in-person classes in the future?

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- New Comment: I'm a grad student in a PhD program - what I'm worried about is my funding.

If my school goes completely online, then from what I can gather I'll remain in status while I stay in my home country. If it adopts a hybrid model, I'll fall out of status, as I'm not planning on returning any time soon.

Any idea whether receiving tuition fellowships and stipends are dependent upon being in status?

I'm also a grad assistant teaching for part of my fellowship, and get a wage for that - any idea whether that will still be possible, in status or out of status, if I'm out of the USA?

Thanks so much in advance for providing some clarity at this insane time!!

- New Comment: When would someone currently on an F1 have to leave by if their college is fully online in fall and they have just completed spring semester?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: FAQ has been released :
[https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/sevisFall2020_FAQ.pdf]([https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/sevisFall2020_FAQ.p](https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/sevisFall2020_FAQ.pdf)
df)

Has this under 'maintaining student records'

2. Can continuing F and M students study online outside the United States and remain in Active status in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)? Are designated school officials (DSOs) responsible for maintaining these records?

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Yes, continuing F and M students may remain in Active SEVIS status while studying online, outside the United States.

As these students remain Active in SEVIS, DSOs are responsible for maintaining these student records.

​

Still ambiguous as to whether this applies only to students attending online-only schools or also to students attending hybridized schools - but the general vibe of the Q&A is that they want students to leave who don't have to be in the US, and students to be legitimately attending school if they are staying in the country. Confused.

- New Comment: Hey CodeTornado, I am a final year student in Cal Poly Pomona in California on an f1 visa. CPP recently announced they are adopting a hybrid model. But I'm already in Pakistan (my country of origin), without a possibility to return back to USA before the start of Fall2020 semester. I mean, it's because of travel restrictions, 8000 USD tickets and my health problems. At this point I'd rather just take a full course online load and graduate by December but I'm not sure if CPP will let me do that because now it's hybrid. I mean I talked to my International office and they said that I could take online courses from back home and that I could maintain status but other people are saying like your status will be out of status and that you HAVE to be there and enroll in in-person course. What do you think? Is there any law or rule regarding a person that voluntarily wants to stay in their home country while their university has switched to hybrid?

Title of the post: Job Search Woes and Financial Struggles.

Body of the post: I graduated in December 2023, and now that it's August, I'm still struggling to find a job. I've been applying since last October and have only had two interviews, neither of which progressed past the initial screening. To make matters worse, I have no savings left and have been relying on my parents for financial support. The job market feels super tough, and living expenses in this country are no joke, especially when you're unemployed. I'm losing all the hopes and don't have much energy left.

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I'm currently doing unpaid work with a professor to stop my unemployment clock, but the financial strain is becoming overwhelming. I know many of us are in similar situation but curious to know how you're managing your finances to survive here in US while job hunting. Also, any tips on staying motivated during this job search phase would be really appreciated.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Keep applying and don't lose hope! You can still go back to home country and look for jobs there w/o visa constraints. You got this!

- New Comment: I will be honest here, most of people here are either at their

1) uncle/aunts/cousins/siblings place (free everything but kind of embarrassing depending on how close/related you are/are not.

2) locked away at a consulting company (free living , maybe free food too?)

3) living at the same place they did their masters and surviving by working. (you know where)

If you are not getting a job, you already know what you have to do earn money to survive. It is the only way apart from asking Money back home. You do not need to give all hrs to work, enough to survive is good. It this way or the highway.

- New Comment: hang in there! i hope you'll only be blessed with better days ahead.

- New Comment: Even US citizens have hard time finding jobs, you are not alone.

- New Comment: If you've only had 2 initial screening interviews in the last 8 months , you're either not applying enough or your resume needs serious work.

- New Comment: Can you just go back to your home country? Why would you suffer?

- New Comment: I know 20+ guys who are in same position as you are right now, even I am concerned about the same because my brother is one of them, and I'm graduating this December with no luck too. You can apply for jobs in your

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country too and I am sure that you will get atleast one job opportunity for sure. Get your resume reviewed in your university or on r/resumes or r/engineeringresumes and it will be helpful too. Apart from these if nothing else works just join a job consultancy and you will know the next steps for now. Good luck.

- New Comment: What is your degree? Are you actively networking?
- New Comment: Can you DM me your resume? Whilst I'm not an expert I'm happy to look over it
- New Comment: Can you get a job at your university where you're volunteering?

Title of the post: Jobs on OPT EAD

Body of the post: Its been really hard and tough to get the jobs on OPT EAD. It is frustrating applying ample of job applications and gets rejected. Why companies are not hiring OPT candidates?

Can someone suggest some job portals for OPT. candidates?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I didn't expect it to be this bad. Everyone just ghosts OPT candidates
- New Comment: Unfortunately a lot of this is luck and really out of your control.
- New Comment: The American dream seems to be fading. We're likely to witness a mass exodus of international candidates back to their home countries especially India. Unfortunately, this situation might also lead to an increase in suicide rates. For example, a friend of mine has a cousin who returned to India and attempted suicide after struggling to find a job for over a year and being unable to pay off his loan. Probably, only the people who already hold a job will enjoy the perks.
- New Comment: No company wants to get in the hassle of H1b sponsorship right now due to market being saturated.
- New Comment: I don't think it's about you being an OPT candidate which is making it difficult to get a job. The honest

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truth is that the job market is saturated and you need to know someone internally to secure a job. It's difficult to find one without knowing anyone. I had to go through an employment agency in order to secure one myself. Same OPT

- New Comment: It's an election year. With immigration opposing candidate in the race to win. So companies are waiting it out to decide their hiring strategy. Also, the market is saturated. It takes a lot of justification to hire someone, especially immigrants when a year ago thousands were laid off from the same company.

Moreover, teams don't want to hire someone to lose them within 2 years if they don't get a H1B. So naturally they don't want to hire someone on OPT.

I'm sorry, but elections and h1b situation has created a very unfavorable market for OPT job seekers. :(

- New Comment: Quick advise:

You should NOT mention that you are on the OPT EAD program during the job interview.

Because most employers prefer long-term employees so that they can save the money and time for new trainees.

By States law, you don't need to tell the company that you are an international student that are on OPT EAD. Unless if the job requires you to be a Permanent Resident or US citizens.

You just only let them know that you are on OPT program AFTER the interview, or when they accepted you, not before that.

After they accepted you, they cannot take away the job offer just because you are on OPT EAD because of the discrimination law.

So good luck out there.

- New Comment: What's your degree and background, OP? Any prior work experience?

- New Comment: It's a very bad market situation right now. But I feel it's a patience game. If you apply to more jobs, your

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probability of getting that one yes will be higher. I am hoping, after the elections the situation will improve. Hang in there!

- New Comment: I am currently in the same boat, except most of the jobs I have applied to have not even responded which really sucks. There's nothing more that we can do except applying until the very last day. Trust me it's easy to lose hope, but you have to stay strong and know that you aren't alone. I know US citizens who are also struggling to find a job. Hang in there , all you need is that one yes. Have hope and keep at it. You got this :)

- New Comment: I am hearing this a lot as well, maybe it is because the companies think you will be temporary and maybe it is a hassle to hire OPTs? I think if a company does layoffs then they cannot hire OPTs (or was that something else, I forgot).

- New Comment: I realize internships help A LOT. For those of you reading this and still in college. Get an internship in the US on CPT. Companies love fresh graduates that have US experience.

Title of the post: Tips and Advice for Incoming F1 Students in the U.S

Body of the post: Hi everyone! I'm an incoming international student to the U.S. on an F1 visa, and I wanted to ask all the current or former F1 students in America for some tips and advice for an incoming F1 student. What are some things I should know? Any small tips or insights would be greatly appreciated! Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: - Firstly choose good roommates, if they suck learn to adjust.
- Learn cooking, not master chef level but the level required to survive.
- Get an on campus job. Try to get a Teaching assistant/ research assistant job .
- Get Social Security Number (SSN)
- Get a discover credit card using that ssn to start building credit history. If you don't have SSN still get a credit card that doesn't require ssn like Zolve.
- Get a driving license (not required but helpful in building driving history)

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- Do not do illegal part time jobs.(thoda karlena, zada nahi Jesé sab karte hai)
- NETWORK with classmates, professors, everyone and anyone you can.
- Go to campus career fairs, local county fairs.
- Build a good circle (friends ka, girlfriends/boyfriends will come and go. Telling you not to have one but they are mostly like passing clouds)
- WORKOUT : Look good, feel good. Dress better.
- Learn 1 thing but become a master in that. Little by little. (AKA Master a skill)
- Donot get hooked on to drugs, alcohol, vapes.
- Be friendly with seniors, they can help you settle, grow, get a job. Possibilities are endless.
- Do not rack up credit card debt. Spend money wisely.
- To be mentally fit you will need people around you so mingle with people do not be a loner.
- ENJOY (University days are not coming back)
- Try maintaining a good LinkedIn profile.

Putting mine here, if you have any tips or advice for mine, will gladly make changes. Let's connect
purav05

- In the END it's all about BALANCE.

If you need any more help or advice in general happy to help. Remember that what goes around comes around so always strive to do things that are right. These were My 2 cents after being in the States for almost 2.5 years now.

To sum up, these were the tips I gave my own brother who is currently pursuing his masters in computer science at Georgia state. Being a brother / a well wisher I wouldn't want him or anyone making these mistakes. You will learn a lot in the 2 years, I would
Just say enjoy the journey.

- New Comment: Don't commit crime. That includes speeding, reckless driving, DUI, shoplifting, etc.

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- New Comment: purav_05 has good advice, and I would add: even if you're in a state with legalized marijuana, as a guest of the federal government, it isn't legal *for you* so stay away from it.

- New Comment: I work at an immigration law firm-

Educate yourself about US immigration law. Don't rely entirely on your DSO- Surprisingly, many schools do not have qualified and educated personnel to fill this role. If the DSO makes a mistake with your paperwork or gives you incorrect information, it's you the student who suffers. USCIS is ruthless and does not give a shit where the mistake originated from. So be on top of it!

USCIS website is a good place to start. Read about how to maintain your status, how and when to fill various forms-For example, way too often, we see students whose last minute OPT applications were rejected due to a clerical error and they've now missed the deadline to refile (very costly mistake)

Don't forget to check the validity dates of your work authorization- we've seen people whose SEVIS was terminated because they were just a couple weeks late to realize their CPT had expired.

Lastly, it's been said before, but don't assume you'll get away with doing cash jobs because your friends are. The punishment for getting caught is having your visa terminated and sent back home. Good luck!!

- New Comment: Make use of all the resources at your university!

- New Comment: Not to demotivate you.. but I hope you understand the current employment situation here. I would suggest rethink before coming here as getting a job that too with sponsorship is a dream for students these days. Not sure what the future holds as the job market could get better or worse.

- New Comment: Don't come

- New Comment: Make sure to maintain ur status as full time student.

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If u have any issues that prevent u take less than full time credits, talk to ur DSO.

The last semester is allowed to take less than full time credits, but u need to completed Reduce Course Load form.

- New Comment: Getting SSN is gonna ease ur life in the long run, so get an on-campus job and that will help u obtain SSN smoothly. Don't share ur ssn with anyone as its super confidential info. Apply for state insurance which will give u free emergency room visits and any hospitalizations from there. This can be done either online or from the hospital's social service agent. I assume u already have a private insurance but its usually expensive and doesn't cover everything. Always report criminal activity against u to 9 11, sexual harassment or abuse being an example. Attend as many uni events as possible, that will open bigger opportunities

Also, if ur university is not a cool ivy league or highly ranked university with great network and innovations labs, keep ur grades high and try to transfer to an ivy league after ur sophomore year, that will open u sooo many opportunities upon graduation. Otherwise, u might have trouble with opt and overall career opportunities

- New Comment: Don't come right now! I have 2 yrs of experience in TCS in India and right now even with experience and some expertise with Software domain, unable to get even interview calls. Trust me, it's better to be in your home country for 1 ye maybe, until the market gets a little better, companies do hire, elections are over, war is over, AI shift is complete. Before that coming here is up to you. But genuinely, I am not scaring you, I was also a Graduate Teaching Assistant during Masters, paid half fees as the student, but still trying everyday very hard for the job. entry level jobs are too competitive, you're competing with those who are laid off and already having experience.

Come, only if you have at last 3 years of experience. Period!!

Title of the post: Visa expiration and international conflict

Body of the post: My girlfriend is a Lebanese national that has lived in the US for the past 11 years. She came to the US on a student visa (F1) and has legally stayed by being granted 3 years of OPT after completion of her Bachelors degree

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(B.S. Mechanical Engineering from UNC-Charlotte), then she received an additional 1 year OPT extension to attend graduate school where she recently received her MBA from Queens University. She has been working with her masters for the past year and recently underwent the visa lottery and was not selected. Now she has to leave the US by July.

She is fluent in MSA, Levantine, and English and has fully assimilated into American culture. She has no debt and no legal troubles, she has never even received a speeding ticket. If you were to meet her on the street, you'd think she was born and raised in the US.

With looming conflict in Lebanon, it's very scary for a Lebanese national to return to a conflict zone. Her entire immediate family has fled to other countries via work visas and she has no family remaining in Lebanon. She is very westernized and isn't a practicing Muslim, but comes from a Muslim family. This creates troubles when moving back to Lebanon and she won't be 'accepted' back into the Muslim communities due to religious and cultural issues. She also won't be 'accepted' into the Christian communities for being a member of a Muslim family, also the Christian communities cost of living is significantly higher than other parts of the country.

Please provide assistance on what options she has to stay in the US legally. Time isn't on our side and I am fearful of what could happen if she were to return to Lebanon and get caught in an international conflict.

Thank you for your help!!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Marry her!!

- New Comment: You should 3 years of OPT for masters degree as well. Has she consumed those? You can think about day 1 CPT or doing PhD or marriage

Additionally she can try getting a job in universities which has different H1B. Then don't do lottery so she will have

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chance to stay back

- New Comment: Marriage is the only simple answer

Unless she wants to go through the asylum hole which would be way more complicated

- New Comment: Back to school or marriage are the likely options here since she lost H1B. Don't think this qualifies for asylum

- New Comment: Marry her?

- New Comment: Seriously? Just get married if you are so worried or let her go back. My goodness

- New Comment: If it's true love, this is not a problem at all.

- New Comment: I went back to school to get a doctorate. She still has plenty of time to make a decision, look and see what other schools have to offer. Look into CPT, especially if a doctorate program takes a few years, some schools aren't crazy expensive so she could make a living while also paying tuition. Will her family support her financially at least partially? It would be very helpful, but I suppose the answer is no.

But yeah, as others said it's either marriage, asylum, or something else that would be considered illegal advice and is frowned upon in this subreddit. Regardless of what she decides to do, F-1 is a non-immigrant visa for a reason, it's a dead end that offers no real way to immigrate, unless you decide to take things in a different direction.

Feel free to reach out if you have more questions, I'll do my best to help

- New Comment: If she's from Lebanon and there's a conflict, can she apply for TPS (temporary protected status)? I was able to get one since I'm from Ukraine. TPS would allow her to stay in the US without the fear of being deported until a certain date. And once she has TPS, she'd be able to get an EAD card with that

- New Comment: I agree with the other commentors.

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To add another option, maybe a PhD? Those usually add a few more years of F1

- New Comment: The answer my friend is obvious .

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Marriage or Europe/Asia. No in between.

- New Comment: ? OP completely ignores ALL comments about marrying her. This tells me OP already has a family of his own. He just needs a concubine.

- New Comment: Why does she have to go home? Is it related to the H1b visa? I am not accustomed to the USA immigration policy

Title of the post: Non-US Citizen Artists: Has The Visa Process Impeded Your Art Career?

Body of the post: After getting two book deals from a major publisher in China and getting rejected from all UX internships, I realized that the H1B work visa route probably can't work for me. Now I am working on my O-1 visa, and plan on being an author-artist promoting culture and imagination.

The point is, I have never heard too much about how internationals navigate the art scene in the States. It's easy to say 'just get a day job' to locals. For internationals, if you are on the work visa, you have to work at a E-verified company on a position related to your major and earn an adequate wage. If you are fired, you have to find another work sponsor in very short amounts of time. No allowance for gap years or long periods of unemployment. It would be hard to do art under these circumstances.

I am curious: any non-US citizen professional artists here? How did you navigate your career and the visa process, especially if you were doing the H1B work visa before?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: On O1 here and an artist. Was in uni in 2022. Switched from F1 to O1. O1 really really depends on your body of work, press and achievements. So yes people like me exist.

Edit - Also was working on my O1 visa till before I was laid off. Still looking for a new job as we speak in my industry but yeah I'm still kicking! It's possible my friend!

- New Comment: My University has a large art department and we get many international students.

Of all of these students, the only ones who were able to stay for OPT were either double majored in something else or had an MFA.

Of those who got jobs and stayed in the US after OPT, (aside from those with a PhD in art) , to a person, meaning all of them, I got married.

I do not have a single student who obtain an O-1 or H1B without a PhD.

I would absolutely never even hint at a non-PhD artist being able to have a real plan to stay in the US. Even the PhD would be incredibly difficult to find sponsorship.

- New Comment: I'm in music and have an almost-complete O-1B application following a US Masters-OPT-J-1 Professor, but I might end up extending the J-1 instead (they can authorize some limited off-campus work). Anyway, it REALLY helps to be somewhat established before grad school, I took a few years between my undergrad and grad degrees which meant I had a decent body of work to draw on for my application. It helps to be very proactive early on eg inviting reviewers to everything, applying to every conference, networking like crazy - usual creative career stuff but amplified 1000%. If you freelance, you should juggle as many plates as you can, because if you just have one and it falls through, you're SOL visa-wise. It helps to have savings too because it's expensive (and about to more than double in

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filing fees on 4/1). Long term it helps to get a university job if you can, or a USC spouse, or a Grammy (or equivalent in your field). Best of luck!

Edit to add: there's an inherent contradiction between having a career in the arts, which requires flexibility, and the US visa system, which requires specialization. Your ability to succeed in both will probably come down to the portability of your major, how connected you are, and your access to resources.

- New Comment: Out of curiosity, what kind of artist are you? I just graduated last December (BFA in Dance), and while I am on OPT as a company dancer at a friends studio, the options for staying beyond that, at least in the field of performance, are pretty limited unless I get a job at a big corporation like a cruise line or Disney park

I have also a Bachelors in Marketing, and even getting a full corporate job for H1B is not easy, so I am debating what I'll do next year when my OPT expires

Good luck with the O1!

- New Comment: Go to a US art school, get a degree then find an art job. There are some art school that will basically will admit everyone, and many experienced foreign artists will first go to these school, majorly for the employment opportunity.

- New Comment: Check with an organization called Accent Society

Title of the post: I-20 terminated, advice needed

Body of the post: I studied at community college for 1 year and was planning to transfer my school but while i was waiting for my new college's i20 my i20 terminated because first semester of my current college started and i was waiting for my i20

Do i have to go back to my country and apply again? Or is there any possible way to get my i20 again inside U.S

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And if i can get i20 inside U.S which college i20 should i apply first?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Just because the semester started ? your college terminated your i20? Something is missing

- New Comment: It sounds like you just didn't enroll as a full-time student at your I-20 school, so you were in violation of your F-1 student enrollment requirements. They would then be required to terminate your SEVIS record for that violation.

The new US school would have needed your SEVIS record to be transferred to them before being able to make you a new I-20.

It sounds as if from what little information you included that maybe you didn't do anything to get the new I-20 and just thought it would come to you?

You would have needed to have been admitted to the new US school. You would have needed to have requested of your current school that they transfer your SEVIS record to the new US school. If you weren't enrolling in the current school, your SEVIS record would have needed to have been transferred away from that school by the 30th day of the term in which you were not enrolled. Study at the new US school would have needed to have started in the next available term there and no more than 5 months from when you ended your final course/study at the current school.

This would mean you are inside the US, per the US government, with any legal F-1 status.

There are two options to request to regain status. One involves transferring the terminated SEVIS record to the new school, getting a reinstatement request I-20 from the new school, and applying to US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) asking them to reinstate your status. It costs money. It takes time. You have no F-1 on-campus or

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off-campus work eligibility while it is pending. Your new school would need to agree to accept the terminated SEVIS record. Not all schools will.

The other option is for you to leave the US. You would then need to get a new SEVIS record/I-20 from the new US school. You would pay a new SEVIS fee. No more than 30 days prior to the program start date on the I-20 of the new US school you would use the new I-20 and a valid F-1 visa to request to re-enter the US in F-1 status.

For either one of those, you need to be acting right away. The longer you stay inside the US without any legal status to be here, the more complicated and problematic things become.

You need to be speaking with your DSO/international advising office of the new school. Right away.

- New Comment: Your new college would not have given you an I-20. The old school had to transfer the record to them, then they would have sent you the new one. You can apply for reinstatement but you'd have to do it with the old college most likely.

- New Comment: Your new school wouldn't issue an I-20 until your first school transferred your SEVIS record to the new school? not sure what you were waiting for. If it was already transferred? your first school wouldn't be terminating your record for failure to enroll?

Talk to your current schools DSO and discuss if their school helps with Reinstatement in the US. If not you will need to travel to regain

Title of the post: Travel abroad with expired F1, a few months left of STEM OPT, and PERM in progress

Body of the post: Hi all,

Asking for a friend:

Reddit Posts

Context:

She is currently on STEM OPT, which expires on June 15th of this year (2024). Her F1 visa is expired, meaning that if she leaves the country she needs to get the F1 visa renewed in the Embassy, despite the visa having a duration of 4-5 months. Her company has applied to EB3 PERM and she is awaiting for the PERM (filed around September 2023).

Here is the situation. Her grandfather is likely to pass away in the next few days, so she is trying to travel asap.

The questions are:

- (1) Would it be possible to get F1 renewed at the embassy with only 4 months or so of STEM OPT left?
- (2) Does the fact that she is in the middle of the PERM process make it inadvisable for her to leave the country? Could this make it difficult to get the F1 renewed?
- (3) Would you advise her to travel?

Would appreciate any thoughts. It's a tough situation.

Thanks,

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Unfortunately, it would be HIGHLY suggested not to leave the United States. If she tries to renew her F1 visa the permanent residency application most likely would be cancelled.

- New Comment: My grandmother passed away in December 2023. My f1 visa expired in 2021 and I could not renew it due to travel restriction due to Covid and embassies being closed. I did not go to see her or attend the funeral, since my company was filing for h1, that pretty much is intent to immigrate. I would advise not traveling to your friend. It is harsh but she should not jeopardize her career and immigration status here for a few difficult days with her grandmother.

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It is a harsh thing to say , I completely know that.

- New Comment: Can someone tell me why so many people here are asking for a friend?? What anonymity does saying that grant? Genuine question.

- New Comment: Don't travel if can avoid it. Talk to your lawyer. F-1 would not be renewed and with an application filed, if you leave, case could be considered abandoned. Sorry for your family.

- New Comment: I just want to add that yes, job and better future could be important, but there's no shame if you decide to leave.

We want to give out as much as information so you can make an inform decisions but ultimately, the decisions are yours and it is okay either way. People value different things.

- New Comment: Maybe a bit unrelated to the question, but I'm pretty sure her perm won't be approved by June. These days it takes over a year to get approved. I hope she has some sort of backup.

- New Comment: Man. If it was my grand-dad, I wouldn't miss it for the world. Unless my country was in the middle of war!! This is an example of those strong family ties spoken of, some of us really have them. Fear of not being allowed back into another man's land is not enough reason for me to ignore that I have a home and family in my land, where no one chased me away.

- New Comment: The PERM process, is everything filed and just a matter of waiting for the green card to be approved and arrive? If thats the case, cant she travel and then return back once PERM GC is shipped out? Someone from US would need to mail her the card to where ever she is but it wont be that bad. Then enter US with the GC. But F1 renewal is going to be very tricky in this situation and having filed PERM is not gonna help it.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: The PERM processing is currently taking 2 to 2 and a half years?

- New Comment: Personal opinion: I wouldn't advise her to travel. But from what others have said, doesn't look like she

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will have any issues.

Title of the post: Just received my EAD card for OPT in the mail!

Body of the post: Here's a timeline so you know when to expect yours:

Nov 14, 2023 - Applied for my EAD card

Jan 23, 2024 - Received a notice in the mail that my application has been approved and that I should be receiving my card soon

Jan 27, 2024 - GOT MY CARD IN THE MAIL! ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Ughhh posts like these make me so depressed. I got approved 1/14 and still no news about my card. ?
- New Comment: Big up!!
- New Comment: But also, congratulations OP!
- New Comment: Did you apply via premium processing?
- New Comment: Which center did your application go to?
- New Comment: You guys have a job ?
- New Comment: I have applied for stem opt EAD. Hoping to get it by end of the February
- New Comment: So you got it three days after email approval

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Title of the post: why do sometimes visa officers in f1 visa just reject you without even having an in

Body of the post: ive seen a lot of posts and students who gets their visa denied without even having one conversation in just like 10 seconds . even with great academics and scholarship they just reject many without even taking interview. why that happens ? like what could even be the reason behind that is it all just their mood or is there some limit on number of people they approve in a day .

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Because the pre-review flagged them for a denial. However you scheduled the interview, so they have to offer it to you. Occasionally the pre-review flagged one item that they may ask a clarification on and then either continue forward or then deny.

- New Comment: Doctrine of consular nonreviewability. They have unquestionable discretion. Which is efficient on one hand but frightening on the other.

When I was getting my first F1, after a month of J1 program, at the age of 15, I was wearing an "I love the USA" shirt, didn't bring financial documents, the officer asked me if I had scholarship and I said yes as I had a 1k scholarship vs rest of the tuition like 20k. The officer misunderstood and approved me right away. But perhaps had I not been a minor I'd have been scrutinized more and denied.

Then, 5 years later I'm renewing my F1. Junior year of college, looking to continue onto grad school. The officer asked why I kept going to college after high school in the US. I don't even remember how I responded because I was shaking out of terror. I got approved. But I knew it was literally a coin toss.

- New Comment: I'm pretty sure they know about all your family members that are currently in the States, legally or illegally. So if you have a family member who is currently an illegal immigrant, your chances of getting an F-1 visa reduces to almost none.

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- New Comment: not a consular so idk but i would guess the most common reasons for that are 1. financial implications or 2. they have reasons to believe based on your documents that you intend to immigrate to the US permanently and not a temp stay as the f1 is supposed to be
- New Comment: I have a friend that was denied twice for having a certain last name

Title of the post: OPT 96 days PENDING!! NEED HELP!!

Body of the post: Hi, I applied for OPT on May 3rd, 2024. It has been 96 days since I applied, and it's still pending.

I've read so many Reddit posts that this cycle is extremely slow. Is there anyone who applied in early May and got it processed? (Plus, I did it without premium processing)

At this point, I've waited for almost 100 days, and I think changing to premium would be a waste of money. That shit costs fucking more than \$1000. (btw if I switch to premium, does the cost that I need to pay to deduct the original fee that I paid, which is \$470?)

I already got an offer, and I told them I would be able to start in early September because I genuinely thought mine would get processed in early August. They said that they were going to wait, but I'm getting scared that I might get things processed in late August and will be able to start working in early October since I still need to wait for EAD. Normally, people say EAD gets shipped 3-4 weeks from your OPT approval date.

I'm conflicted right now. Could you all share your experience and give me some advice? Thank you!!!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you already have a job, better apply for PP. Even after approval it takes 2-3 weeks for the card to be produced and delivered. It costs \$1680 on top of the \$470 you paid while submitting your application

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- New Comment: It's not a waste of money if it means that your current job offer doesn't slip away. You're lucky enough to get a job in this market. Pay the 1.6k, have peace of mind, get started on your job on time and move your budget around to accommodate for the PP spend

- New Comment: Im on a similar timeline to you. I changed to premium for the peace of mind. its around 1600 USD. it gets added on to the original 470, so 2k plus in total. PM me if you have specific questions and I will try my best to help.

Goodluck my friend!

- New Comment: I found that they are currently processing April 1st week applications. So it's definitely gonna take some time for you.

- New Comment: Definitely pay for premium processing if you have a job offer!

- New Comment: get pp, i applied march 31st and got approval on july 30th, card delivered august 2nd

- New Comment: The average processing time is over 4 months. My receipt date was 28th March and mine got approved only towards the end of July. From what I see on reddit and opttimeline, they are still at early-mid April so even if you get approved before September, it would be very close to comfort.

If you have a job offer, apply for PP and be done with it. You will cover the amount in the 2-3 weeks that you work that you would have left out on in case you were still waiting for the OPT approval.

- New Comment: my receipt date was on march 27th, its been more than 120 days . still no approval or any update, is there anyone who applied at the end of march and got their opt ?

- New Comment: I applied on 4/15, and still have not gotten any updates yet.

- New Comment: Congratulations on your job offer mate!?

Stay calm and do precisely what the others have suggested you to (coz I really don't know what to suggest you)

Everything's gonna be fine. Godspeed?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: It's likely you'll get it in September because those who applied in April are now getting theirs in August. I applied in April too but my job start date was in August and as at mid July it was still pending so I applied for PP. I hated having to spend that much money but you have two options. Ask the company to push the start date to late September or early October. Or you can pay for premium processing.
- New Comment: Last year I applied for OPT on late May and got approved at the end of August.
- New Comment: What about paying for PP in July and still no approval after 18 days? This is after an initial submission on April 23rd. What can one do in that case?
- New Comment: I have been waiting for 111 days and so far no OPT. Relax, you have some wait ahead of you.
- New Comment: I have waited for 120 days without PP
- New Comment: I applied on 25th May and currently it shows on the page under my Progress section that it will take approximately 6 weeks to go through the current step (Decision Pending), i.e. the final step before they post my EAD. If mine says 6 weeks, I would presume that yours would be approved earlier than this.

Although if I were you I would have gone premium processing as soon as I landed the new job.

Firstly, I would have gotten more days out of my OPT. USCIS will update your start date on your EAD according to the approval date but they are not allowed to extend your OPT end date beyond 14 months of graduation. Therefore, if your OPT is approved after 2 months of your graduation you won't get an entire year of OPT.

Whatever the premium processing fee maybe I'm quite sure you'll get the return on that with your salary of the first month itself. Also, sometimes it takes weeks to get the EAD shipped itself after it is approved because UPS fucks up somewhere in the middle.

So better to go with premium processing and join the company as early as possible.

- New Comment: Apply for premium processing 1 month prior to your start date, I've heard it is slow these days and

Reddit Posts

even premium processing might take a month.

- New Comment: Bruh if you have the offer do PP

You?ll make more in the long term than a 1000 you?re being worried about

- New Comment: Bruh. If you have an employer that is offering you a job, please talk to them and ask them to help you out with the premium processing. You will receive your EAD within 10 days if you do. The amount you pay for premium processing is over and above the amount you?ve paid, so it?ll come down a little over \$2000. Your employer can help though. Just talk to them.

- New Comment: Check on myopttimeline they have pretty accurate data on processing

- New Comment: When I did premium processing, it got approved in 3 days. It's crazy how money can move things...but do the PP, have peace of mind and start your job on time. No point losing a month or maybe even 2 months of salary at the cost of 1600\$

- New Comment: Hey, it?s really sad to hear about your situation. I applied for my OPT on 12th april and i waited till 25th July and then switched to Premium Processing because I heard from a lot off people that they are taking more than 120 days. They want students to pay for PP and make money so thats why they are taking way too much time. Also, even for PP, i took them 2 weeks (which they already say that a new clock starts for 30 days and they are supposed to give us the result) which being said, I got my approval today, 8th august. lastly, you have to pay \$1685 additionally on top of what you paid when you applied.

I got really tired and I waited almost 100 days before switching to PP because my employer changed my start date thrice for me because they understand that ultimately, this is not our fault.

I hope this helps!

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I applied April 2nd and got approved July 30th, so according to that timeline you should be fine in time for september at the latest. Best of luck!
- New Comment: I applied April 25th and decided two weeks ago to pay for PP, no approval yet?
- New Comment: Please get PP. My roommate who applied in last week of april, still hasn't received her EAD yet. But if you have a job, get a PP asap. Still takes 3 weeks, 1 week for approval if you are lucky and 2 weeks for shipping. Can take even more time.

Title of the post: Can you buy a house with f1?

Body of the post: Are we allowed to purchase a house while on f1? I want to know if I can get a mortgage. If I want to renew/apply for other visa. Would it be considered a red flag (non immigrant intent)?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes, you can buy a house. The problem would be you getting a mortgage approved. House loans are typically for 20 years and banks are usually reluctant to give it for students on F1 visa. And no, it's not a red flag to have a house in the US or have a house loan.
- New Comment: Commenting so I can know what replies you get I also want to know.
- New Comment: You can buy a house if you are on F1.
- New Comment: 2 options
 - 1) you buy the house in full (all in one payment), got a couple of rich homies that did that.
 - 2) If you are certain to get some sort of h1b/GC then you can buy a house when you have good credit to get a loan from the bank (mortgage), though if you are a h1b you have to put like a 25-30% down payment with a nice salary to get a mortgage.

Reddit Posts

Good luck

- New Comment: America allows foreigners to buy houses if they can pay in full. Otherwise, it's very hard to get a mortgage loan if you are on F1.
- New Comment: Yes you can. Just need good credit, income and down payment
- New Comment: Mortgage officers can work with you on that, I just bought a house in a highly competitive market. H1B visa good credit and a solid employment history that's all they want
- New Comment: Had [same](<https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/s/VkzWVLPbeQ>) exact question a year ago.
- New Comment: Some states may restrict property ownerships for nationals of certain countries such as China, Russia or North Korea.
- New Comment: Not sure why everybody suggests H1b. I got offers for home loans all the time on F1. Also fairly easy to get a good enough credit score for a mortgage. Get a credit card and set it on autopay for a year and your score will be 700+, which will qualify you for most loans. You will need a sizeable down payment though.
- New Comment: You can get a mortgage on an F-1 visa. You do need to show income though so unless you have a campus job or you're on opt you may have some trouble establishing a convincing income source.

We did obtain a mortgage on f-1 visas last year with my spouse so I'm not talking out of nowhere.

- New Comment: cash only

Title of the post: How do influencers earn money while on F1 visa?

Body of the post: Hi y'all! I was wondering how influencers who are study as grad students in the US earn through Instagram and YouTube.

Reddit Posts

Indian influencer kids like Dev Raiyani, Ashana Sule and Taneesha Marwani to name a few.

Does anyone have a clue?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If they are actively making monetized content while in the United States on an F1 visa, then they are breaking the law.

You can post un-monetized content (as a hobby), only produce content when outside the United States, or hire someone else to do all of the production and management.

- New Comment: are you sure they're even on F1? i know many indian kids my age (early 20s) who are US citizens since birth even if they haven't lived in the US most of their lives.

- New Comment: They are not monetizing their content/service.

- New Comment: Marketing major with OPT?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: If you have enough of a following (and please don't quote me I could be wrong), I am assuming you could switch to an O1 visa which is for celebrities, influencers and anyone who's basically known on the internet or in the media. it has 0 restrictions in terms of work hours.

and if not they probably make content without earning money or just receiving PR (which I don't think would fall under earnings since PR is usually items not \$\$)

- New Comment: Report them.

- New Comment: pretty sure they are citizens

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I think they get paid in their Indian Bank accounts and not in their US ones. I remember Singh in USA talking about something like this about how this makes it fall in the grey area and how he consulted a US lawyer about this.

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Currently on an F1, would like to one day hold a GC. Any advice would greatly help

Body of the post: I am about to be a high school senior and I attend a boarding school. Hopeful of one day receiving a GC, I would like to know what options I have. I am definitely going to be attending college and plan on studying Finance/Accounting. My main question is what is the pathway I need to take since I know F1 is non-immigrant intent and there is no direct pathway to GC from it. I am a UK citizen if that matters lol.

I assume it would be go to college and find someone to sponsor me on H1B after i?m done but i?ve read plenty of people getting screwed over in various ways and technicalities with these things. Would it be wise to hire an immigration lawyer? Any sort of guidance or advice would be appreciated. I want to get a jump on this and be proactive with my efforts of receiving a GC and being able to stay and work in the US one day.

If any other info is required or clarification needed, feel free to ask.

Thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Also participate in DV lottery tho not sure if UK citizens are eligible. Also perhaps if you lucky you get married to USC

- New Comment: It's extremely hard but I don't think you should give up. Here are some thoughts:

Reddit Posts

1) Return for college (like you said you will) and DEFINITELY study a STEM related field (so quantitative econ, finance, math-adjacent stuff MAY count, ask your DSO (designated school official). If you study STEM then your STEM opt allows you to stay 2 extra years after regular OPT (so 3 total years after college grad). This gives you 3 chances to apply for H1B if you're proactive and hopefully you get it. Despite that your chances are 50/50.

Yes, H1B is brutal, some people have to pay out of pocket and it's a LOT of money. The problem is that companies are less incentivized to sponsor H1B recently because of the rising costs. It severely lowers your chances of getting a job and the market has been HORRIBLE. So good luck and I wish you the best.

2) Find love. I wanted to go back to my home country after college, was completely prepared. But I got proposed to last month by my long time girlfriend (and tbh my bestest friend) and now I'm going to apply for my GC. So in my case it was unexpected and it helped me with immigration purposes.

Obviously as you said you don't want to count on this, but is this any more shaky and risky than your other options? Absolutely not, immigration to the US is brutal and really hard. All options are equally steep.

Are you planning on leaving the UK for good?

- New Comment: It goes without saying but I will say it anyway, do not, under no circumstance, engage in unauthorized work. Yes, it may seem easy money in a quick way. And yes, you *probably* won't get caught. But those tiny odds may ruin your chance of ever getting a green card, hell you might not even get a visa.

You are a little young for my second advice but I'll still say it, never ever drive under influence. It will automatically terminate your status and torch your chances of a green card.

Reddit Posts

You have a long road but as long as you follow the rules, hopefully you will get a green card someday!

- New Comment: It took me 12 years. I came for college at your age, did summer internships with CPT, worked for 2 years after I graduated, then I started grad school and eventually sponsored myself. Some of my friends have gotten married and got sponsored by their spouses. Others have been sponsored by their work. Others have found opportunities elsewhere and left the country. I'd say do your best and let the chips fall where they may.

- New Comment: H1B lottery (fyi higher education institutions have priority vs private-sector lottery); TN if you're able to provide consulting services; F via further education; investor (EB classes); naturalization via marriage. sources: my immigration lawyer & DSO officer

- New Comment: Do you have a girlfriend or boyfriend?

- New Comment: It's great that you're planning ahead! Your path could involve finishing your studies, getting an H1B sponsorship through a job, and then your employer could sponsor you for a green card. Consulting an immigration lawyer can provide more personalized advice and help you navigate the complexities. Best of luck with your journey!

- New Comment: See this: <https://immigrationroad.com/green-card/immigration-flowchart-roadmap-to-green-card.pdf>

- New Comment: I was a F1 - GC. However, I don't work in the finance field and I think other commenters are right in that it may be harder for you to get a GC using your employment this way.. I am a nurse and I got mine via employment based 3rd preference when I graduated with my bachelor of science in nursing and got licensed as a RN. It was during Covid and I was lucky to have my case expedited

- New Comment: Go to Masters program and above and do EB-2 NIW

- New Comment: Bro you got like at least 7 more years to live your life before going into this rat race of GC. Do a STEM degree (preferably computers), apply for scholarships. You'll probably find a girl as American girls are crazy about UK/Europeans so shouldn't be a problem for you. You're too young to worry about all this bullshit- go enjoy your life as you won't get these days back ?

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- New Comment: Study nursing at a community college. Nursing is the easiest and most straight forward profession to get a GC. You can always go back to a university for like 2 more years to get a bachelor's degree in something else. You would be a gc holder by then and it would be cheaper for you. I wish someone told me this many years ago.

Title of the post: USCIS scam call

Body of the post: Hello All,

I am on F1 OPT. I got a scam call(assuming it was) from someone from USCIS saying that I haven't filled a form(forgot the name starts with ER or something) with an angry tone and I muted for a sec and he was shouting at me why am I muting and shouting like moth ** f**, I'm gonna screw your a**. I was scared for a second and realized I have read somewhere about the same kind of scam. I'm just wondering that will USCIS ever call? Also why they would that person is even shouting and saying these bad words. Any similar experiences? Anything to be concerned about?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Definitely a scam. In no world would USCIS call you to scream at you. If you would have stayed on the line, they would have either asked you for money or for copies of your documents.

- New Comment: It'd be too much work for the monkeys at the USCIS to shout at anyone

- New Comment: uscis dont have any manpower to call u lol dont worry

- New Comment: USCIS doesn't call. They will send things via mail.

- New Comment: Piece of advice: Don't answer unknown numbers. If they are really important, they will leave a voicemail or email you.

- New Comment: im just wondering how they were able to contact you and also give you the USCIS scam. It's gotta be a recent database leak, USCIS will never do this.

Reddit Posts

During OPT I got 2 calls in particular, one saying that they had my relative in the border and needed some money to let him pass through, the other was someone who had told me I had to renovate my OPT requirements. I study information security and some of these calls happen because there's someone exfiltrating information. Interesting, but scary

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Ar11

- New Comment: For it to be a scam call, a person calling you needs to demand something from you. What did that person ask you to provide them?

Title of the post: OPT unemployment clock

Body of the post: Just lost my job. Im on OPT. Whats the best way to stop the unemployment clock? I've started looking for a job, but I want to be safe and have a plan B. I've heard volunteering for research under a professor can count? If someone who has been in the same boat could explain some options, id greatly appreciate it. Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you're on initial OPT, any volunteer work that is related to your major stop the unemployment clock!

- New Comment: go to volunteermatch, search and apply for ngo positions related to your degree. Do this asap

- New Comment: Ask your Professors for employment even unpaid.

- New Comment: Reach out RND4Impact, they will help you to stop the clock. Google the company and fill out the form, then they will reach you out

- New Comment: 1. Ask your professors for an unpaid volunteer research assistant position.

2. Reach out to non profit organizations.

Reddit Posts

3. Ask any legitimate (non consultancy) business/startup for an unpaid internship.

4. Start your own LLC.

Do not join any consultancies or any companies that ask you to pay money for an offer letter.

- New Comment: Form your own LLC and then self employ

- New Comment: Random, how does one check the unemployment clock?

- New Comment: The public debates about this are nowhere close to how a hearing goes on in the immigration court.

Somehow lot of people claim to have a lot of knowledge about the risks. Not just a lot of people but almost everyone.

So, i will not engage in a debate, but willing to talk to people who approach us in a friendly way. <https://forms.gle/PR4FUbhyKhmW9hyJ8>

Title of the post: Not going to US after visa issue

Body of the post: What are the consequences of not going to US after my visa has been issued?

I'm an upcoming Fall 2024 MSCS student and already got my visa issued but due to the bad job market I want to skip going now. I want to analyse the market for a year and maybe apply again in Fall 2025 if things improve.

Will this be a red flag in my next visa interview?

What other disadvantages will I face?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The job market is not great now, but how do you know what the job market is like in several years

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when you graduate???

- New Comment: Instead of reapplying next year, ask your university if you can defer your admission by a semester.

Take the rest of this year and reevaluate your goals.

If you don't intend to attend the same university in the future, better to cancel your admission than defer.

- New Comment: I did that during 2021 after my F1 visa was issued. Later decided to come to the US for F23. I had to renew my F1 visa(drop box). So it shouldn't be an issue. Incase your dropbox is denied, you will have to go for an in person interview. Idk if this is based on one's nationality. Im Indian btw!

- New Comment: There is no guarantee of the job market being good next year. The skilled and intelligent will still find a job. I urge to go ahead and enroll in the masters and simply be grateful for this opportunity.

- New Comment: If you were issued a multi year visa you can use it next year as long as you're going to enter the US with an I-20 from the school that's listed on your visa. You only need to go for another interview if you're going to attend a different school.

- New Comment: For me if you plan to study and back yeh, its okay or if you already have a good job and decent money. My suggestion is keep the job. Right now the amount of international students in the US are a bunch and I can say most of them can not land a job. Even if you come next year, but with the amount of students can not find a job, you still competing with them even market bad or good. The US is a good country to study and make money, but tbh with that money you spend on university in the US, you can choose the better country in Europe..

- New Comment: The current downturn in the market shouldn't impact you at the moment since you'll be in college. By the time you graduate, there's a possibility that the market will be improving, giving you the opportunity to gain a first-mover advantage when companies begin hiring. If numerous students share your perspective and choose to defer, its great as that could benefit those who are already here, granting them an advantage to move jobs!

- New Comment: Market is never going to be the same. I think by the time you graduate things would already be good. If

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you expect things to be better, then know that trump is going win this election. If you have a stable job, try to settle in there. Lots of hurdles here. If you are born in india, its nt even worth it. American dream is no more an american dream and things will soon be clear to everyone. Remember, grass seems always greener on the other end until you see it from this end.

- New Comment: This is a very stupid decision as your degree will be invaluable and the job market could recover by the time you graduate but your life anyways it will probably affect you negatively

Title of the post: Company says my major does not comply with USCIS

Body of the post: I?m a quantitative econ major where a lot of my coursework are econ/ data analysis. I applied to a business analyst role and after first round of interview the hr told me this below.

?Unfortunately, due to USCIS requirements of the degree being an immediate relevant match to the job description at hand, we are unable to move forward with your profile for this role.

This decision was not made lightly but was made with the leading factor of us feeling confident in the ability to obtain an approved long-term visa beyond the 3 years that an OPT or STEM-OPT offers. This decision was made to keep both your and the company?s best interests in mind. ?

I think this is the first time the company is offering sponsorship, but I?m pretty sure a quantitative major should do fine in this case? Or am I wrong? If not do i have a chance at arguing.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The company probably doesn't wanna sponsor you and was looking for any other reasons to reject you anyway. The job description does comply with USCIS and even the "related to major" thing is vague and broad. You'll only get into trouble if its completely unrelated and obvious (like driving Uber/Doordash, working as a cashier at a

Reddit Posts

restaurant/store, etc).

- New Comment: >Unfortunately, due to USCIS requirements of the degree being an immediate relevant match to the job description at hand, we are unable to move forward with your profile for this role.

This is a misunderstanding of USCIS rules AND it is not a company concern. It is a student concern.

For H1B sponsorship it is a separate conversation.

All that said, they are under no obligation to hire you.

- New Comment: An advice: don't talk about being on OPT with an employer. They're not allowed to refuse your EAD when you fill out the I9!

The only person u should talk to about a job being related to your major is your DSO

my brother was also an Econ major and did data governance for his STEM OPT ! Good luck

Title of the post: OPT request denied

Body of the post: (28th April)

I am an international student. I have filed my OPT application before receiving I-20 because of lack of information and wrong guidance. My OPT request has been denied with the following reason:

Late Recommendation in SEVIS

You are applying for post-completion OPT. Your Form I-765 application was receipted by USCIS on March 7, 2024, but

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the DSO entered the recommendation for OPT into your SEVIS record on April 5, 2024. You have failed to submit Form I-765 within 30 days of the date the DSO entered the recommendation for OPT in your SEVIS record.

Can I appeal saying that I made a mistake with the delayed attachment of the documents? Or is there a way to start a new application?

My graduation date: 3rd May 2024

Received rejection: 26th April 2024

Start date requested: 1st July 2024

Any help appreciated. Thank you.

Update(30th April):

Spoke with the DSO today. She asked to send her the denial notice and a request for new I-20. I should file it again.

Thank you all for your answers. Very grateful??.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You should be able to make another application, but speak with your DSO first.

- New Comment: Speak to your DSO asap. I believe you're allowed to reapply but need to do so before a certain time.

Don't try to appeal because the reason for denial was your fault

- New Comment: which university? they usually should provide proper guidance

- New Comment: Just apply again

- New Comment: Did you pay premium processing?

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- New Comment: What does that mean??? DSO entered recommendation for OPT. Do they have to do something else once I apply?
- New Comment: You can apply after graduation, within 60 days after graduation.
- New Comment: Completely tangential to OPs question, what's a DSO?
- New Comment: Premium processing for opt is good ? I am graduating May but applied recently so checking premium or normal for opt . I heard premium has more RFE ? Is it ? Please help
- New Comment: Hi buddy i m having the similar issye like you can you please contact me if possible i m new to reddit unable to text you pls help me ?
- New Comment: How is everything?

Title of the post: Entering US on STEM OPT + EAD

Body of the post: In the last 18 months, I've traveled internationally a few times. I've been on OPT STEM extension with valid visa, i20 and travel signature. Everytime except once, I was stopped at immigration and asked to wait in a separate room while they checked my status. The very first time I traveled after a new visa stamp (received just a week prior to traveling), and I was stopped at the AUH pre clearance. Multiple times entering via Detroit metropolitan airport as well. The only time they did not stop was during pre clearance at Toronto Pearson.

It seems like I'm not alone, two of the other colleagues at work had similar experiences. As far as I know, our OPT record says deactivated and they have to check some other system to verify the current status.

Does anyone have similar experiences? What were the port of entry and what was the procedure? Any information on how this happens, but not everytime?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Let me just tell you they do this at every single airport. I have flown on STEM more than 10 times and

Reddit Posts

not once have I never been stopped. It's just a secondary inspection. It's going to keep happening. Don't worry about it and just accept it. Also I've come on at different Airport. Dallas, Seattle, St. Louis, New York to name a few, you'll be okay

- New Comment: At first I thought this was only happening to me but after reading posts like this and on FB groups recently I've realized it happens to most everyone with STEM OPT. I was so scared when it first happened but now I think I've come to just expect being pulled into secondary. I was also worried that my record deactivated but I've been following the 6-month reporting deadlines, am able to login to SEVP portal and my school has been able to print and sign new I-20s, so all seems fine. I think just to be safe next time I'll print even more supporting evidence like pay stubs and training plan, and be prepared that this will keep happening while I'm on STEM OPT

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Submit an inquiry to DHS Trip! <https://www.dhs.gov/dhs-trip> this is not normal, you should not be pulled into secondary every single time you travel.

Title of the post: Is it okay to say I don't need sponsorship if I just want to work during my OPT period?

Body of the post: Some jobs explicitly state that all OPT students fall in the category of "needing sponsorship", I'm talking about the jobs that do NOT explicitly state that in the application. I'm talking about jobs that just ask you if you're authorized to work in the US (which I will be, if I'm on OPT) and if you would need sponsorship in the future (which I won't, because I don't intend to apply for the H1B visa).

I'm applying for new grad SWE roles and I'm not gonna lie, it's rough out here. I feel like my applications are just getting thrown out automatically once I check that little box that says "I need sponsorship in the future". Just wondering if anyone else has had success by saying "no" to that question. I'm dying out here

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: You can say no. If asked you will need to explain why you said no.

They still may not hire you but you can answer no I do not want/need sponsorship in the future.

However if/when you change your mind, don't expect them to adjust their stance

- New Comment: You can try it but in my limited experience, the outcome will be the same. They don't want immigrants because they have to pay the government and their expensive lawyers every time they hire an immigrant. That's all there is to it.

To everyone downvoting me: I'm a student just like OP. Shut your golden traps ye bunch of GC holders

- New Comment: Unfortunately- most employers don't want to have to train someone on the job who will just leave within a year or two, intentionally or not.

- New Comment: This is how i got my job. Just say no

- New Comment: Just say no and take the chance if things advance. No point to burn the bridge because of one question.

- New Comment: This is why my company asks "Will you now or in the future require visa sponsorship?" And then if you say no you're caught out.

- New Comment: I've had success by answering no to the sponsorship question. I've gotten internships and additional offers this way. I just never tell them I'm an international student and then just show them my work authorization documents when it comes time for the I9. I've never had a problem this way and I recommend doing it if you're not wanting them to sponsor you in the future.

If you answer yes to needing sponsorship, your application will be automatically discarded like 99% of the time it feels

Reddit Posts

like.

- New Comment: Yes you can

Title of the post: Got denied a visa.

Body of the post: VO: So which university you are going to?

Me: University at Buffalo

VO: So you like snow huh?

Me: Yeah, although it is supposed to be the opposite considering I was born in Summer.

VO: Who will be sponsoring you?

Me: I won a scholarship 44\$k for 4 years, and also my father will be the main sponsor.

VO: What does he do?

Me: He owns 3 gasoline trucks and a gas station.

VO: So he owns trucks and a gas station? In the Chilandar district right?

Me: Yes

VO: I am sorry, I can't approve your visa, but your English is excellent, try next time.

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Then I was given a letter for the reason of rejection, it was about not having enough evidence for my return to my home country.

But bro, did he even ask about my graduation plans? Did he ask about what I am going to do after I get my degree?

He literally rejected me just because I didn't provide an answer to a question that he even didn't ask.

So what do you guys think might be the problem here? I had all documents ready in my hand, and all of them were authentic. Do you guys think I should reapply again?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Does your dad actually earn enough *net* to fund your studies?

- New Comment: Understanding your country is Uzbekistan from the comment below, it might be a country issue. It could also be the fact that your father's funding might not be clear.

Have you had any work experience before?

- New Comment: Regretful to hear this mate, if yk there is different kind of PR program for the international students who are boarding UG or community college there, apart from this, the interview seems smooth but out of nowhere im still confused why he reject u, btw are you reapplying for the visa?

- New Comment: It's fucking racism is what it is.

- New Comment: I also got my visa denied, gonna reapply, if it's what you want and you worked hard for it, you should reapply too, don't lose hope, it was probably just bad luck

- New Comment: Sorry to hear. UB is local to me and an excellent university. Can you volunteer next time that you're coming home after graduation to assist with the businesses?

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- New Comment: I know this is gonna sound stupid- If that's the way you answered, it wasn't enough.

My advice, re-apply and this time talk to the consular like he is your friend that you haven't seen in the past 3 years and you want to update them on what's new in your life. You have to detail your answers. If you give short rehearsed answers you will get denied.

Sample scenario-Question: Why Buffalo, out of all the places you could have gone to why Buffalo

Sample Answer i.e. I am going to majoring in (insert whatever STEM major you got approved for) They have one of the most advanced science and technology facilities in the country -one of the leading programs of its kind in North America etc.... you get my point?

Title of the post: F1 interview - good news!

Body of the post: Hello everyone, I just wanted to share that I just got my expedite appointment July 21st!(embassy Rome, Italy)

My embassy still hasn't posted anything on their website so it doesn't hurt to just send them an email and ask if yours hasn't too! Good luck!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: So happy for you! No such luck with London unfortunately.

- New Comment: Hi! I applied for one too but have not gotten the result yet. I sent my I-20 just to be sure. Hoping for the best!

- New Comment: Hi Carlo, fellow Italian here. So my appointment is on Sept 29th in Milan.

Did you ask the expedite procedure before now? If yes, how did you request it the second time?

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Because I did and it was rejected the first time (about a month ago), but the consulate told me I would be able to request it again. I just tried now and the system wouldn't let me.

I'll call the consulate tomorrow to have more info, but I wanted to hear if you were in my same situation.

- New Comment: That's great news! I wish I could also get an expedite appointment but I'm an incoming freshman and they might not grant it. Though, I have already scheduled an interview for Sept 1st, I just hope it could be earlier. How did you do it though?

- New Comment: hopefully ur new appointment won't get canceled again thou. I have an emergency appointment which turned out to be canceled due to the suspension of consular services. Good luck bro

- New Comment: Hey man. Would you mind telling me how to applied for the expedite visa? When I go online to book an interview it always says 'no interviews currently available'. Was that the same case for you?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Congratulations! That's great news. Did you first email the embassy asking if you should apply for an emergency appointment or did you just apply on the system. I wrote to my embassy and they stated that they are working on resuming services soon and to stay tuned for updates. I was wondering if I should anyway go ahead and apply for an emergency appointment

- New Comment: Congrats! I'm wondering if you still need to use a new I-20 with the mode of instruction specified (online/in-person/hybrid) since the ICE policy was rescinded 2 days ago?

- New Comment: Hi from Spain! I just got my interview in Madrid for July 28th. I'm stoked! I'm wondering, given Presidential Proclamation 9993 restricting travel from the Schengen area is still in place ? how will you travel to the US?

- New Comment: A little bit more of confirmation about travelling, still not that official:

<https://twitter.com/ejtaub/status/1283825904670642179>

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Title of the post: Parents B1/B2 got rejected. Should I still risk and go renew my f1?

Body of the post: My parents applied for a touristy visa to visit for graduation in May 2025. I am currently enrolled in masters, one semester left to graduate. Should I still risk and go renew my f1 visa considering my parents visa denial. For me it is a dropbox appointment only.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Technically you don't have to renew your visa as long as your I-20 is still valid, so I wouldn't risk it.
- New Comment: I mean, at this point the question should be do you see your parents in the near future or after green card (which if you are not ROW, well ?)?

If you miss your parents and wanna see them, just go see them. A visa renewal is always gonna be a risk, and probably riskier tomorrow than today.

- New Comment: I only got a 4 year F-1 Visa (221 g slip) in July 2018 that expired in July 2022 while my STEM OPT was still valid till July 2023

I went to Mumbai consulate on an expired F-1 visa but with valid EAD in November of 2022 (only 8 odd months left on my OPT) and still got my F-1 renewed for 5 more years. Helped me a lot in the long run to leave and enter U.S but was definitely a risky move to do so. Depends on the officer and his mood if he wants to be generous

- New Comment: I just completed my OPT with my visa valid until 2027. I am going back to grad school this semester but I am not booking my flight until my i20 comes through. From my understanding, the F1 visa alone doesn't help unless you have a valid i20 that shows you are currently enrolled as a student or have an OPT extension. Not sure what your intentions are if you are trying to stay longer after you graduate. I would recommend doing the OPT, I found it very valuable and the process isn't too hard as long as you do not leave it to the last minute. If you have an F1 but do not provide proof of enrollment at the border I'm not sure what they will do. You won't be allowed to work unless you have the OPT approval either.

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- New Comment: Stay in USA and don't bother leaving the country until you completed your education and training.
- New Comment: Unrelated, but why did your parents' visa get rejected? It's not that common is it
- New Comment: What's the reason it got rejected?
- New Comment: Hey Bro, my understanding you don't need to renew a visa unless it's getting expired before you stem OPT gets completed so if your VISA has a validity of next three years from 2025 just from your graduation you're in a good shape. Expiry only happens to the bachelors student because take at least four years. I'm not quite sure about.

Why do you think yours parents b1/b2 VISA got rejected?

- New Comment: Yes duh why would u not go?
- New Comment: If a parents visa gets rejected, does it have an impact on F1 visa renewal ?
- New Comment: My parents appointment is in next few days. Could you please let me know what questions were asked and other details? It would be of great help.
- New Comment: Hey may ik which embassy was it
- New Comment: What do you mean by renew my f1 visa? Don't you have OPT after that? F1 visas don't need renewals they're stamped till the end of the course

Title of the post: Traveling out of the USA with an expired F-1.

Body of the post: Hi, I'm in my first year of OPT and have been working for a while. My F-1 Visa on my passport recently expired in June and I was planning on renewing it but needed to save PTO so my work would let me travel. I just got a call today that a family member passed away but I am not sure that I will be able to get entry back into the US if I leave because of the expired F-1.

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I have :

- * Approved OPT
- * Singapore Passport
- * EAD Card
- * I-20 with the latest travel signature in June
- * Job offer letter

Does anyone know if I can travel back to my home country for a week and still be able to come back with an expired F-1?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >and still be able to come back with an expired F-1?

No. You need a valid F-1 visa stamp.

- New Comment: no, you'll need to apply for a new visa while you're there

- New Comment: It clearly states in you EAD card " not applicable for reentry"

- New Comment: Nope, eventhough you have all documents needed, you still need unexpired visa

- New Comment: Make an appointment to renew your visa while you're home. It's very simple and many ppl can do it by Dropbox mail. You will not be allowed to re-enter with expired visa

- New Comment: I was in a similar situation a few years ago and I went back home got my F1 renewed while i was on OPT. There's always a chance of being denied but if it's straight forward you are good to go!

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: You should contact the embassy in Singapore and ask if you can get an emergency f1 visa appointment due to the unforeseen circumstances of family member passing away. if the embassy agrees, you would still need i think 2 weeks off work imo.
- New Comment: Automatic revalidation by traveling in from CAN or MX?
- New Comment: With valid i-20 you can renew visa , just do that asap and re-enter
- New Comment: There are some countries where you're allowed to leave on an expired card but I think it's a one time use. I would do some more research on it though before proceeding if your country of birth qualifies
- New Comment: Renew your visa, it only took mine about 2-3 days in my home country
- New Comment: A visa is a stamp you show to the people at the airport that says ?I can come in.?

Your visa status is ?why I am here,? given to you by a school, business, family member, or otherwise.

If you show up at any airport and you don't have the stamp, even if you have the correct status, they will turn you away.

- New Comment: Get a new F1 Visa at the Singapore US Embassy with a interview waiver.

You (likely) qualify because you:

- Were previously issued a nonimmigrant visa in any classification, unless the only prior issued visa was a B visa; and
- Are applying within 48 months of their most recent nonimmigrant visa's expiration date.

You should get your passport back with your visa within a week's time after dropping it off at the Aramex location in Chinatown.

- New Comment: F1 is for 5 years right. How did it expire during opt?
- New Comment: You can make sure you take your EAD card as well make a copy of it and ask for an emergency

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appointment at the embassy

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: It is never a good idea to travel during your OPT period. I realise it's a very tough situation for you but, please keep in mind the risks. That's all.

Title of the post: Working at walgreens on OPT?

Body of the post: A friend of mine told me that she got a full time job. ?In this job market!?? I questioned her, knowing that she hardly applies to any companies while I beat my ass day in and out with no replies from employers.

She told me that she got into Walgreens as an emerging store manager and she got into it after an interview. She told me that they were impressed with her candidacy and offered to hire her after she gets her OPT approved.

I was confused because she was very confident while saying all this and this brings me to the question.

Are students who graduated their masters in STEM degree allowed to work as a store manager in a retail on their OPT?

I know this question sounds lame. But posting this question on this sub and seeking validating answers would be like a slap to the face to check if I am dreaming or is my friend really that dumb.

If the answer is not what I expected. Then it's clear that I deserved that slap.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Its up to her to prove the relation between job duties and her major. It can be somewhat loosely based.

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Especially on first year OPT, its usually not hard to prove the correlation.

- New Comment: If she studied business management or something like that, then the store manager could be a position that is related to the field of study. But it all depends on job duties.
- New Comment: You did not mention the program you are enrolled in. The job must be related to your field of study.
- New Comment: Tbh all it requires is "working in your field of study". Its entirely discretionary and up to the USCIS officer/consulate visa officer adjudicating any future cases or visas to determine if she violated status or not.
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: If she has a business degree then I think working as a manager at Walgreens is related to her degree
- New Comment: Can we do this for the STEM extension?

Suppose it's a Data Management degree. If we get a job of Data entry. It's like filling in data in a CRM system and excel sheet. Is it okay?

- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Jobs on OPT can be for any employer and can even be more than one job but need to be related to their field of study. Your friend , if she graduated from STEM degree she cannot work as a store manager. They won't approve her OPT.

Title of the post: Repercussions of unpaid tuition from 2015.

Body of the post: I was on a f1 visa in the US between 2013-15. Initially, I was in a paid program and I never missed a payment. Within a year, I was moved to an all expenses paid program. A year into it, my circumstances changed and I had to drop out and return to my home country.

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My program admin offered to keep my sevis record active for a few months should my circumstances change and I decide to return. I turned it down and had them terminate my sevis record. I also got a copy of my transcript before I left.

Later in 2015, I received an email from the uni informing me of unpaid tuition ~ \$1,800. I found it fishy and I also didn't have money to pay. I ignored it. Eventually, they moved my account to collections agency, who followed up with a couple of emails and then it stopped.

During my stay in the US, I had an Ssn for part time work. I also held a credit card and made regular, timely payments.

I have a potential work (H1B) and/or business travel (B visa) opportunity in a year.

Will my history affect my chances of getting the visa? If I land in the US, will I have to face legal trouble?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: For getting a visa, NO.

For living in the US. YES.

Your previous charges, credit history and all the money you spent, paid etc are recorded so it will impact your credit score and ability to rent a house and stuff like that.

You can read more here:

<https://moneynerd.co.uk/can-visa-denied-because-debt/>

- New Comment: What you should do depends on whether you actually owe tuition or not. You said you paid everything

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on time, and then it was all expenses paid. Then what is the unpaid tuition from? Was there a clause that obliged you to pay back tuition if you dropped out?

Being sent to collection also does not mean that it will be on your credit report. There are steps that collection agencies have to take by law before they can report it. A simple letter that says "please pay" does not cut it.

- New Comment: you should fight it..call the lender.. you should not pay it , if you know you dont owe anything.. and notmally you can win the case by taking to the right person nicely

- New Comment: Just pay it. Bad credit means no cellphone plan, you will fail background check for apartment rental, no credit cards, and many employers do credit checks now.

Title of the post: Opt Ended.

Body of the post: I completed my bachelor in may 2022 and OPT in october 2023. My f1 visa expired on 2021. I applied for eb3 in 2022 but due to retrogression was able to file i-140 only got approved but still waiting to file for i-485 until my pd date becomes current. I'm worried since I have completed my opt ended in october 2023. During the meantime i had family issues after my mom & grandmom passed away. So i couldnt get into master rightaway.

Its been alsmot 7months. I worried if i can re join the college with out having to leave the country.

How can i remain in status until i file i485.

Please let me know!

Any suggestions

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: This thread was misinformation galore ?

- New Comment: I'm on EB2-NIW visa process. Did you do adjustment of status and if so do you have the receipt notice? If you have done AOS and have at least the receipt notice, you can stay legally in the country although you can only do volunteering. If that is not your case, at the end of your OPT you can go to Canada and return the same day, entering with your tourist visa, if it is not expired. Other option is to change to another study program, although it can not be a school to study english. Also, I learned from the lawyers that if you submitted the AOS and you have not received the receipt, you can stay lawfully up 180 days despite that your visa expired. If you have still doubts I recommend you my lawyers, IMMIVISA, you can schedule a 30-60min consultation (it is around 200 bucks) and you will get very good advice. They are in Utah and attend online. I recommend you to reach out the lawyer named Jake, is the owner of the business and he is pretty good. The firm specializes in EB visas. I hope it helps

- New Comment: What happened to stem opt

Title of the post: Professor dropped me keeping me out of status

Body of the post: Hey everyone,

I was wondering what to do. The spring semester will end in 4 weeks, and my professor dropped me from her class (it was a midterm class), which is keeping me out of status. The thing is, I made my change of status in the US. What can I do to avoid getting my SEVIS terminated?

Do you think she can re add me to the class Although the last day to add with a code was 2 weeks ago?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Talk to your professor, your department and with the international student services at your school.

- New Comment: Beg the prof for the F grade and retake it next sem

- New Comment: Why were you dropped

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- New Comment: Had the same situation , let your professor know your situation and need to keep the class even if you fail, sending you lots of care ?
- New Comment: Update: Thx everyone for your help, I appreciate it. I already got reinstated into the class
- New Comment: You can make up for it with a summer class. I've had this problem before, except it was that I withdrew from too many classes
- New Comment: Talk to your professor. If she doesn't care, talk to your designated school official(DSO) for international students.
- New Comment: you need to become a pro beggar my friend
- New Comment: i had a class i couldn't attend to come i am here to see if you can reschedule me for another day . Is this English Correct
- New Comment: F1 has no grade requirement, just that you are enrolled in a certain number of credits
- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: just saw that my OPT got approved.

Body of the post: don't believe the estimated time on the USCIS website.

even though I got the standalone approval, the website says it will take 3 weeks to get the decision lol

I applied on feb 28th and got the decision on march 30th.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You applied on time tbh. It gets longer the later into the semester

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Nice!!! So a month exactly
- New Comment: I applied on 02/22/24, got approved on 03/17/24. Still waiting on the physical card.
- New Comment: whats the start date?
- New Comment: Premium processing?
- New Comment: Yeah, the website is so glitchy. I applied Feb 25th and got the standalone approval on March 21st. Still says 2 weeks till the decision, and I don't have the EAD card on hand.
- New Comment: Was this stem opt or normal?
I'm applying for stem opt and tomorrow is 3 months. I'm so worried :(
- New Comment: Your problems have started only now. If you think your OPT is a big deal, you have no idea what's awaiting you.

Title of the post: Jobs on F1 STEM OPT

Body of the post: I am on my last year of F1 STEM OPT. I want to get a new job in a big company, I've 2 years of solid data science experience but it's so hard to get an interview because of my visa situation.

Recruiters call me for the position but after knowing my visa status they don't proceed further.

Have I been unlucky with not the right companies or it's very hard to get a new tech job with F1 STEM OPT and no H1B yet?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: They're not going to hire someone to work less than a year.
- New Comment: You're in a highly saturated field so this was bound to happen.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Try looking for something outside data science.
- New Comment: may i know your current visa validity.we actually work for these so,i could help you to sort this out. hit me with DM or mail me on uday dot charlie 2597 at the rate gmail dot com
- New Comment: Find a US citizen.
- New Comment: Why wouldn't your current company file H1B for you?

Title of the post: Can I legally work remotely from my home country for a U.S. employer while on OPT?

Body of the post: I'm planning a trip back to my home country and am currently employed full-time in the U.S. under OPT (Optional Practical Training). If my employer agrees, can I continue working remotely from my home country during this visit? Or is remote work from my home country completely prohibited while on OPT?

I asked my school this exact question and they said this:

?Our office does not prohibit you from working remotely from your home country while on OPT, as long as your employer agrees. ?

Thank you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes, you can.
- New Comment: Every company has a time limit to how long you can do that depending on how they file taxes, usually it's fine for trips less than 3 months but you should check with your HR.
- New Comment: [removed]

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Not legal advice but there may also be tax implications as some folks have pointed out. You should also consider the rules of your local country. It may be possible that you would incur tax liabilities there as well.

- New Comment: Yes you can

- New Comment: It's not recommended you abandon your US address listed on your I-20. If you are not living at the U.S. address indicated on your I-20 then you are providing false info to the government. Address updates are supposed to be reported within 10 days. The whole purpose of OPT is to allow you to work in the U.S. If you're working from your home country, what is the point of OPT at that point? I would advise you not to, but that's between you and your school.

Title of the post: losing OPT because you completed CPT

Body of the post: Hello,

I recently got an offer for a part-time job in my field and I'm in my first semester of master's. I heard many people say if I finish 1 year CPT, I will lose my OPT. So I was wondering if this is true, if so, how can I avoid it.

I am in a STEM based program so if I do lose my 1 year OPT will it affect my STEM OPT as well. Could anyone of you shed some light on this topic.

FYI: I am aware that I have to complete at least 2 semesters before taking an internship or a part-time position so I am going to request my hiring team to move my joining date for Oct.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 12 months or more of full-time CPT will make you ineligible for OPT. If your CPT authorization is part-time, it shouldn't impact OPT.

- New Comment: If it's part time, it will not be count into your CpT time.

<https://www.ice.gov/sevis/practical-training>

Reddit Posts

?If you have 12 months or more of full-time CPT, you are ineligible for OPT, but part-time CPT is fine and will not stop you from doing OPT.?

- New Comment: Not all colleges offer day 1 CPT. You cannot start CPT/approved off-campus job (part/full time) before completion of 2 semester. Loosing OPT and STEM-OPT is not worth. CPT should be less than 12 month. CPT should be approved and should reflect in i-20

- New Comment: Yep, i worked 3 months of CPT fulltime (Summer) + 2 Months of parttime(winter).

My DSO specifically says to be careful of the 1-year thingy of full time. At that time i dont see how possible to work full time for 1 year CPT

- New Comment: Be mindful if you have a scholarship and work part time for school.

- New Comment: First point: your FYI is wrong. For a masters degree, CPT can be started as soon as you join. To answer your questions, yes, working more than 12 months full time CPT will make you ineligible for OPT, and along with it, the STEM OPT extension since you do not have OPT in the first place. But working , say 9 months full-time CPT and 24 months part-time OPT will be okay.

- New Comment: You can do 364 days of full time CPT to keep your OPT intact.

- New Comment: Lots of great info here; I have a follow-up question: if I graduated with my MS last Dec. but was unable to find a job, I began another MS program in the Spring, but now a great job offer has come across my table. What are my options? Before I began a new program, my DSO informed me that I should still be fine for OPT from my previously completed program, but she is now saying she was wrong and that because I have completed 1 semester of the new program, I cannot use OPT for this FT opportunity. I'd love to hear any thoughts on probable solutions

PS: I know I should've done more research to be sure on my part rather than taking their word for it.

- New Comment: affirmative

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: What is your field and how did you get the offer?

Title of the post: What is the best way I can stay in the US? OPT ending soon

Body of the post: Hello guys! I would like to ask you an advice on how to stay in the US. I'm F1 on OPT ending on 02/14. My plan is to apply for grad school. However, there is the whole 120 day rule that you need to transfer your SEVIS ID. Lucky me, I will be 150 days away to any school begin.

​

Does anyone have any advice on how to stay in the country. I have valid F1 visa for next two years and passport valid for the next 10 years

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Do you have/could you get a B1 tourist visa that you could leave and come back on? You can spend up to 6 months in a year in the US on a B1.

- New Comment: Go to grad school, spend 2 semester, make sure that there is less than a year left before your get degree, apply for cpt at the same company you are working at, maybe they will re-hire you.

- New Comment: You only have ****60 days**** of your grace period complete a SEVIS transfer. And the new program date must begin in 5 months of your current end date. Since you would be applying for fall, I see no reasonable options, unless you get an offer from an advisor, and they allow you to enroll in the summer term. You have to return.

- New Comment: There are many colleges that you term system where the term could start as early as March or April. Don't be discouraged! Do prepare to move though! Best of luck to you and feel free to DM If you need someone to talk to :)

- New Comment: 1. Day 1 CpT school.

Reddit Posts

2. O1 visa
3. Marriage to citizen
4. Eb1A
5. EB5
6. Reapply next year for h1b
7. Go to grad school and wait it out

- New Comment: You mean your opt period is ending but still have stem extension? Is that right?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Day 1 CPT, if you were a undergrad.

- New Comment: Hope for a great valentines and marry them. Jk, that?s super illegal if your intention is to exploit immigration law. Just go and come back an a B1 or on ESTÁ if you?re from a Country that has it to hold you off until you start grad school.

Title of the post: Intentionally failing a class to postpone graduation

Body of the post: I am currently a master student in the US on F-1 visa and I have an interesting situation:

I had to start my program in **January 2023** because my visa was delayed 6 months due to "background checks". Therefore my I-20 end date is **December 2024** (it's a 2 year program). However the school fast-tracked a bunch of courses in my initial quarters and now I am able to graduate in June 2024. International Student Office tells me if I am able to graduate I must graduate to maintain F-1 status. However I would like to graduate in **December 2024** to have more time for my job search. I have the following idea at the moment:

I can intentionally fail a class and then not be eligible to graduate. After that I can take that class in the fall and graduate in December 2024. Would this work?

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >I can intentionally fail a class

Am I reading this right? ~~Why not take up a few additional courses for Fall 2024 and graduate in December?~~

Edit: Not allowed by USCIS

- New Comment: Spring is almost always a better time to graduate for employment purposes. Graduating in December puts you applying for jobs during the biggest US holiday season. Many companies also stupidly set the end of the calendar year to be the end of their fiscal year, as such they don't know their next year finances.

Now this does depend on your field of employment.

- New Comment: Go on a 6/8 month internship

- New Comment: Won't you have to take additional courses (apart from the one you fail) to meet the minimum credit requirement in the fall semester? That will also mean additional tuition

- New Comment: I think the rule is that if you finished all your required core courses then you cannot keep studying. You should have layered taking your core courses so that you use all the time available ...

- New Comment: When is your I-20 end date?

If it's already June 2024, intentionally failing a course would not allow for an extension at my institution. You'd be terminated for failure to maintain status and make your normal academic progress, and you could apply for reinstatement which may or may not be approved before you graduated in Fall 2024

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: If your masters has an option to do a thesis or dissertation- just do that and take your time w it

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Can you drop a required class?

- New Comment: your GPA would come down?

- New Comment: Try to enroll in a graduate certificate if that is available in your university.

- New Comment: Drop a class, join consultancy run payroll on CPT as to show you're doing an internship? in that way you won't fall under not meeting f1 requirements for dropping class. And enroll to the dropped class next semester.

- New Comment: I don't know what your field is, but I'm telling you that December is the slowest hiring time.

And nowadays people only hire as needed. So if you interview and get a job offer in June, they won't wait for you till you graduate in December.

- New Comment: Unless something changed, I am pretty sure you are allowed to be part-time on your last semester. I did it both in undergrad and grad school.

Check with your DSO

- New Comment: What about drop a few courses now? I believe if you have a disability or like depression, PTSD, traumatic event, they would let you drop courses and delay graduation?

Title of the post: F1 deportation, because of illegal working

Body of the post: As F1 student, and without work authorization, if you work off campus job which is illegal and get caught how long will it take for you to get deported? Can somebody report F1 student working illegally?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This is a second second-hand story from my boss. His friend used to work at a restaurant and one of the girl reported to USCIS about F1 girl student working there

Reddit Posts

That F1 was caught but then released with a warning not to do it again.

Granted, that story was in 2011 when the immigration debate is not as intense as it is now.

- New Comment: If you're deported, you may be banned from ever visiting the US and even Canada because they share immigration records so be careful. Just withdraw.

- New Comment: Withdraw from courses. Your DSO will terminate your SEVIS. But don't rush into making a decision. You might change your mind years later and want to return to the United States. Your past shouldn't stop you from doing that.

- New Comment: Please don't be an idiot and just talk to your family

- New Comment: Don't do it

- New Comment: Don't sabotage your immigration record. Your situation might change in 10/15 years. US shares immigration records with many other countries. Just inform your DSO and leave the country. Tell your parents whatever you need to.

- New Comment: DO. NOT. WORK. ILLEGALLY.

- New Comment: The real risk is that it's going to become a headache down the line every time you are seeking any kind of visa. Deportations take forever and people working illegally are not a priority. But you could certainly get deported for that.

- New Comment: As others mentioned, don't sabotage your countrymen's opportunities just because you want to go home.

You don't want to be the reason someone from your country couldn't come to the US to study computer science

- New Comment: Don't

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: You are an adult and can make your own decision, no? If family tried to bully me like that I'd just stick it to them.

- New Comment: What kind of an ingrate are you?

You have been given an opportunity that millions of people all over the world work their butts off for, and you just want to squander it and return to your home country. What's worse is that you want to get deported?

I know a guy who got deported a few months ago, also on F1 visa, and it has devastating effects on him, his wife, his parents and his friends.

If you really want to leave, have an honest conversation with your folks and leave the country even if they say no. You are a grown adult, no one can make you do something you don't want to.

Don't resort to committing a crime just to leave the country. There are many people here who work hard to stay here and to reinforce laws and rules here. Have some respect for them and leave with dignity.

- New Comment: Being in a country and intend to be a criminal from the start?

Immediately is the answer

- New Comment: Don't do anything that you might regret in 8-15 years.

- New Comment: Don't do it ??

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: STEP OPT extension denied. My current OPT ends on the 15th of Jan and I need to

Reddit Posts

Body of the post: I am an international student based in the US. I have a degree in Urban Design and recently received a letter from USCIS saying my STEM OPT application is denied for the following reason:

*"****Your diploma/transcript shows you were granted a Master of Science in Urban Design. Your SEVIS record shows a CIP code of 30.3301 - Sustainability Studies which does not match the conferred degree.*** *As your SEVIS record does not accurately reflect your program of study, and your degree is not on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List, you are ineligible for employment authorization under 8 CFR & 274a.12(c)(3)(i)(C)."

Context: My degree **is** a STEM degree. It's just that since there is no CIP code that specifically says "Urban Design", it is designated a CIP code of "Sustainability Studies". I now have a letter from my director that proves the same.

Now my current situation is such that, I have a job offer and need to switch to the new company to join on the 22nd of January. My current OPT expires on the 15th of January. I spoke to an immigration lawyer and she suggested since I have time before my current OPT expires, I can collect necessary evidence from the school and resubmit using a new application.

I have two options:

1. I open the new application through my **new** company BEFORE I join on the 22nd. With this, I'm not sure if it's really legal/allowed to apply for a STEM extension with an employer I haven't started working with yet.
2. I open the new application with my **current** company and THEN inform USCIS within 10 days of joining the new company that I have switched. I have read on the internet that there is a little bit of a risk there.

Which option sounds better, does anybody have any suggestions? This has never happened before to any of the past students in my program.

Reddit Posts

Also, I really need a 2nd and 3rd opinion from other immigration lawyers experienced in this area. Does anybody have any suggestions as to who I can contact?

​

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: OP, immediately let your international office at the school know. They will/should be able to write a letter explaining how your major falls under the CIP code eligible for STEM OPT. Usually USCIS sends an RFE in such cases, but you were unlucky to get a straight up denial.

For now, get that letter from the school and submit your application with it.

- New Comment: Did you apply with premium processing?

- New Comment: When did you submit your stem opt application?

- New Comment: Did you get a notification in the online portal?

- New Comment: I would take option 2, it?s less complicated and easier because it?s something that most people even on post completion opt do. Also not sure what additional evidence you will need and if it will be accepted by USCIS so would play the safer card.

- New Comment: The USA hasn?t been fair to international students at all .This is very bad !

- New Comment: Hi there, have you been able to resolve this problem ?

- New Comment: You should have made sure there was a STEM sevis code for your degree if you were banking on that extension. You could ask the company to file a H1B for you ASAP

- New Comment: Did you attach the letter of support from your director to your STEM OPT application? Or receive it after the fact?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: If mexican or Canadian, u can check if ur degree is under the tn visa list
- New Comment: What CIP code should your degree be considered?

Title of the post: I received an email my I-20 status is cancelled and I need to leave the US immediately

Body of the post: ?As stated in my previous email, your SEVIS record is now terminated for ?Unauthorized withdrawal? for the Fall 2023 semester. Your Form I-20 is no longer of use for reentry into the country. If you have not already done so, please depart the United States as soon as possible. Per the F-1 regulations, students must leave the U.S. within 15 days from their termination date. This is due to withdrawing from courses without authorization. If you decide to return in the future to continue your program, you will need to go through the I-20 process again. ? What do I do I am crying If you see my previous post on my profile, I talked about my situation ?What to do I had not been attending classes student resources called me what do I say what do I do. Long story short basically my brother was suicidal and told me he is planning on _____ so I went right away to my brother's side and stayed with him (he is in a different state) and the past 2 weeks almost a month) had been so stressful and I know it is hard to believe but I completely forgot about school and had not attend for two weeks and forgot to email the professor or do anything. Today student resources called me and left me a voice mail and right away I was snap back to reality like how did I forget this was not on my mind at all. At all. And they are waiting for me to call back I do not want to fail all my classes or would the university kick me out? I am on my fourth year so close to graduating what should I tell them I am afraid this is not good enough for them my goal is to go back to my class and turn in any over due work I cannot do a gap year (I already did during covid) should I tell them someone close to me died? Would that do anything? I need to do anything so there will be less consequences and that I can graduate (my university is a private university) and attendance counts as grades and obviously assignments what can I do?? Because I missed 2 weeks almost a month my school withdraw all my classes automatically I did not do it myself. There is no way I wanted to withdraw but because my school is very strict the classes were automatically withdrawn. I didn't know what to do in the situation I talked to the school if I can get my classes back and they said no. It been a month I complete shut down I don't know what to do. I already had a gap year. Last week I received this email that I quoted in the beginning I just saw this email and I'm going to leave the US immediately by tomorrow. I had not

Reddit Posts

seen the email last week because I just do not want to look at anything I am aware for this part it is my fault. Now that my I-20 status is complete terminated, does that mean I lose everything? These past 4 years? My classes my transcript? I have to start all over again? Am i not a official student anymore? What is going to happen. If I reapply my I-20 F1 again, how long would it take, spring semester is one month away. Can I make it on time? Can I get my degree? I pray that I can get my degree and my transcript is not deleted automatically. I did not withdraw on my own the class automatically got withdrawn I spoke to the professor and started to hand in missing assignments and the professors did not ask for me to be withdrawn either. I had a doctors note and a note of my my psychology evaluation (sorry if my english is not good) but after my classes got automatically withdrawn and the school said nothing can be done I had not looked at my email since there is nothing to be done. Today I saw the email about my I-20 termination.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No need to worry. I'm not an immigration lawyer but speak to your DSO. They can help you out. In most cases once you deport the country, you will issued a new i-20 and SEVIS. If you have valid passport and visa basically not expired. You can come back and pursue your studies again. Talk to your DSO and immigration lawyer immediately. Don't delay on any thing. Take care!

- New Comment: Not sure why no one is answering your big question, but your transcript is safe. Even if you are expelled from the school, your transcript is still valid. You could transfer the credits to a university in your home country or another one in the US to complete your degree if you're not allowed to return to your current school. If you do this, you will likely need to take some extra courses because degree requirements vary between schools.

- New Comment: Do not fly home yet. Go to the school in person and get some answers. I personally agree with the person who suggested reinstatement. You can stay in the US while the case is pending, probably as long as your next semester. However, you will not be eligible for OPT as once you're reinstated, you will not have a full academic year as an F1 behind you, but it will be from the date your reinstatement occurs (assuming it's approved) and your graduation date.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Unfortunately, I believe you don't have any options but leave. If I understand it correctly, Student visa is for studying and not taking care of others (even though life is not white and black but that's the rule). Doctors note probably helps if you have any medical issues and not your family members. Please talk to your DSO and if needed consult with immigration lawyer. Un authorized stay will be viewed negatively for your future visa applications.

- New Comment: I think others have already answered. But going forward any email communication you have with these folk- bcc your school international office or a certain office from said office who is like your case worker. I've noticed in my own experience that this ensures you can state the international office was aware (in case it comes to a point where ppl wanna ask questions) and also that they are aware of what email exchange was and such.

- New Comment: TL;dr: Just talk to your school. They can answer every single question here. Most of these we cannot answer as it is school policy not immigration.

>And they are waiting for me to call back I do not want to fail all my classes or would the university kick me out?

You disappeared because of a family situation and told no one. It looks like you just abandoned your studies. So sounds like your school has a policy to terminate enrollment in such situations.

> I am on my fourth year so close to graduating what should I tell them I am afraid this is not good enough for them my goal is to go back to my class and turn in any over due work I cannot do a gap year (I already did during covid)should I tell them someone close to me died?

No. You should have let them know about your family situation with your brother and needing to support him. Speaking to your professors would have been good too.

Reddit Posts

> Because I missed 2 weeks almost a month my school withdraw all my classes automatically I did not do it myself.

There is no way I wanted to withdraw but because my school is very strict the classes were automatically withdrawn.

They are allowed to do that. You agreed to these terms.

>Now that my I-20 status is complete terminated, does that mean I lose everything?

No.

>Am i not a official student anymore?

Possibly

>If I reapply my I-20 F1 again, how long would it take, spring semester is one month away. Can I make it on time? Can I get my degree?

Days to weeks maybe longer delay due to the holiday. Yes you can still get your degree but how long that takes is different.

>I did not withdraw on my own the class automatically got withdrawn I spoke to the professor and started to hand in missing assignments and the professors did not ask for me to be withdrawn either. I had a doctors note and a note of my my psychology evaluation (sorry if my english is not good) but after my classes got automatically withdrawn and the school said nothing can be done I had not looked at my email since there is nothing to be done.

Reddit Posts

This could have been fixed if you spoke to the school BEFORE and could have taken a medical reduced course load.

Basically speak to your school, get a new I-20, reenter for Spring or go home and come back for Fall.

- New Comment: Your record stays in the school system even if you didn't complete your degree. The credits you earned will still be valid if you can't get into the same university try transferring credits to a different university

- New Comment: You will be okay. You just need to go through the entire process again.

- New Comment: Not a lawyer, but one of my friend had a similar situation. Nothing happens to your transcripts. You can file for reinstatement of your f1 visa here in US. You have 6 months after your termination to re-instate. You might want to speak to a lawyer and get more details. Don't panic. You'll be barred only if you stay over 180 days.

Title of the post: Want a new job but nobody wants to hire after looking at my visa status (STEM-OF

Body of the post: I'm so extremely frustrated at this point. I try to be positive and push through the job apps, but it's been draining to say the least.

I am currently working and waiting for my new EAD card (approved), but my job is sucking the life out of me. I love the people I work with, but it's not the type of work I want to do, and I live in a quiet town which I DESPISE.

I've applied to 164 jobs and I reach out to multiple ppl each time I apply to a role. I've spoken to a few people and am immediately shut down after they find out that I will require sponsorship after two years.

I am eligible for the H-1B1 visa as well (which needs sponsorship but is guaranteed), but it doesn't seem to be helping so far.

Any tips on what I can do to improve my process? I'm desperate at this point. Thank you all.

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: A few reasons for your situation: first you are new to your career and as entry level you are not very competitive; second you need H1B in 2 years but might not get it due to h1b lottery. It makes it worse since your company will train you two years and lost you if you are not lucky enough to get h1B. Here is my suggestion: continue on your current job to get more experience. Second, ask current company to sponsor your h1b even you still have EAD. Once you get h1b, it becomes easier since change job just requires h1b transfer (guaranteed) not new h1b (chance not getting it).

- New Comment: It's very hard right now, I'd suggest to not hold out too much hope. Companies don't want to go through the extra hassle of hiring international students right now with the surplus of people with a lot more experience than you in the market. It's just a really bad time to be hunting for a job (I'm a student like you, so I understand).

- New Comment: That sucks. But then the whole immigration thing sucks so thats that.

- New Comment: Keep applying my friend. With the job market where it is right now, you need to increase your quantity. I've seen people apply for 500+ jobs and landing one interview.

Sometimes you just have to disclose if you need work authorization, not sponsorship. But I know this is not the case in most cases.

- New Comment: Hey OP, take it 1 day at a time and stick to the process. I know it sucks and it sucks bad. But one day at a time. Keep working on it. Find things to do apart from the job stuff. The road is long, windy, and hard.

Also, would recommend not counting the number of applications you applied for. It makes things worse for you.

- New Comment: I paid an agency to get me interviews and have had 2 so far after applying to 200+ companies by myself. I'm still looking on my own but the agency was worth the money, just not in my desired location.

- New Comment: Unless you bring in a very specific skill set, the reality is firms are just going to hire domestic students since they don't have to worry about spending money and time on visa sponsorship. It makes perfect sense.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Honestly, I think you are in a better position than most people in this subreddit.

I would say it is all about your perspective. A job is a job at the end of the day. I never heard anyone proudly say that they love their jobs ever and looking forward to it. Try to find hobbies, friends outside of work.

- New Comment: Idk what your field is but I would recommend looking to work for non-profits and universities that are typically h1b cap exempt. The odds are much higher and they are more willing to higher stem just cause they have a lot of experience with them

- New Comment: Look for smaller companies

- New Comment: Job applications tbh is really a numbers game. You have to keep applying. After few weeks, you'll get the hang and understand better what kind of roles are getting you interviews.

For sponsorship question, you can say that you are authorized currently and if your H1B doesn't get picked up in the lottery, you will continue studying (DAY1CPT) and the company can still apply. (If you're thinking of going down the road)

Try to find roles in international companies that tend to sponsor often. Even in house staffing firms role since they sponsor a lot too.

- New Comment: Just marry an American citizen like I did. Made everything so much easier.

Title of the post: Violated F1 Status by unauthorized work. What are the options?

Body of the post: So, someone that I know violated her F1 status. She unknowingly continued working through for her summer intern employer, assuming that her paperwork was still good. She's about to graduate, has been offered a full-time job by the employer, but has come to realize that she's violated her status.

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Her school has been notified and she's working with them to invalidate her status. The school is encouraging her to apply to grad school with them, get new SEVIS/I20 paperwork and do a border hop in Canada to get a new D/S.

This would effectively ruin her current job prospect given that the invalidated I20 cannot be used anymore for OPT/EAD. It would also mean that there's no way she can apply for OPT until she's done working on her grad degree, or perhaps just applying for CPT for internships during her study.

Is that correct?

Any better suggestions?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Consult lawyer

- New Comment: Also, I removed the majority of the Lawyer COMMENTS. To be frank, it is a waste of time and money unless this frje

There is nothing an immigration attorney can do in this situation. The violation is very clear, very simple, and the consequences very clear. I have never had any immigration attorney in the last decade find a route to correct this issue.

Additionally, for other issues related to OPT, any route that OP's friends tries to take will take too long to get OPT. The regulations are very strict and you have a maximum period of 15 months to utilize OPT. So even if something could be worked out the time it would take to bring a lawsuit to USCIS, the majority if not all of the OPT period would be gone.

Unfortunately there is almost no money in F-1 and thus there is incredibly limited case law. Meaning even novel ideas will take a long time to be processed.

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- New Comment: >This would effectively ruin her current job prospect given that the invalidated I20 cannot be used anymore for OPT/EAD.

Correct

>It would also mean that there's no way she can apply for OPT until she's done working on her grad degree,

She could obtain a second undergraduate degree and use OPT with that. But otherwise, yes. She need a new degree and at least one full academic year to be eligible.

>The school is encouraging her to apply to grad school with them, get new SEVIS/I20 paperwork and do a border hop in Canada to get a new D/S.

She doesn't need a grad degree with that school, but she does need a new I-20 if she intends to attempt to stay. That could be an undergraduate degree or a graduate degree with the current school or a new school so long as they start soon and she can get admission soon.

>She's about to graduate, has been offered a full-time job by the employer, but has come to realize that she's violated her status.

Unless that graduate program offers day one CPT, that job is likely lost or significantly delayed.

>Any better suggestions?

No. This violation is very simple in its cause and effect. The school can delay the termination for a few days for

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"administrative reasons" but otherwise there isn't much else they can do now that they are aware.

- New Comment: Who notified the school??? Her interning company?

- New Comment: From someone just experienced this:

If the school decided to terminate her status, then there is NO way to legally stay in the US except getting a new I-20, exit & re-enter on a new SEVIS. No room for negotiations. OP should realize that her lawful status, if she wish to pursue career here, is more important than any types of employment authorization at this moment.

OP also stated a best solution, finish graduate works, accumulate one-year OPT/CPT eligibility and starting work the next year.

P.S. There is always no guarantee for a noncitizen to pass the border. My another suggestion is please be really prepared to speak to the CBP Officers at secondary inspection, be 100% honest about the past employment history, as that increases her chance to re-enter. Do not apply for any non-immigrant visas in the next few years.

Let me know if you have any questions.

- New Comment: To the OP: Could you please tell me how things have turned out for your friend? I'm sort of in a similar boat. I got terminated from job and left US within 15 days of realising I committed an unintentional violation of status. That was over a year ago.

Did your friend have to disclose about the unauthorised employment anywhere? Did she get a new visa based on that?

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It would be of great help if you could share more information about this.

Thank you!

- New Comment: They can join universities that offer a day 1 cpt to continue with and continue their masters program there? The legality of this is pretty gray so I recommend you do your research on this.

- New Comment: I had a friend in grad school who had violated his F1 status by working 40 hours the week of Fall break. Apparently even during fall break he was allowed only 20 hours. This just needed some form of correction from the authorities to reinstate his F1 status. She should consult a lawyer instead of depending on the school. The school advisors are usually useless.

- New Comment: Would you guys really tell your dso if you exceed working for a week or a month. Idk i wouldn't.

Title of the post: If you could go back.....

Body of the post: For the F1 students who came to the US. Was the decision worth it? Looking back after all the years you've spent, would you say the decision was worth it? Would you make the same choice again if you could go back ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Well it was worth it for me but I'm already planning my eventual exit from America. It's good, I'm now a permanent resident. Working a nice tech job but I hope to exit America for good once I get my citizenship. I don't really enjoy it that much. I prefer life back home in Africa. Once I get my saving and investments right, I'm gone. I only got here in 2018 as an f1 student

- New Comment: I would probably still do it, but there were A LOT of hardships I wish I would have foreseen. I'm Canadian and went to school in the US. While this doesn't sound like a ?big difference?, (even I didn't think it would be

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a big deal), I still dealt with many challenges similar to international students overseas. Also, my flight from home to school was still over 8+ hours and expensive as heck? I also did not know another soul in the US before moving, meanwhile many of my international friends had gone to international high schools and seemed to have local connections, others to ask for advice, etc?

1. One surprising hardship was putting all this effort into making new friends just to never see them again. The US is so big, and my friends were all across America. So, when my undergrad ended, everyone went to work back closer to their home state or another city and I basically never saw most of them again.
2. You have to research the visa process first. Had I done this properly when I was 18, I wouldn't have done it. Or, at least, I would have majored in STEM.
3. Your parents get older? and you invest all this time and money to move AWAY from them? seeing them grow up is heartbreaking and I feel so guilty living far from them now.
4. Everyone in your hometown will hate you ? And, if you feel like giving up and want to move back home, you will find that you have grown and changed so much it is not the same place any longer.

However, that being said, attending an American university and law school in the US, all by myself without knowing a single American, was the adventure of my life! Football games, frat parties, amazing professors? School is one thing the USA knows how to do right.

- New Comment: I am an Indian National, came here during 2018. On my last year of STEM OPT. Never missed a single day at work - didn't get picked the last two H1B attempts and not optimistic about the next one.

Feel like I wasted 5 years of my life, looking into other countries now.

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- New Comment: Been in the States for 5 years. My career is not too bad but I realized there are so many more things I want to do but my F1 just doesn't let me unless I spend money to go back to school. Planning my eventual leave, but it's been a great time.
- New Comment: Decision was worth it. Id probably major in different things though. So I can better endure the waiting period while I go through the visa processes
- New Comment: Yes
- New Comment: I've learnt some lessons along the way but I would pick other countries if I could. The visa and lottery in America is a shit show. Is it worth it? I guess but I still prefer other countries.
- New Comment: developed so many mental health issues from loneliness and racism I faced in my PWI, but my country is experiencing a civil war so I'm glad I can be safe here for a little while so I guess I would still make the same choice.....

Title of the post: Is anyone in OPT but has no job?

Body of the post: This's stressing me out ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: me! I'm leaving the us this week before exceeding 90d of unemployment. I applied for ~200 and got a lot of replies, but mostly rejected lol. I had 3 interview but they all from the company that use the easy apply feature on linkedin, so they didn't know I'd need sponsor in the future. I've heard my field ME is in short of senior position, not fresh grads so well I was prepared for this since the beginning. A little bit sad, but hopefully I can come back some days to get my Master degree
- New Comment: I had a hard time trying to get a job too. I got some interviews, got accepted, but then the company backed out because I haven't gotten my EAD card yet at that time even though I've already mentioned it in the interview.

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Now I am self employed on OPT, running my own business. Best decision I've ever made because I finally can do what I like doing as my job :)

Edit : typos

- New Comment: Happens often. Job hunting takes a while also use your school's employment resources for job hunting, resume review, etc.

- New Comment: I actually paid someone to make my resume and I started getting more interviews after that. Just something for you to consider.

- New Comment: I have had horrible time finding employment after I graduated. I searched for 9 long months and just got into a role. I was volunteering for rnd4impact as well. Thanks to them I got the clock stopped.

- New Comment: I'm a marketing major, and what helped me is that I put my OPT start date a month and a half after my graduation date, and that gave me the enough time to find a job in my field. I was getting rejected everywhere, and getting only scam jobs interviews? but I read that you need to be more specific when searching for a job: like instead of writing "marketing jobs" I started looking for more specific positions such as "social media specialist", "digital marketing?", "event marketing?" etc.

That helped me to get my actual job a week before my start day they contacted me, did the interview and here I am! I'm sure you can find one!

- New Comment: Some people have success talking with their school or connections for an at-will part time position. Have you tried that? You can work there and still apply for full time positions. It's like getting a few more months to apply for jobs while working part time. I'd look into that if I were you.

- New Comment: I'd suggest looking into a contract position, because then you'd answer no to needing a future

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sponsorship since the contract would end before your EAD would. And then before your contract ends, find another position and so on. Good luck!

- New Comment: Stay strong ?

- New Comment: I know a Chinese PhD paid to get a fake job to maintain her Visa status when she graduated. She has been using the same fake job for the past four years. She uses it to stall in the US and hopes to get another fake job someday.

- New Comment: Keep trying. I know many in CS who got a job without prior experience. Good luck.

- New Comment: Yeah! I'm maintaining my OPT status by volunteering. If you want to know more about the nonprofit I volunteer at, please DM me.

Title of the post: F1 visa renewal while on post completion OPT. Dropbox experience

Body of the post: While there is so little information on this topic on the internet and forums in general that I thought I add my experience hoping to help someone navigating through the same pains. Before I start let me give you some context. I graduated with a PhD in December 2021, and have been working on post completion OPT for a few months now. I haven't been to India (home) in a while (thanks to we all know). To add to the misery, my F1 visa expired in June 2020, and I had no idea what the situation was regarding visa renewals.

By the beginning of the summer, I thought of giving it a shot and started collecting information on how the process looks like. Since post completion opt comes under the category of F1 visa, the process is exactly the same as for someone who is applying for F1 visa for the first time.

The process looks like this:

Let's start with the pre appointments details

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1. You start with filling out the DS160 on this website (<https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>)(<https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>)).
2. Once you have filled out the form, you will look for the appointments for dropbox on this website (<https://cgifederal.secure.force.com/>)(<https://cgifederal.secure.force.com/> - Note: I think you can no longer use this website, it has been moved to something else). Most likely you would have forgotten the password but it's easy to recover that. You will have the option of choosing dropbox if you already have a US visa. This will most likely be true if you are on OPT (or any other type of visa for that matter).
3. You need to fill out the new application for the appointment and choose the date. There will be a bunch of questions that you need to answer either yes/no which will determine if you are eligible for a dropbox appointment. Once you are done filling the application and paying the application fees, it will provide you the available appointments.
4. Now here is the caveat, after listening to all the horror H1b stories I knew I had no chance of getting an appointment but to my surprise the appointments for F1 dropbox are available in plenty even if you need a week from now. It took me a few seconds to book the appointment.
5. The documents you would need to have at the time of appointment are: **DS160 confirmation page, appointment confirmation page, I20 (6 months signature), 1 photo**: please be very careful with this, a lot of people were sent back because of wrong photo specs but again they would give you the end of the day to come back and submit if you have missed anything. Nothing more, nothing less.
6. Some points to remember; even if you make a mistake on your DS160, don't panic. It's totally okay to fill out a new form and take a print out of it on the day of your appointment and submit it with your documents. Just let them know that you had made a mistake in your submitted DS160.

Day of appointment:

1. I had my appointment at the Delhi VAC which is next to Shivaji metro station. My appointment was on Wednesday at 1:15 PM but I went there at 10 AM. They will ask you the appointment time and chances are they will ask you to come

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back 20 mins before the actual time. You can always lie to them which is what I did. I told them that my appointment was at 1030. They won't check your confirmation page.

2. Once you are in, you can go to the counter and submit the documents. Since the person who was collecting the document did not know about post completion OPT, she had to go back and check with her senior officials. Don't hesitate to explain your position if they don't have any information on it.

3. I did not see any update on my application before Monday (you can check the status here: [\[https://ceac.state.gov/ceacstattracker/status.aspx\]](https://ceac.state.gov/ceacstattracker/status.aspx)(<https://ceac.state.gov/ceacstattracker/status.aspx>)).

4. On Monday, my application status changed from "no status" to "application received" and also had a note to check back in 2 business days for a decision on my application. On Tuesday, my visa got approved and I got my passport in 3 business days.

The whole process took 9 business days (1 holiday in between), so keep the time frame in mind with some buffer days.

I had a lot of anxiety throughout the whole process but it was pretty straight forward. I had all the worst scenarios in my head just in case I had to stay here for a few months.

Please feel free to DM me. I know it can be extremely challenging to go through this!

PLEASE PLEASE go ahead and book your appointments, I was too scared since it's recommended not to go back when you are on OPT. Amongst my friends, I have not heard a single case of rejection and that's the same thing that the DSO told me as well but again that's a very small sample size.

Edit: I have received so many messages that I want to add this. Don't worry about it. Visa renewals will be a part of your life if you are planning to stay in the US longterm. Don't plan your life around it if you want to keep your sanity in check.

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Go home and enjoy. Most likely you will get the visa and even if you don't, you will be stuck there for few months and isn't that the best thing if you can obviously afford it!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: That's a great post, u/AtmosphereSingle6533 . I just Sent you a dm about a question, and would really appreciate your thoughts! Thanks!

- New Comment: Thank you ??

I have a question if someone could help me. I am currently on STEM OPT, my visa is expired and I am planning to go back home to my home country and renew my f1 visa. When filing the ds-160 they ask for the intended date of arrival in the US, and it got me confused. Do I have to wait to be in my home country to file the ds-160 or can I file the form and book the appointment even before leaving the country? I don't want to mess up the application. Thank you for anyone that would respond ??

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: If F1 already expired in June 2022, can I apply for renew NOW , in October 2022 ? How to see appointment slots for Dropbox in Mumbai, India ? After filling form and scheduling appointment, it shows me Feb 2023. I haven't paid fees yet.

- New Comment: you're a blessing, thank you.

- New Comment: I paid \$160 visa the CGI website. Do I still need to do the DS160 process separately using the ceac.state.gov website? @AtmosphereSingle6533

​

For the DS160 website, did you start a new application or retrieve previous application? Idk how to retrieve previous application lol

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- New Comment: u/AtmosphereSingle6533 previous comment won't let me tag you so tagging here. Thanks in advance for you help!

- New Comment: u/AtmosphereSingle6533 Thanks for sharing your experience. I am in the same boat as you. What is the length of time for which your new F1 visa was extended?

- New Comment: Hey, could you please tell me what documents you submitted?

I have my appointment 3 weeks from now, I am on my stem extension right now!

- New Comment: Thanks for sharing your experience. Could you please share the correct photo specs?

Title of the post: URGENT: I checked my F1 status and it says REFUSED. I need help!

Body of the post: [This is how it looks like.](<https://gyazo.com/6a38aadc2c942278cdace46d54c04307>) I saw that it might be related to administrative processing, how do I know if it is just refused or if its investigated?

Is this normal? I am freaking out, I should be starting school in 45 days and I will not have time to re-apply, am I doomed?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: No Problem! Happy to help:).. I am not sure about your country but here in Inda, I recieved a physical mailed copy of the passport along with a physical letter stating that I have been called at the embassy for fingerprints. There will be options for Fingerprints or Interview.. mine was ticked for fingerprints.

Don't worry at all. I received this physical mail after 4 working days of this status update. And 2 days after I was at the

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embassy.. after the process it took me 3 days to get my passport back. And btw, I have flight booked for second week of august.. so you can imagine my stress... so I would say don't be anxious at all.

They may ask some basic questions.. when you give your fingerprints. So be prepared for that. But i think, your Visa has already been approve..if they will call you for fingerprints.

- New Comment: This happened to me today, having sent my passport and documents off for an F1 visa on the 13th July. I received refuse in the CEAC tracker and am expecting my letter and passport tomorrow (27th) in the post, and I?m panicking because my flight to the US is aug 8 - my classes start on 15th. My fellow British incoming students have relieved their visas approved. I?m very worried about the timeframe in receiving an interview in the US embassy in London after this as I obviously only have less than 2 weeks?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hey, were you issued your visa during your interview? If yes then this refused is probably just some mandatory administrative processing that's taking place and you can only wait for an update. You should probably hear back in a few weeks time or even lesser!

- New Comment: The same happened to me. I applied for my visa in the UK. They reached out via email in 1-2 days and asked to submit follow up documents. My visa was approved 6 working days later.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: If you have received 221g form (pink, yellow, blue, white) and hasn't yet been contacted by email, then don't panic. It's either already in AP or yet to go for AP.

- New Comment: I have not experienced this but let me guess, you applied for a dropbox because you already have a B1/B2 visa. From what i gather from reading experiences of others, you would be sent an intimation to come for an interview or biometrics or both at the consulate and then you would be issued a visa most likely. (This is what is happening at dropbox refusals for F1 in India)

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Hope your problem is cleared very quickly

- New Comment: mine is refused as well due to missing biometric.. did anyone face this situation and got their F1 approval

- New Comment: Any updates? My case status shows the same.

- New Comment: update?

Title of the post: 4 weeks left before accumulating 90days of unemployment

Body of the post: Hey y'all- as the title states, I have 4 weeks left before hitting that 90 day unemployment. My OPT is valid for June 2024- June 2025 and I've yet to secure a job. Does anyone know what I can do in the meantime to stop my unemployment clock until I find a job? My school is a for profit institution so I'm not sure if assisting a professor as a volunteer would count. Any suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

Ps I'm in Georgia and my degree is in Business Administration/Accounting

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can volunteer outside of your school. The law doesn't restrict you only to your school when it comes to volunteering opportunities.

- New Comment: Wait, 4 weeks left? How were you able to accrue this many unemployment days this early in your OPT period?

Look for volunteer positions in your university or seek out a non-profit. Do whatever job relates to your major to stop the unemployment clock. Profit or not for profit Universities doesn't matter.

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You're in a precarious position because if you're a STEM major and if you're planning to file for STEM OPT, whatever number of unemployment days leftover + 60 days is all the unemployment days you get for STEM OPT for the remaining 2 years.

You should have made an appointment with the international office and your career services team when the pressure wasn't ticking back then.

Good luck!

- New Comment: Check out www.volunteermatch.org for volunteer opportunities

- New Comment: Apply for volunteer positions, unpaid internships or you can be self employed

- New Comment: Only way is if you qualify for self-employment, that's the only way you can stop your unemployment clock until you find a secure job.

- New Comment: Can't you volunteer?

- New Comment: You can volunteer at any organization outside of school, just needs to be related to your major

- New Comment: Try <https://www.egiscareers.com>

- New Comment: Volunteering is sort of a made up term in this particular context. Any position where you are not being paid is considered volunteering, you don't need your institute or company for that matter to be non profit. As far as I understand.

- New Comment: Try changing the present ngo, they will stop your clock but they charge 75\$ per month

Title of the post: Travelling India after graduating in US on F1 OPT

Body of the post: Hello Everyone ,

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Did anyone travel to India after graduation, I am waiting for EAD confirmation, based on my calculation, I expect to receive my case approval on end of July and EAD card shipped to me by mid August, my friends parents are coming from US to India so they can bring my EAD with them(no need to courier it to India) . I do have a paid offer letter from a small startup, I also have e OPT- I20 , will get it signed by ISSS, before I leave from US.

What else can cause issues in immigration for me ? I just graduated recently in May, applied for OPT EAD in mid April.

Thanks for helping, please share any experience who went to India after graduation from US and what challenges they faced in immigration. Recent experience as of today's date i.e 21st July 2024 will be very much appreciated. Thanks

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you have EAD card in hand while coming back with other documents, you are fine. I did that.

But I personally would not be comfortable with my friends parents bringing my card, plans can change, they can lose the card by mistake. Too big of a risk. That's just my opinion.

- New Comment: It's a risk to leave without approval. If there is an RFE, you need to be stateside to respond. Leaving after approval is less of a risk but still not one I'd be willing to take without reentry documents in hand.

- New Comment: My visa is valid till 2027. I came in 2022, so I think, I am fine on that front.

- New Comment: You need a valid visa! Separate from OPT I-20 and EAD card.

If your initial visa only allowed entry to the US until your graduation date it is no longer valid for re-entry into the US. You would need to renew the visa at the US consulate in India

- New Comment: I am in the same boat.

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Opt still pending, applied for premium processing July 16 2024. Have a flight back to the US on Aug 31. Am waiting for approval then for my roommate to ship me the EAD card in Asia, will then enter the US with it.

- New Comment: Everyone I've ever spoken to, including my DSO and US government websites don't recommend you travel in the period where they're still making a decision for your OPT. It's not forbidden, but it's highly discouraged. I'd suggest you postpone your travel until YOU have your EAD card in hand.

P.S: you will need to give a copy of your EAD or your EAD # to your ISSS office as well

- New Comment: DSO usually doesn't sign the i20 after you request one for OPT. They sign and update it once they receive a pic of your EAD card. At least this was done at my school. Idk if other schools had the same policy.

Title of the post: The amount of documentation you should prepare depends on your home country

Body of the post: I'm not sure if this was obvious. But I just went to my Visa interview at the US embassy. I am a UK citizen and upon reading all these forums and the government website. I provided so many documents. I had financial documents and then more financial documents proving whether finances in my savings account came from. I had acceptance letters received that I paid off some of my tuition. I had like some sort of proof of ties to my own country being employment. I had printed off my university offers. Letters as another form of proof of ties and I was so worried going into the interview that I had insignificant proof of ties only to get there and my interview lasted 10 minutes. They only asked for my passport my, I 20 as well as my sevis receipt, and that's it. However, a friend of mine who I met there, who was only applying for a tourist Visa who happened to be from Ukraine but was taking refuge in the u.K. Was there for a bit longer than me and got his visa denied due to lack of ties (even tho if he wanted to stay in the US he could have just been a refugee there he didn't need to do anything sneaky he literally just wanted to go on holiday) he has ties to the uk as well he just didn't provide evidence. Anyways, moral is if you're a citizen of a country like the UK or AUS don't sweat the interview because there was a concerning amount of not checking me.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Im from bangladesh, a third world country. Only my i20 and sevis were asked for.

Not entirely correct rather it is more dependent on the interviewer.

- New Comment: What I understand from an ex-Consular Officer is that - given the availability of technology to fabricate forged documents, and the limited time to process an applicant, the officers are primarily trained to assess validity of the applicant through their own words - *Can you describe in your own words, a simple coherent story for why you need this visa* ? The longer interview times are sometimes not to check more documents, but just more lines of questioning. I heard (don't quote me) that they deliberately set up the questions to be of short questions for some candidates, longer time of questioning for others. Sometimes the application really needs a longer time of questioning. But for other times - I am not sure of the reasoning behind this, but my guess is that should the candidates who got approved go back and tell their friends when asked - *What questions did the officer ask ?* one does not really get a fixed set of questions to get 'coached on'.

- New Comment: I had basically the exact same experience with both of my visas, I took every document I could think of, and they never asked for any of them, I'm also from the UK. First visa was issued in London in 2017, the second in Iceland during the Covid lockdown while London was closed, as were the US borders to basically everyone except students, I got a national interest exception on my visa and still they only asked about 3 questions. Definitely different rules for different nationalities.

I will say though, better to be over prepared than under prepared. Our experience are anecdotal and it's not a guarantee if you're from the UK or similar that it'll be a walk in the park like it was for us.

- New Comment: Italian here, same experience. They just asked me a couple of questions to confirm what was already on the I-20.

- New Comment: Unfortunately there is a presumption of intent against Ukrainians now due to the geopolitical situation.

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Also now the TPS program for new applicants is closed, but even while it was active there was a presumption.

For myself, I have a bad passport and other reasons for which people here would say I'm likely to be rejected, yet both times I applied for F1 it went very smoothly. There's no rhyme or reason to it tbh.

- New Comment: That's interesting. I'm from Canada so no interview required. Just passport and Visa form and Sevis payment that's it. Glad you got accepted.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: F-1 and tourist visas are two different things. Tourist visas get abused/overstayed the most and as such get scrutinized a lot more.

There's a perfect chance your friend from Ukraine got his visa rejected because his story was inconsistent with a few questions here and there or his refugee status in the UK was not solid enough.

Side note - I'm from India, got my F-1 in less than a couple of minutes after answering only three questions. Never was asked to furnish any documents - but they only ask for them if they think your story is unconvincing or you're not giving them the full truth.

Then again - each applicant is different, each interviewer is different. The nonstandard or human aspect of the process is what makes it work for reducing fraud and illegal presence.

- New Comment: I'm from Albania and they only asked me for my Sevis payment and that's it my visa was approved. It just depends on the case

- New Comment: No, it doesn't entirely depend on the home country. It comes down to various factors- what visa you are applying for, why you are applying, what your home country is (what is the immigration / foreign policy between that country and USA), how you are answering their questions (consistency, communication, and of course your story), and

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obviously the counselors perspective of your case.

- New Comment: lol you sound tone deaf and obviously privileged, being British.

Visa interviews are a lot psychological.

Can't remember when last I heard they checked someone's documents, because those documents are easily forgeable.

You just take them to cover your bases. Not because you expected to be asked for them.

Why is why people there's people who get rejected and offer the interviewer the document, but the officer isn't even interested because he's made his decision off the one or two questions he's asked you.

Title of the post: New job offer after just starting a new job on OPT

Body of the post: I found myself in a tricky situation. As the title says, I got a much better job offer (more than twice the pay) in a better position after just starting a new job last week and am planning to quit my current job. I am waiting on the offer letter but in the meantime, I wanted to ask:

1- Anything I should be aware of when reporting these changes? Will the short employment period for my current job cause any problems on my immigration record?

2- If I quit my job tomorrow (I'd have worked less than 20 hours this week in that case), will that pose a problem?

Thank you!!

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No, if you immediately start your next job. Record every job in your SEVP portal to not count towards your unemployment days.
- New Comment: Hi, OP. Congratulations on your success! I really want to know how you are fetching ?offers? (2 in your case) when people aren?t even getting callbacks! Could use some tips, thanks a lot :)
- New Comment: You can do both the jobs

Title of the post: Only few OPT unemployment days remaining - help needed urgently.

Body of the post: Hey everyone! I am an international student on F1-OPT. I need suggestions on some non-profit organizations who provide an offer letter on urgent basis. My unemployment days are running out! I have only like 20 days remaining. I was waiting on a company whom I interviewed for, but they?ve taken too long and I?ve lost days because of them. Any non-profit organizations which I can contact through email? I filled the forms for Changing the present and CrowdDoing and a couple others but no response from Changing the present and CrowdDoing is taking alot of time which doesn?t work for me.. Please if anyone could guide me, I am really stressed out. Thank you in advance!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hi there! Were you close with any of your professors? You can reach out to them to ask to volunteer with some research or a TA position until you can secure a job
- New Comment: 1. Email your professors as well as any department advisors you were close with for any volunteer opportunities.
- 2. If you know any business/LLC owners (legitimate businesses, not fraud DCs), ask if you can work an as unpaid intern.
- 3. You can also be self employed by starting your own LLC.
- New Comment: [removed]

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- New Comment: I am currently a HR intern for GAO Tek. It offers unpaid internships. Would you like to hear more? Dm me

- New Comment: oh 20 days hmmm excluding weekend even less ... just one advise dont overstay which kills any future u could have

- New Comment: Try reaching your professors. Go and personally meet with them and explain your situation to them.

Try to reach staffing companies, they might have some immediate roles at the moment.

Initial OPT can be unpaid but for the STEM it can't be unpaid.

What's your major? Hope you get a job soon.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Self employment or ask anyone that has a company to put you on ?unpaid internship?

- New Comment: There are consultancies that ask for pay to give you offer letter. Not safe but gets you there till you find a job

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: URGENT: F-1 VISA Renewal got REFUSED while on STEM OPT - Applied through I

Body of the post:

Hi Folks - I graduated with my bachelor's in 2022, and I am on STEM OPT (valid through July 2025). I currently work for a SEVIS registered employer (have been with them since my internship in 2021). My F-1 visa expired in July 2022, so I came to India (my home country) to renew it. Since I was eligible for interview waiver, I submitted my documents at Delhi VAC on March 11th. They only took my I-20 and photo; this is probably where it went wrong as they didn't take my EAD card or proof of employment even though I insisted multiple times. My status changed to REFUSED today (March 26th), 10 business days after my drop-off appointment date. I have not received any email from the consulate so far, nor

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do I have my passport, so I don't know on what grounds they refused my visa. If anyone has gone through a similar experience recently, PLEASE LET ME KNOW! I am freaking out as I was supposed to fly back on 30th morning. I have used all of my PTO, and my employer doesn't allow me to work from outside the US. I would like to wrap this up ASAP so that I don't have to go unpaid for the coming weeks (need to think about rent and car payments!).

PLEASE HELP!!!

Update: I just got my passport back today (April 2nd), along with 221g requesting me to come in for an interview at Chennai Consulate (any day except Wednesday from 9-11 am).

<https://preview.redd.it/78nhfknouppqc1.png?width=909&format=png&auto=webp&s=fb8e08910838a028b9ed24d579b29fad5880bf93>

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I think it might mean that you need to appear for an interview.
- New Comment: Refused is not the same as denied (yes it's dumb). Refused means they need more info.
- New Comment: Call the consulate. I got my F1 Visa renewed on STEM OPT a few weeks back from Chennai using drop off. It was delayed by a few weeks and I had to rebook my flights but was approved eventually.
- New Comment: You have to figure out why it's refused. Your info doesn't say anything about why.
- New Comment: It's not refused, wait for 3-5 working days it will change again
- New Comment: I had a similar issue on h1b COS. Don't worry. Did you opt for passport collection from embassy or to be sent back to an address? If you had requested for a mail back, then you'll receive your passport with a form inside stating the reason for refusal (221- g I think). Usually in this case it'll be to appear for an interview on a Specific date. I would however advise you to contact your employer and tell them about this situation. Since you have a 221-g, you have

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a preference for an earlier interview date. In my case they had asked me to walk into the Mumbai consulate for the interview on any working day b/w a certain time frame.

Don't panic. It's usually just an interview request.

- New Comment: They don't take or check EAD cards for anyone

- New Comment: Please check Ustraveldocs for the latest status of your passport. If it was meant to be delivered at home/premium delivery, then you can use the UID to track on blue dart. UID is the ref. Number.

My Visa was refused on 25th March (dropped on March 11th at Chennai). It was dispatched on March 26th and is expected to be delivered on March 28th.

- New Comment: OP, what's the update now? Did you get your passport? How long after interview were you approved?

- New Comment: If your F1 expires, you shouldn't have left the U.S. while on OPT. It's high risk that they can refuse the renewal because you are not a student anymore. I'm sorry that this happened to you.

- New Comment: Wait for 2-3 days the status might change. In the worst case, they might inform you to attend an interview

- New Comment: This looks like ds5535. Did they ask more documents. What major for your F1.

- New Comment: It's ?specialized 221g?. 15 years history of stay , digital footprint etc , will take 6 plus months. People in analytics get it sometimes.

- New Comment: All the best. There is a ds5535 telegram group in case that's the issue. But keep your fingers crossed and hope you don't get it. Lot of Indians get it too.

Title of the post: Friend's OPT Denied

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Body of the post: An acquaintance of mine got OPT decision that it is denied. Grace period has also ended. Eventually they have to leave for their home country.

Question is, can something be done? They are a transfer student from previous college so the reason of rejection is that they have two bachelors. But actually they just have one.

What are their possible options?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Do they have same SEVIS id?
- New Comment: Appeal the decision, consult an immigration lawyer and you will be good
- New Comment: What was the reason for opt being denied? They can apply for reinstatement.
- New Comment: Before I advice.... What is the exact wording in the denial letter?. I have 3 AS degrees and was approved for OPT based on #3 so I don't understand the impediment of having 2 degrees. Filing form I -290b (motion to reconsider/reopen) is \$675 ,must be filed within 30days of denial. As it's pending you are accruing unlawful presence unless it's approved. If denied, Sevis would have been terminated on the last day of the F1 grace period. Are you able to send an excerpt of the denial?.
- New Comment: What is wrong w having 2 bachelors?
- New Comment: I just wanted to that whether your friend uploaded any letter in the unsolicited section explaining his situation?

Title of the post: Travelling to India on active F1-OPT with a Valid passport and F1 visa.

Body of the post: Hello Everyone,

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Has anyone recently travelled to India on F1-OPT and returned?

\- Can you share your immigration experience while returning to the US?

\- Can you help me out with some information?

I Graduated in May '23 and have been working with an employer since May on a Valid OPT-EAD. Working for 40 hrs a week. I'm planning to travel to my home county by the end of February for urgent medical attention and am willing to return back in 3 weeks on OPT.

Gathered the following documents:

- * \- Passport with validity of more than 3 years.
- * \- Valid OPT EAD Card.
- * \- F1 visa stamp with a validity of more than 18 months.
- * \- Offer letter.
- * \- Travel I-20 with OPT Approval mentioned and received in January.
- * \- Employment verification letter.
- * \- Educational documents

Do I have to carry any other documents as safety side apart from the above-mentioned?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I traveled twice in last year. The documents you mentioned above should be more than enough

- New Comment: Take form i797

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- New Comment: I carried the last 3 paystubs as well. Wasn't asked, but would suggest adding that to the list
- New Comment: The documents you've gathered should be enough for travel and immigration
- New Comment: Hey, did you travel?
- New Comment: Hello everyone,

I am currently on my F-1 OPT EAD. My EAD period ends on Jan 28, 2025. The organization I currently work at is applying for a J-1 Visa for my extended stay post my EAD end date. However, I have travel plans coming up from Nov 26 - Dec 26, 2024. Since, I'll be leaving and entering back to the US on an F-1 visa (as J-1 would start from Jan 29; next day of F-1 EAD end date) would it have any impact on my travel plans?

I would really appreciate if someone can give me a clarity on this to ensure a smooth entry at the port of entry.

- New Comment: Hey did you travel to India? Can you share your experience please
- New Comment: I have and you are good

Title of the post: F1 student - Asylum

Body of the post: I am on an F1 visa and applied for asylum in 2018. I got denied. I continued my education. My F1 visa has expired but I still have a valid I-20 (expires in 2026) as I'm still studying.

Can I leave the USA to a nearby country to renew my f1 visa?

Also, I applied for the EB2 NIW and got approved this year. The green card will be obtained in about a year because of the backlog.

Will this also affect the F1 visa renewal?

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: i won't travel until GC n hand especially after getting denied for Asylum.
- New Comment: Don't leave until you get your green card. Your EB2 application shows immigration intent and your F1 will be denied high probability because it is non immigrant visa.
- New Comment: You shouldn't leave the country until you get a green card. Both application for asylum and approved I-140 clearly demonstrate your intent to immigrate, and most probably your F1 will be denied. Or you can leave the country and apply for green card through consular processing when your PD becomes current
- New Comment: As long as you have a valid i20 you don't need to go for renewal. You can stay here and just renew your i20.
- New Comment: No it won't. U can leave to Canada, or Mexico and get it renewed to enter back. Be ready for questions by the interview officer
- New Comment: What was your process of getting EB2? I am an F1 student, but I am only doing my associates in nursing right now. What field did you/are you studying in?
- New Comment: Do you mind telling me what's your niw based on? Do you have any publications etc? DM me. Thanks
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: Ok OP go to the third country like you're advised just don't be shocked when it doesn't work. This is not legal advice and no one should take it as legal advice. People just don't want to tell each other the truth and don't want to hear about the possibility of something not working out????
- New Comment: Don't even think about leaving the US now. Your F1 is gonna get denied because of your intent of staying in the country. It's as simple as that.

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Keep studying or keep enrolling to new classes/majors until you get your EB2 approved.

- New Comment: You can have an expired F1 and stay in the U.S. as long as your I-20 is still valid.

Title of the post: Backup plan in case of H1B doesn't work out.

Body of the post: Hi all, as the title says just want to know everyone's backup plan and what things have people done in case H1B doesn't work out.

I'm an Indian non-IT guy (Materials Science) doing my MS. Have completed my internship in a related industry recently and will be graduating in 6 months.

Want to stay in semiconductor R&D (Industry or Academia). So, I don't plan on going back to India for near future as lack opportunities. The options have noted and talked to people so far are:

- 1) Getting PhD from US after paying off some of loan during OPT and work on famous projects to get many citations and try EB-1 route (will be poorly paid for the time of PhD)
- 2) Getting PhD from Europe after OPT (language barriers and social life due to it).
- 3) Move to Canada after 3 years of OPT (have heard cost of living is too high).

Are there other countries apart from Canada where people can move?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: On what basis are you able to move to Canada?

- New Comment: 4. Get married ?

- New Comment: The PhD EB1 route sounds good but it would still take years to get your EB1 GC assuming you are an

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Indian citizen. Also remember not all PhD graduates would be eligible for EB1, if you go to Academia then EB1 is considerably easy.

- New Comment: I like the PhD to go eb1 route

- New Comment: EB1 is not guaranteed with phd

- New Comment: Start a semiconductor manufacturing business in India

- New Comment: EB-1 takes about 10 years of work post PhD to get. and there's still a wait for that.

- New Comment: I would say O-1 Visa is an option, which was what a lot of semiconductor industry people end up doing if h1b doesn't work out. In the same boat though. Canada is pointless if you want to do work in semiconductors.

Title of the post: Has anyone said "no" to future sponsorship questions and had success

Body of the post: Hello, I got an offer for an internship for upcoming summer and signed the letter. I already have my cpt approved from my school as well.

However, when I applied, I said no to will you now or in future require sponsorship question. This is partially true because I don't need a sponsorship for now as I have CPT, nor in future as I'm waiting on my GC (will have it around next year). The job listings specifically mentioned that I'll need a permanent work authority and won't hire someone that needs sponsorship in future.

I'm aware during I-9 process they'll figure out I'm using CPT, but how likely would be to get fired during the first week after onboarding? If anyone has been through similar situations, please share what happened! Thanks :)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Here was my situation:

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Received offer 3 months before internship, and employer was made aware 1 month before when I sent them a CPT form to fill out (which is required by my school). I received a "quick connect" invitation minutes after (a very bad sign) and they said my employment is in jeopardy as I lied in my application. I explained to them the whole situation and made it clear that I don't CURRENTLY require sponsorship. HR discussed with hiring manager and finally decided to honor the original agreement.

Worst 30 minutes of my life.

- New Comment: Being on CPT and foreign doesn't automatically mean you'll need sponsorship, so I see no reason for you to be fired. A friend of mine went through that and there were no issues. Hope it works out well!

- New Comment: Yes. Many of my students.

- New Comment: I am an F1 graduate student in my final year. I initially always answered "Yes" to all sponsorship questions and realized it just meant my application was chucked in the trash instantly before even being seen by a human recruiter. Started answering "No" and applying for internships, got a couple interviews and finally got an offer at a large healthcare corporation. Didn't mention visa status at any point in the interview process, just let them know when completing my I-9. Starting work next week :)

- New Comment: Following

- New Comment: More favor to you. Some companies rely on the "yes" answer to have the advantage of salary negotiation.

Another way to say that a company seeks to exploit sponsorship is looking for people to say yes.

But if you use CPT, how can you continue to work 40 hours during the semester?

- New Comment: Im curious how does the employer know that ur on cpt? When we submit our cpt form to our school

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international center does it get sent to the internship employer?

- New Comment: Yes! I did this and still have my current job that I was on OPT with

<https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/11btxim/comment/ja0in37/>

Explained further in this comment i left under another users post similar to yours. Feel free to PM with any questions

- New Comment: I said no and have been working for a year using F1 opt

Title of the post: Not been able to find a job on OPT

Body of the post: I graduated in May 2022 with MS CS. Got my OPT EAD in June. In August I got connected with one of the IT consulting company which provided me a letter of hire as an Intern which is unpaid to stop my unemployment clock. It is basically a 3 months training before they prepare my resume and do the marketing. It is January 2023 now (7 months since OPT start date) and 5 months trying to find a job. They say that they are still trying to find a job for me. My question is, will this create any issues during my STEM OPT extension? Will I have any problem in future for the reason how am I able to pay rent and bills if I do not have any income?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The only way I managed to get a job is because I sent my resume and applied to 100+ jobs daily. I?m not even kidding. Finding a job needs to be your full time job as for now? I strongly suggest to get any paid/unpaid offer just to get the ?unemployed? days stopped. Also, there?s no requirements for you to get a paid job, the only requirement is to be doing whatever you degrees is. Be proactive, your degree fits in a lot of things, stick with whatever option you get even though you don?t like it.

- New Comment: I don't know if USCIS are going to ask you about how you afforded you living but you cannot be unpaid

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during your stem OPT. What do you mean by they are trying to find you job? Are not looking for yourself?

- New Comment: >IT consulting company which provided me a letter of hire as an Intern which is unpaid to stop my unemployment clock

Yea... Those companies are either gentle scams or significant scams. Depending on which company and what is reported on your I-20 it could mean nothing or it could put a flag on your file. A lot of those companies have significant issues with many similar companies being raided or closed by the government for fraud. As you didn't mention payment to them you may be okay, but if you are paying them it is likely a waste of money.

>3 months training before they prepare my resume and do the marketing.

What training and what marketing? What are they offering you that you cannot do yourself or via a headhunter who is Paid to recruit you?

>will this create any issues during my STEM OPT extension?

As you are not even eligible for STEM OPT currently I don't see that as being a concern. You must have a paid position for a minimum of 20hrs a week with an E-verified company. So, worry about a job first. But yes, this company you are "working" for absolutely could cause issues with your future immigration applications.

>Will I have any problem in future for the reason how am I able to pay rent and bills if I do not have any income?

How did you pay for school before? Why would this be different? No you won't unless you are doing something illegal.

Also, with a degree in CS, you are either only looking at high end companies like Facebook, Google, Apple, etc. Or you

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need better interview skills, or you need to rework your resume. A career coach will do you a lot more than this "IT company". Even with the layoffs there are lots of smaller companies who need workers but cannot afford the 150k salaries.

- New Comment: The public debates about this are nowhere close to how a hearing goes on in the immigration court. Somehow lot of people claim to have a lot of knowledge about the risks. Not just a lot of people but almost everyone. So, I will not engage in a debate, but willing to talk to people who approach us in a friendly way.

<https://forms.gle/PR4FUbyKhmW9hyJ8>

Title of the post: Received my EAD card, losing unemployment days.

Body of the post: I am a recent Masters in Mechanical Engineering graduate. I received my EAD card last week. I've been searching for jobs for almost 3 months now and had no luck. What's the best way to stop my clock and not lose any more unemployment days?

My university isn't helping, there are no RA positions to take up. Is there another way I can try?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Volunteering at a NGO

- New Comment: QUESTION: How many unemployment days do you get ?

- New Comment: How many days does it take to receive your EAD card?

- New Comment: Heard somewhere you can be self-employed as a freelancer, at least when you're in regular OPT(not STEM). Make an account in a freelancing platform and try that?

Title of the post: Should I pay \$2k for PP?

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Body of the post: I applied for OPT May 29th, still absolutely no update but I got a job offer that's supposed to start August 26th. They're pretty lenient with the start date but I don't want to make them wait a whole extra month. I could afford to pay for PP, it would hurt, but I do have that extra money saved up. I hope to hear all types of opinions but I need to make that decision today/tomorrow. Any tips, thoughts and ideas are welcome too

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Regular processing time is crazy rn. 2+ months for sure. If you have a job offer, PP is the way to go. A friend of mine got case approved within 2 weeks plus some days to offset the card production and delivery. I would do the math of how much I would earn to offset the PP cost if I didn't have work authorization for 2+ months just to peace up my mind. Go pay that 2k

- New Comment: They are currently processing March 30/31/April 1 cases. It would be a miracle if you get your EAD in time for 26th August start date.

You can consider asking your employer to fund the PP. Lots of them do.

You can also consider how many weeks of lost salary is worth the cost of PP to you.

- New Comment: It costs 1.6k not 2k. It will cost much more money in salary if you delay your start date.

- New Comment: Hi,

If you have the money, then go for it. It's worth it. Start your job asap. You will start making money anyway at your job.

- New Comment: Weren't you born with it?

- New Comment: I agree with everyone else here. I paid for PP July 9th and got approved July 22nd. Waiting for the card now. My employer paid for PP so ask yours if they could. \$1700 is probably less than losing out on income for about a month and half! Good luck!

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- New Comment: Think of it this way , opportunity cost. Even if your job is lenient with their start date you will likely lose out on more money by not working.

Do the PP. We recommend to expect 3 or 4 months for approval then extra time for card to be produced and shipping.

- New Comment: What is PP?

- New Comment: Pay extra and get things done. Certainty is superior than uncertainty. Money comes and goes but mental relaxation is needed. Be on the top and PP is a way to keep things in control.

- New Comment: Kinda unrelated question, but what happens if you don't get your OPT in time to start a job? Does the delay count towards the 90 days of unemployment?

- New Comment: If you check the processing speed. Even for PP, the processing speed is not as fast as before. Many people received approval within 10 days in June or earlier, now it costed 14 days at least. I just received mine moments ago, and my PP date is July 12.

If this job is very important for you and you cannot delay your start date, pay the amount or you will lose more. Please understand the economy is not good after pandemic and lots of international students are difficult to find a job in a foreign country. You should treasure an employer that still wants to spend money at a foreigner.

- New Comment: I applied on May 16, I applied for PP on July 16.

My case is a little urgent. I applied for opt then left the US to see family, I need my EAD to return back to the US before I start my job. My friend will mail it to me from the US and I will use it to enter. Applied for PP on July 16, still waiting. Have a flight back on Aug 31.

Praying for the best, put a lot of money into this ????

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- New Comment: Hey, I heard that people who applied in April first week are just getting their EAD approved, in your case i think it would be best to apply for pp and ask the company to reimburse. I applied on 19th April, is there anyone who applied during the same time who got their EAD approval ? I've been waiting for a long time now , any advice or info would be appreciated!

- New Comment: Yup I applied on June 15th, was somehow hopeful but I decided to apply for premium processing and I'll recover that money working

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hi,

I graduate on **December 13, 2024** and I'm planning to apply for my OPT EAD on **Sept 12th, 2024**.

But, I'm already working (on CPT) and wouldn't want to take a break at work after my graduation. So:

1. Do you think I'll receive my OPT EAD card within this time period in normal processing?

2. If not, should I apply for premium processing?

3. Should my preferred start date be December 14th, 2024?

Greatly appreciate any help!

- New Comment: yes apply , you will earn that money back . Think it as an investment . if you wait till last moment you might lose out on the offer. I would not intend to push start dates

- New Comment: whats pp sorry idk im graduting next year

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- New Comment: I would go for it. I applied for OPT May 16th with a start date for August 8th. The processing time was showing one month in the beginning but quickly changed to two months. I did not want to take the chance, so I filed for PP on July 6th. My case was changed to PP on July 11th and I received my EAD on 23rd. Good luck

- New Comment: PP no question.

- New Comment: Unfortunately the whole system is a scam set up to fleece money.

Definitely pay for PP and have the peace of mind. You will get it within 2 - 3 weeks.

- New Comment: I think you should pay for PP

- New Comment: How do you apply for PP?

- New Comment: Can you share your journey on how to get a job???

Title of the post: F1 visa approved with I-140 approved as well.

Body of the post:

The following information is intended to only help other people who could have been in a similar situation to me. I knew at the time I would have benefited a lot from a post like this, especially when the majority of the information out there is very vague and there is not a straightforward answer.

To put things in perspective. I have been in the US for almost 11 years. All this time, I have been on a F1 visa. About a year ago I decided to apply for the green card through the NIW program. During the application, I decided that I will go through Consular process, because I refused to be stock in the US. Additionally, there was a personal motive as well.

A few months forward, my I-140 got approved and I decided to do my first trip out of the US with and I-140 approved.

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When I returned, I had no issues entering, and so far I have entering 6 times and in those time I never got questioned. Up to this point, this information is kind of well known. There have been a lot of people sharing similar experience as mine. However, here is where the situation gets a little bit complicated. Remember that, when the NIW application was filed I chose to do Consular process because of personal motive. Well, the thing I never wanted to happened it happened and I had to leave the US. To make matters worse I had only one week left on my F1 Visa.

When I was leaving the US, I tried searching online for any potential cases of people renewing their F1 visa with an I-140 application approved. Everywhere I looked, all the information was the same. Applying for an F1 with and I-140 approved will most likely lead to denial due to the immigrant intent. I also asked the lawyers I used for my NIW application, and this was their answer.

?The officer will not grant your F-1 visa if they believe you have the settled intention to file form I-485. The burden of proof is on you to show that you do not intend to file form I-485 inside the US.

An approved I-140 can be seen as evidence of one's intent to file form I-485 inside the US. In order to approve your F-1 visa, an officer needs to be convinced that your plan is to leave the US at some point to do IVP.?

Although all the information I found was negative, I still decided to leave. Because for me it was more important to be where I needed to be at that time, than any green card or F1 visa. While I was abroad, my visa expired, and I had to re-apply for a new one. During the interview the office did not asked anything related to my I-140 application (I did disclose it on my visa application). During the application I was informed that I will be placed in the administration process. This procedure lasted 4 months and a half, but at the end my visa was approved I returned to the US about a week ago.

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Anyways, I hope this story helps anyone to have a little hope in case you face a situation like what I had to face. I know that for me it would have been good to read a story like this at the time. Also please take this information as what it is, a story. As someone that decided to go through an experiment that not many people are willing to go through due to the high risk it presents. Always discuss with your lawyer your specific situation, but if it happens that life put you in a rough spot you could use this story to grab some hope that everything may be ok.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you don't mind sharing the lawyers you used, that'd be great
- New Comment: I am in a similar situation as you. I have a pending immigration petition and in three days I will attend the f1 visa interview. Bachelors and the i-130 is f2a category.

May I know how your visa interview went? Can you share some tips? Please ?

- New Comment: same boat. dad filed i-140 when i was a 17 and got it approved march 2023. waiting on priority dates now.

currently in the US but i am going to start college and dad will be moving back to home country till dates become current

i however need an f-1 because my L2 status expires in april 2025.

how do i prepare for my f1 interview

- New Comment: God bless you!
- New Comment: if you don't mind, i have some questions to ask?? i dm'ed you something
- New Comment: Did you say, you were in us on F1 for 11 years? What degrees you enrolled for?

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Title of the post: High Yield Saving account as an international student

Body of the post: Some of my friends told me about how I should put my money into a High Yield Savings account in the US. Does someone know if opening a high yield savings account such as Wealthfront in the US as an international student on an F-1 Visa and earning interest on it is legal?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes it's legal.

- New Comment: It's legal, but as an international student you don't really have the capital for this to make much of a difference. You can leave \$10k there for a whole year, and you'll just earn \$500 at the end of it -- and it's unlikely that an international student has 10k just lying around.

It's better than nothing, so if it's worth it for you then go ahead.

- New Comment: It is legal and everyone should make one rather than letting your money sit stale in cc or savings acc.

I just got one and it's from Wealthfront. 5.5%

If you need referral let me know. Easy to use

- New Comment: Yes, it's legal as long as you earned them legally and paid taxes

- New Comment: Hey! I love my Capital One SavorOne card and I think you will too! You could earn unlimited rewards on every purchase with a card that fits your lifestyle. Apply through my referral link: <https://i.capitalone.com/GQXJWBP9Q>

A lot of benefits including : 10% cashback on uber trips and uber eats, 3% cashback on food & restaurants and many more!

- New Comment: Here's my referral link for anyone who wants the APY boost:

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Use this link to open a Wealthfront Cash Account. Once you fund it, you'll get a 0.50% APY boost!

<https://www.wealthfront.com/c/affiliates/invited/AFFB-F3VW-E7PY-UY7U>

- New Comment: It is legal, but very few companies let anyone other than a US PR or citizen open a HYSA. When I was looking for one 4 years ago, only one took me. Maybe things have changed by now.

Title of the post: F1 renewal visa issued within 1.5 days while on OPT

Body of the post: Hi all,

I wanted to post this positive news because most online posts we see are negative (e.g. long administrative processing timelines) and I was super worried about having to renew my visa on OPT.

I had a visa interview yesterday in the morning and was told it was approved. My visa status changed from "approved" to "issued" this evening. This is my third F-1 visa and it was never issued this quickly before.

I did my undergrad in the US, worked under OPT afterwards (did not attempt to renew visa then), started my PhD, renewed my visa after my first semester and I am now on post-completion OPT. I applied for STEM OPT extension right before having to travel abroad (with premium processing) and it got approved a few days before my visa interview (took a total of ~10 days). The officer didn't really ask me about it, though, he just asked my purpose of travel and what I did for work. Last time I was given a yellow slip and was put on administrative processing, I think, which took about 3 weeks. I thought I would experience something similar since my field is adjacent to multiple fields on the TAL (technology alert list), but everything went super smoothly with no administrative processing this time.

If you are currently traveling on OPT, have to renew your visa and are stressing out about it, here is one positive example. Best of luck to everyone!

Reddit Posts

Update: Received my passport 4 days after the interview

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Thank you for sharing your experience!
- New Comment: If you don't mind can you share your country name?
- New Comment: Did you travel to your home country or you did renewal here in the U.S.?
- New Comment: Can you share what you bring to the visa interview apart from the normal things like appointment paper? i.e. do you bring bank statement or employment letter?

Title of the post: 180 days extension STEM OPT - what happens if I get RFE?

Body of the post: Hi, I am still waiting on STEP OPT(receipt date 11/28). My initial OPT has expired and I am on 180 days automatic extension while my STEM OPT is pending. If I get a RFE, will that period still covered thru ?180 days extension? until I get the final decision?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: My god. They are still processing November cases.. !
- New Comment: Do we need to do anything from our side to get the 180 days extension?
- New Comment: You are covered. RFE is not a denial.
- New Comment: Extension has been increased to 540 days

Ps: this is false. Fragomens website says this 540 extension is nt for stem opt and opt.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I applied on Nov 12th. Received RFE. Got approved still waiting for card to be posted lol. I did apply for premium just before I got the RFE.

I got RFE during my 180day extension which ends in end of July

I continue to work .

So when if you get an RFE you can continue to work

Unless it gets defined after ur response

- New Comment: I got RFE while i was on 180 day extension. You keep working and submit the evidence. In most cases, RFE will get resolved within 180 days. If they weren't you should stop working after 180 days.

- New Comment: Better go with Premium Process.

- New Comment: Unfortunately, if the 180 days expire, you will need to stop working, regardless of whether or not you get an RFE. This has been happening to at least 5 cases I have worked on as a DSO. Make sure to have a conversation with your manager to let them know. You could opt for premium processing but remember, that only guarantees you a "decision" within 30 days. There is no guarantee of a positive adjudication, just a case decision. If your case goes to RFE, the work authorization does not get extended based on that or a response to that. Tough times for STEM students for sure.

- New Comment: Can we still be in unpaid employment during 180 days extension ?

Title of the post: Can't log in SEVP Portal

Body of the post: Anyone having the same issue? I created my account a week ago but cannot log in right now. It shows "unable to authenticate user". Same thing appeared when I tried to reset my password, and I'm sure that my email and SEVIS ID are correct. Thanks!

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Experiencing the same thing here, think it's a system error. Will give a try tmr and also contact my DSO

- New Comment: Did you receive any email saying STEM OPT data validation report is due?

Because mine was reported and I remember seeing it in SEVIS. Surprised about the email

- New Comment: Yes, same. Can't reset password because of "undable to authenticate user".

- New Comment: I also received that email saying that my validation was not received. I contacted SEVP (703-603-3400), and they helped me to checked that they already had my record and validation report received before the due day. They said it is still a tech issue at this moment. p.s. The waiting time on the phone was extremely long.

- New Comment: Same issue, I'm unable to login with my credentials. Also unable to reset the password. Did anyone find a way to fix this?

- New Comment: Same here. I still get the same error

- New Comment: It's still down at the moment.

- New Comment: Same here says unable to authenticate user

- New Comment: same thing here. All blocked out

- New Comment: Do you guys have a guess on the estimated timeframe for it to be fixed?

- New Comment: Same here. I'm still getting the error saying "Unable to authenticate user" and cannot reset password.

- New Comment: after the recent update of the sevp system, my authorization dates are now reflecting incorrectly. basically, the authorization dates are now reflecting the dates when i requested my opt with my school. however, because my opt approval was delayed, uscis adjusted my authorization dates. up until the recent sevp system update, my opt authorization dates were correctly reflecting the adjusted start and end dates on the ead card issued by uscis.

Reddit Posts

after the recent update, they are incorrectly reflecting the dates when i initially requested my opt with my school. anyone else experiencing this? i contacted my dso and they told me that my uscis approved dates on sevis are reflecting correctly and that this is an issue with sevp. could it be that this information will automatically fix itself by monday 04/29 since they indicate a rolling info sync from sevis into sevp?

- New Comment: is anyone having an issue logging into sevp this week? when attempting to login, i get an "error" message.

- New Comment: Sevp portal is down

- New Comment: yeah looks like the website is still down after the update. unable to login

- New Comment: Same thing here. i contact my DSO and waiting for their reply

- New Comment: SAME

- New Comment: Same here! And Tomorrow is the last date to update my address! Will this be an issue? I have reached out to my DSO but they haven't responded yet

- New Comment: Still an issue, better reach out to the DSO

- New Comment: still getting same error, did anyone able to login?

- New Comment: i even received email from school that employer info missing and unemployment days started, but I did add the info, and did not add up any unemployment days, now anxiety is killing me as the website says unable to authenticate the user

- New Comment: same, still getting the error. thought I forgot my password :(

- New Comment: Same. At around march 15 I saw the website said they were updating systems and let me wait. Later this unable to ? popped up

- New Comment: Same issue here as 3/21/2024, couldn't log in and check my 6 months report status.

Reddit Posts

My STEM 6 months reporting is due next week. I have finished the 6 months reporting through my school DSO and received the new I20 because of some job info updated. But still receive an email this morning said my reporting is due. How do I make sure I have finished the report? I have emailed my DSO to confirm it and waiting on response.

- New Comment: Same issue!
- New Comment: I just tried to update my password and it says my SEVIS is wrong. I have 2 attempt left!!
- New Comment: I can?t log in to the SEVIS portal as well.
- New Comment: Same issue here! It?s all f***ed up !
- New Comment: try signing in using Edge! i also couldnt log in or change password using chrome but edge works for me
- New Comment: Had the same issue - error without a message. Cleared the cache and I could sign in fine.
- New Comment: Hi, I was facing same issue "unable to authenticate user". Could anyone please help me with this?
- New Comment: <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/bcm2404-04.pdf>

This article by ice might explain what?s going on. I am also having the ?unable to authenticate use? issue.

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) received reports of several issues affecting users of the SEVP Portal following SEVP Portal Release 6.0 and additional maintenance and outage that occurred the week of March 11, 2024. SEVP will address the issues with the following initiatives:

1. An hour-long maintenance outage on Thursday, April 18, 2024, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. EDT. During this time the SEVP Portal will NOT be available. Any changes to Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) student records will upload to the SEVP Portal once the portal is back online. SEVP will not send a follow-up email regarding system

Reddit Posts

availability. This effort will address the following issues:

? Designated school officials? (DSOs?) inability to generate temporary passwords for student portal password resets.

? Students? inability to log in to the SEVP Portal.

NOTE: Like the March outage, when students log in to the SEVP Portal for the first time after the system update, they will need to change their password. There will be a notification on the SEVP Portal Sign In page explaining the outage and password reset requirement for students.

2. A rolling, backend SEVIS Portal data resynchronization effort that should not impact portal users.

Students should see correct information in their portal accounts by Monday, April 29, 2024. This effort will address the following issues:

? SEVP Portal inability to authenticate users.

? The portal displaying a generic ?error? message when students try to update their portal account information.

? The portal sending erroneous missed portal validation and reporting emails.

? Employer information missing from certain portal records.

? When DSOs update student email addresses in SEVIS, the portal is not accepting the newemails addresses and is not sending updated email address emails to students.

Reddit Posts

Until these two initiatives are complete, please do not contact SEVP or the SEVP Response Center (SRC) about the issues listed.

- New Comment: i had one separate question concerning SEVP so would appreciate the community's help. I am currently about to apply for stem opt extension, continuing with the same employer because they offered me a contract extension. currently, my sevp reflects an employment end date which matches the end date of my post completion OPT EAD card. this also aligns with the initial offer which was for one year. should i change the "employment end date" to "unknown or basically leave it black" prior to applying for my stem opt extension? Or do i still report it as the end date on my current ead card and change it after my stem opt extension gets approved? i see the stem opt application has a question on "start date of stem opt extension", which directions from schools mention to fill out as the first date after your current opt expires if continuing with the same employer. i know we may not have the answers, but would be curious to hear anyone's thoughts

- New Comment: Has it been fixed at all?

- New Comment: Any new user still encountering this issue ?

- New Comment: Yes, I am not able to log in!

Title of the post: STEM OPT - Did I violate F1 Status?

Body of the post: I am currently working with valid STEM OPT. I signed up to be an extra on a TV show for fun, but got reimbursed \$60 for taking a COVID test before the shoot. I hadn't realized this would not be allowed for my STEM F1, since it was for such a short shoot. The shoot never ended up happening, and I was never employed due to the show getting cancelled, but I now have a W-2 for those \$60. Did I violate my F-1 status?

What steps can I take to undo this? What is the likelihood that they investigate this if I get my H1-B lottery and will I get a chance to explain myself?

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Lol you're fine, IRS and USCIS doesn't share information unless you're a criminal.
- New Comment: lol chill out its such a small amount USCIS wouldnt find out. And besides like the other comment said, the IRS doesnt care about your immigration status nor does it share your info to other government agencies like USCIS. Just avoid making money where you shouldnt be in the future but for this situation just chill out its not that deep anyway
- New Comment: >I hadn?t realized this would not be allowed for my STEM F1, since it was for such a short shoot.

... Why would you think being paid for work not related to your STEM OPT would be okay? The length of time doesn't matter.

>The shoot never ended up happening, and I was never employed due to the show getting cancelled, but I now have a W-2 for those \$60. Did I violate my F-1 status?

You were paid for your time and taking a COVID test and you apparently gave them enough of your personal information that they could generate a W-2 for you. Technically... Looks like you violated your status.

>What steps can I take to undo this?

None. This is like spilling water in the ocean. You don't get your water back and you cannot undo it.

>What is the likelihood that they investigate this if I get my H1-B lottery and will I get a chance to explain myself?

There wouldn't be an explanation. You either did it or didn't. The reasoning why is irrelevant.

The likelihood they notice \$60 as one payment and investigate is infinitesimally small.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Probably won't get flagged but don't repeat it.
- New Comment: Anything with under \$600 on W2 you don't need to report.
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Weather it is \$1 or more, it is a violation technically speaking. But I don't see this being a huge problem. By the way, visa status violation can result in bigger problems. So be careful all the time.
- New Comment: You are fine. They were not even supposed to send you a W2 for \$60.

Title of the post: EAD premium processing delayed!!!

Body of the post: My EAD card premium processing seems delayed and I am worried sick

I have applied for my EAD card on November 12th, 2023 with OPT start date as Jan 18th, 2024. I saw no progress till Jan 10th so I applied for premium processing on the same day.

My friends who have applied for premium processing around the same time got their EAD cards in their hands within a week. It's been 3 weeks and I am worried sick that my unemployment days are getting used up.

My friends who have applied on Nov 30th also got their cards approved. I have called premium processing services - a representative multiple times and they've been of no use. They just keep asking me to wait for another week(they've told the same thing every time I called - ?within 15 days it should be processed otherwise give a call back?, ?within 30 days it should be processed?, ?by 31st, it should be processed? T_T

I have a 21 hour job aligned and they've been patient with me for 3 weeks. Idk if they'll terminate me if I don't get my card before mid Feb.

Reddit Posts

Is there something I can do from my end? Also people keep telling me the date on my EAD card would be the date it got processed but it didn't happen to my friend who applied for Jan 15th as start date and it got processed on 30th, when she received the card, it said 15th Jan ?. If same thing happens to me, I've already lost 3 weeks and what do I do if my EAD hasn't been processed in 30 days even after applying for premium?

I read somewhere I would get a refund, I was thinking after getting a refund I could apply for another EAD application but a representative told it would be considered as a duplicate request. I am dying, please suggest me what I can do from my end?

If the officer is delaying? Can I request to change my officer? Is there someone else I can reach out to other than the representative???

Please help me out!

EDIT: Guysssss, I'm unsure if my EAD is approved, I received a mail saying it is but there's no receipts attached in the docs section. snnsjdkdkdkdkldkd I'll update once I have my card in the hand

EDIT 2:

I got my card approved on Feb 6th and approval notice was attached to the docs section on Feb 8th. The card got produced on Feb 14th and delivered on Feb 16th. All of this on premium processing, it took around 28-29 days to get approved. On normal processing I applied almost 3 months ago(Nov 12th). I didn't lose on any unemployment days from Jan 18th as my start date was updated and printed as Feb 6th.

Reddit Posts

Hope this helps, good luck!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I am in same situation, applied normal EAD on 7th Dec , then shifted to premium on 16th Jan as I have my joining date on 12th Feb, from last 3 days it is saying ?longer than expected time? , is it showing same for you also?

- New Comment: I?m sorry to hear that. They will refund the premium processing portion of the fee if the decision has not made within 30 days of premium clock start. Where is your service center? Mine is Potomac, and I applied Dec 27 (normal), switched to PP on Jan 21 and approved Jan 23 from email and standalone approval document showed up on Jan 25. Card was produced yesterday and USPS popped up today. Instead of phone call try email as well. I?m sorry again.

- New Comment: Did you get a notification that your application has been approved and you?re just waiting on the card itself? If the application is still pending, your unemployment days are currently not counting down right now.

- New Comment: I?m so glad I?m not the only one going through this ? I applied initial opt on sept 15, 2023 and my status was ?longer than expected? for FOUR MONTHS. I didn?t want to give them the satisfaction of more money because it?s already not cheap. I filed an inquiry the day my inquiry date opened and kept waiting and waiting and got NOTHING. Meanwhile I kept seeing people who applied after me get approved before me and I couldn?t take it anymore.

I caved and upgraded to PP on Jan 21, 2024. So far all I?ve gotten is my progress bar changing multiple times a day with no actual improvement. I resulted in calling customer service twice and my rep felt so bad about my situation and it taking so long so she flagged my case to bring it to the USCIS? attention and told me to wait 2 weeks and I should get a response about my inquiry.

Two weeks go by? NOTHING. So I call again and the second rep, also sweet as pie tried to flag my case for me again

Reddit Posts

but apparently their system does not allow them to do it multiple times. She finally told me I should hear something by Feb 5th but at the rate they're going I'm not holding my breath. I'm at my wits end and my anxiety is at an all time high, because my requested start date is mid Feb but I'm so scared I won't get anything on time and I literally have no clue what else I can do at this point. You'd think after almost 5 months and 2K they'd send my stuff ??

- New Comment: Sorry if this doesn't help, but my experience was based on 2021.

I applied for normal OPT early OCT 2021. I got approval for OPT at the end of Dec 2021. My EAD was in the mail on early Jan 2022.

I think it depends on where your EAD was sent to which of the 3 (or 6?) offices. It just happens that my application was sent to the largest and slowest processing center.

I had friends who applied on November 2021 and received it by December.

I know it's frustrating and stressful to not hear back about your application but hang on! In this case no news is good news! They would tell you straight up and fast if your application had some sort of error.

I also applied to jobs and got one lined up around early November of 2021. Thankfully they understood and were patient until my EAD arrived in the mail. I think if you are honest with your employer and it's within reasonable expectation that you may not receive EAD until 3 months-ish it should be fine. Once you get approval of EAD receipt I believe you can start working.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hi, I guess I'm facing the delay as well. One question I have for you is that, while calling the premium line, the call is getting transferred to the Normal call center unit but not the premium processing line. Could you please

Reddit Posts

help me how did you bypass that and reach the premium customer line??

- New Comment: I am on the same boat .. my original receipt was April 5th. Then, I switched to premium process on June 18th. It's been 13 days, I got nothing while everyone's else was approved within a week. Today July 1st is supposed to be my first day at work, but I still don't have my EAD card. The company is nice enough to push my start date back but idk for how long. I'm scared

- New Comment: Message me personally, we can discuss

Title of the post: F1 student still in hospital after medical emergency in US. What to do about uscis?

Body of the post: Hello. My fiance (F1) got into an accident last month (December), and his F1 visa is set to expire on February 1, 2024. He's here as a Ph.D. student. He's still in the hospital and will still need to be in the hospital after February 1. I'm a US citizen, and we plan to marry in the next 3-6 months, but at the moment I don't know what to do or file so he can be here legally. How do I let uscis know that an accident happened and he needs to be here for medical care?

Thanks

​

​

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I would say his DSO needs to be aware for a start.

His visa expiring doesn't mean he becomes illegal that day, he's legal for the entire duration of his program, that includes his post study work period.

Reddit Posts

Only concerns would be whether he's enrolled for the semester.

I don't know if they give time off for medical issues, u/codetornado might have the answer.

If y'all do have plans to get married in a bit, I'd be more focused on his recovery than anything other thing.

Goodluck to you both.

- New Comment: Contact the school, ask about a medical Reduced Course Load.. It's basically taking an academic term off for medical reasons. there is also an academic version you will need to do as well.

Do the above and let him get better and recover after the accident.

- New Comment: Visa is a document that grants entry into a country, not a document that allows staying in the country. Students can usually legally present in US for as long as it is necessary for them to complete the training.

- New Comment: You should check her I-20. As long as her I-20 is still active she is still considered having legal present in the US, regardless her expired F1 visa.

I hope your wife will get well soon!

- New Comment: even if he's overstayed by years, once he marries you a US citizen it's forgiven. wishing your fiancé a speedy recovery

Title of the post: F-1 to H-1B concerns

Body of the post: Hello, I am fortunate enough to have found an employer that is going to sponsor my H-1B visa, starting in 2025. I'll graduate in Spring 2024, then I will use my 1 year of post-completion OPT. My employer requested a few of my documents, that I have questions/concerns about.

Reddit Posts

First of all, they requested all I-20s. I have been in the U.S. for 5 years, over two different degrees with at least 4-5 different I-20s and I'm very sure I threw my old ones out whenever I received a new one. Will that hinder my H-1B process if I can only supply the most recent one?

Also, I did get a speeding ticket last year, amounting around \$250, will that negatively affect my chances?

And third, if you are lucky enough to be drawn in the lottery, I read the H-1B visa would start in the following October, my OPT would only go until June though, is there a grace period between both dates or would I have to leave the country for a few months?

Thank you for all your help!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: oh no. you never throw out your old I20s, USCIS will want them for a green card application too.
- New Comment: Reach out to your school(s) and ask them for copies of your old I-20s. They most likely have them on file
- New Comment: I've sent ALL my I-20s since 2011 for my F-1 to H-1b change. My first (original) I-20 was too old that Department of Justice was issuing them back then :)

Definitely sent all your I-20s...

Speeding ticket, nope. Never came up.

For your 3rd question, look up Cap-Gap.

Reddit Posts

Good luck

- New Comment: I can only help with your third question. I think you would be able to stay and keep working using something called the "cap gap extension". Google it. "The cap gap extension allows for some F-1 students to extend their F-1 status and/or authorized period of post-completion OPT until they transition to the H-1B status on Oct." from a .gov website. There are some eligibility requirements so do your own research into it!

- New Comment: Don't worry about the speeding ticket. I had one for \$350 5 years ago and was able to get two OPTs and an H1B since then.

- New Comment: 1, For the first, I think you need all i20s, you can always request the old ones from your schools' international student office. They have all the copies.

2, don't think so unless it's criminal charge(your case likely not but do consult lawyer

3, you can google opt cap-gap, it will extend opt to cover the gap period

- New Comment: 1. Yes that is a problem. Try to find copies. I20 are proof you're here legally, more or less.

2. Should not matter. Don't speed.

3. Yes it's called Cap-gap.

- New Comment:

Every time the DSO generates an I-20 for you, they'll copy that and have it in your file. How do I know? I used to be a GRA for the international office ;)

So, yes you can get all your previous I-20 copies. Never throw away any of your immigration-related documents how insignificant they are. I have a box

full of all of my documents from the start. Also, a good idea to scan every

Reddit Posts

time you receive a document. Adobe Scan is a nice free app, when you scan it, it will be copied to Adobe Document Cloud you can download it. I have all sorts of copies including birth certificates, SSNs, driver's licenses etc,

Keep the speeding ticket payment receipts and any correspondence. This will be needed in the future like for green card and naturalization. Also good idea to get a driver history record from your local DMV and keep that handy as well. Again in the future, if you move from one state to another, it's very hard to get a copy of your old driver history record. If there's no criminal issue related to your ticket, then don't worry about it. In some states, the speeding tickets are misdemeanors. So it depends on the time of the ticket you got.

- New Comment: I have a similar situation like OP, but my DSO said they don't have any copies of my past I-20s, will it affect anything as far as H1b/green card application? Thanks you in advance!!

- New Comment: Your old school's international student office should have a copy of your old I-20. I lost my undergrad's opt I-20 and they emailed a scanned copy that they have.

- New Comment: My employer has sponsored me to enter the H1B lottery earlier this year and they don't have all my past I20s only the most recent one when I took the job. I didn't get selected though, so maybe it's needed more for if you get selected?

- New Comment: On an H1 now.

1. I was on the F1 for 8 years. I gave the I20s I had (3?) and didn't give the rest.

2. I've had more than one speeding ticket. No one cared.

3. You could just apply for the STEM OPT extension. There's a CAP Gap option too.

- New Comment: Contact your previous schools for copies of your I-20s. Schools are only required to keep the docs on

Reddit Posts

file for three years. I-20s are legal documents so yeah, start keeping them.

As long as you don't have a warrant out for your arrest for an unpaid ticket then you are fine.

Talk to your current DSO about the cap gap Optional Practical Training extension. They may have info their website about it.

Title of the post: Got a visit from homeland security.

Body of the post: Hello everyone,

I am an international student in California, (I got a full scholarship sponsored by my country) and as the title says, I got a visit from two homeland security agents asking me about all sort of stuff, and asking me about my papers..etc. I answered everything and gave them my papers, and after that they left. This was like months ago and nothing happened and I just thought its a normal visit, and every international student receives one. Anyway a couple days ago I asked some of my friends that have the same scholarship as me, and they said they didn't get any visits.

So my question is, is it normal for homeland security to visit international students randomly? and why did I get one and my other friends didn't get any ?

please and thank you in advance for answering

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Not normal at all.

Someone probably complained about you and alleged you were breaching your visa or somethings tipped them off.

- New Comment: > is it normal for homeland security to visit international students randomly?

There are no "Random" visits from the Department of Homeland Security. In the last 5 years, this has happened to only two students of mine. One was due to a visa violation the other was related to a national security concern. So a visit

Reddit Posts

from DHS happens to less than one-hundredth of one percent of students.

>why did I get one and my other friends didn't get any ?

Your record was flagged for review. Could be you have a similar name as another person on a watch list. It could be a reporting issue in the system and it flagged you.

It is also possible you did something questionable and DHS wanted to see what happen if they showed up. See if you did anything weird.

As there was not a follow up you are likely fine and it was a routine check.

- New Comment: I don?t think this is normal. Do you have anything weird on your record?

- New Comment: If you wish you do not have to answer the door unless a warrant with your name is issued. You do not have to answer any questions from law enforcements, including feds. You have fifth amendment rights just like any American, that any alien admitted into the states legally share some of the constitutional rights. My school issued statements and guidelines in response to unannounced visits from FBI to Chinese scholars/students due to ?China initiatives? during Trump administration. California and Texas had a lot of Fed visits.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [R1- visa | us immigration | punjabi language | attorney jay terkiana](<https://youtu.be/5NnkU7G50uQ>)

- New Comment: I had the exact same experiece in 2020. now I am filing for green card and I am really anxooous on whether this will have any effect on my case. How is your current status? did they tell why they visited you?

Title of the post: Online OPT... Cool...

Reddit Posts

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes... online OPT applications only skips the lockbox. They don't get approved any differently. They still go to the Potomac Service Center. They still take the normal processing time, just removed the lockbox step.

The online application has not been active long enough to have approvals. It will be July before we see them starting to approve Online applications as we get near the 90-day window.

- New Comment: Right :(it's crazy to see mailed in applications up to late april already being approved. Meanwhile no news on online applications.

- New Comment: Hey, did you get approved for your online case?

Title of the post: F1 Drop Box Visa Says Refused

Body of the post: Hey all!

I came to India to do my F1 visa renewal through drop box. My visa expired (July 2022) and I was waiting for H1b and didn't get it this year so decided to pursue my masters after doing my bachelors and 3 years of OPT through it.

I dropped off my Passport, DS-160, I20 (Northwestern U), and all relevant docs at the Delhi embassy for the Chennai VAC appointment on August 9th.

My timeline is -

August 9 - Dropped off

Reddit Posts

August 11 - Received

August 12 - Refused

I'm freaking out as not sure what happened and why it's refused. My passport status on the USVISAScheduling says shipped by post (not sure what this means)

My return flight is September 9, and have so many things dependent on this. Can someone suggest what to do next?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hi! This happened to me last month. I was called for an interview in Chennai and then it was approved so don't worry!

- New Comment: I think it shows refused for a few days and then it updates. But I'm not entirely sure but I read this somewhere. Research on this and I wish you all the best buddy.

- New Comment: Will do, hoping it works out!

- New Comment: This happened to me this month. Not in India tho. Was in the EU. Called them and they asked that I appear for an interview, which only took like 2 mins and was approved after that. They probably only want you to come for an interview. Don't panic.

- New Comment: Sorry this happened!! Would you mind keeping us updated on the situation? I have my flight tomorrow to home for a Dropbox

- New Comment: For me, when I went to pick up the passport, they gave a slip and told me to attend the interview. There they again gave another slip and asked to deliver some documents. Exactly 4 weeks from them receiving all the

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documents, they approved my case.

But then again, each case is different.

- New Comment: Collect your passport and check if you have any notice in it. They might be wanting you for a inperson interview

- New Comment: If your visa is refused for now, it means you could possibly get an interview letter along with your passport. It happened to me last year; I got my visa approved after an interview.

- New Comment: It's shipped you will get it soon don't freak out

- New Comment: Is your I-20 from the same school to which your first F1 visa was issued?

I made to understand that embassies can still request an interview if an applicant submits an I-20 different from the one tied to their original school listed on their F1 visa.

- New Comment: Please update your status

- New Comment: For my renewal it was similar. I had to visit consulate thrice

1. Drop off

2. Interview (approved but they forgot to take fingerprints)

3. Went again just for fingerprints

Title of the post: Full Time CPT During FALL

Body of the post: I got an SWE internship with one of the FAANG companies for this Fall. This internship is a full-time position and out of state. I am an undergrad in CS and this is my final year (Fall 2024 is my 4-1). I have been trying to convince my school to accept my CPT for the last month. My advisor is rejecting my application, stating "We do not approve full-time internships during the fall semester because you need to be enrolled in 9 in-person credit hours." Now,

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I am trying my best to convince them that I can fly down for classes since my internship is a hybrid position. I don't know how to do that, so if you happen to have any ideas, please comment or DM me, thank you.

Edit: Thank you everyone for sharing their information or advice on my post. I just got to meet my advisor today and she said it was final from department and we will not be approving your application.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Unfortunately CPT is at the discretion of the university. Some universities don't authorize CPT for fall and spring semesters. I highly doubt they would change the practice for you
- New Comment: There's nothing you can really do if your advisor doesn't approve it. If you can't talk them into it, see if the company is willing to give you a 20hr remote internship.
- New Comment: Your mistake was attempting to get an internship when you are not eligible for CPT.

>"We do not approve full-time internships during the fall semester because you need to be enrolled in 9 in-person credit hours."

I'm not sure what you expect to change here.

>Now, I am trying my best to convince them that I can fly down for classes since my internship is a hybrid position.

Your school is absolutely, positively, and without question not under any legal obligation to offer CPT at all. To anyone, ever.

Your school can set any CPT policy or just not offer it at all. You didn't check if obtaining an internship was even an

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option.

You could try to apply for pre-completion OPT. It will be expensive.

- New Comment: Same here. FAANG company extended summer internship. Wanted me to work full time during fall.

Uni declined. Had to drop the offer. So bummed!

- New Comment: Full time CPT fulfils the criteria for full-time enrolment at my school.

Talk to your DSO. Academic advisors are generally not aware of the rules.

- New Comment: Is it possible to take a gap semester and still use CPT/OPT then, in this scenario?

- New Comment: is there no internship course that your school provides

- New Comment: Can you convince the HR or Hiring Manager to delay the first day? My hiring manager is willing to delay it after I graduate (but I explicitly told them this during the interview)

- New Comment: Same happened with me. Unfortunately you can do nothing. Even I regret about selecting such a shitty university

- New Comment: Yeah, it's at your school's discretion. You have a couple options. Really beg for an exception from your school, beg the company to make the internship remote so you can still be in school (might help your case), see if you can move the internship to the summer.

Good luck on getting it done fr.

- New Comment: I was in a similar condition last Fall and had to lose my internship.?

- New Comment: Your chance of getting CPT is extremely unlikely. However, you can consider pre-completion OPT. My dumbass school only offers one CPT for students, so a lot of them get OPT for their second internship. It is super

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expensive though; it'll run you about \$2.2k at least with premium processing. However, since it's a FAANG internship, depending on your comp, it could be well worth it to spend that money since ideally you should be able to make up the cost in very little time. Also, check with your recruiter to see if they'll reimburse part of the fee; I know Meta will reimburse the base fee for OPT (\$470), but not the premium processing add-on (\$1785). Not sure about other companies.

- New Comment: Just extend graduation by 1 semester

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Talk to the company to move your internship to winter or next Summer

- New Comment:

This happened to me at a FAANG company during my master's CPT in fall 2021. I had only 6 credits remaining to graduate, but the university's rule was that you needed to have 3 or fewer credits during the regular semester to do a 40-hour internship. I spoke to multiple people at the department and college level, but it was in vain. The worst part was that it was still the COVID era, and those 6 credits were online anyway. I spoke to my hiring manager, who didn't care about what was mentioned on the I-20. So, I worked 40 hours regardless and got paid too. The thing is, nobody ever checks these details?not to say it should be abused, but companies and colleges rarely interact except for maybe internship reports. USCIS will never check college-level rules or verify them. In your case, because you are ready to travel to attend your classes, I would suggest talking to your recruiter and manager to work it out. It's a difficult market out there, and I would turn over every stone before losing out due to rigid college norms

- New Comment: This happened to me as well. Applied and got accepted to a coop remote position full time. I was literally crying when I realized that I can't do full time in fall-spring semester so I begged the company to let me do part time 20hrs instead and they were nice enough to go through with it. I'd say just explain to the company abt your situation and show gratitude for their patience even if they can't go through with it. It's not too late to resubmit cpt if you're manage to work it out with the company.

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- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Expelled from University

Body of the post: I was expelled from my Uni on 13th December 2023 and I was told to leave immediately. I left on 24th December 2023 and was told by DSO that leaving upto 14 days post termination is okay. Can someone advise me on this?

I'm accepted into another Ivy League university now and have gotten I-20 as well as new SEVIS. Please advise me on this!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Leaving on the 24th should have been OK.

- New Comment: how was the process of switching unis and how did the new one go about what happened at the previous one? good luck

- New Comment: Why were you expelled at first place?

- New Comment: When do you need to travel?

- New Comment: Lmao, you are a G for bagging two ivy?s casually.

- New Comment: Where are you going now to?

Title of the post: 10 days left on OPT, and no STEM OPT job offer yet. What do I do?

Body of the post: Basically the title. I was on a job during OPT and my employer never submitted the I-983 and told me a few days back that they won't. The market is broke and finding jobs is hard, let alone finding one in a week that will submit the I-983 form for me.

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However, I know paid work is not a requirement on OPT and a few people volunteer with organizations to stay on OPT. I know unpaid volunteering cannot be done on STEM OPT, but is there any way out? Is there any consultancy or staffing agency you can recommend that is swift with paperwork? (I normally find them to be scams but rn I just want a job)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Unfortunately no other way out. You need to find a paid job with an e-verified employer in the line of your studies. If not, you'll get 60 days to exit the US provided you have not completely utilized your 90-day unemployment during OPT. You can apply for a higher degree and get your sevis transferred to continue to remain in the US though
- New Comment: The job market has been awful. I think if you are unable to find a job, transfer to another school and get another degree if that's doable for you
- New Comment: get an MSc
- New Comment: You can go for day1 CPT, that's the best option you have as of now given the situation.
- New Comment: What's your degree and what kind of job you are looking for?
- New Comment: Why didn't he submit the I-983? It costs him nothing
- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: F1 Visa Status changed to refused after approval by the officer during interview

Body of the post:

<https://preview.redd.it/ka6acsr3ho6d1.png?width=525&format=png&auto=webp&s=349fd268fff96713b0472410ef57616625eb33d3>

This is a long shot, but I'm hoping someone has some experience or advice for this crazy situation. I had my visa

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interview for an MS CS program at a top-ranked university (got a half scholarship too!) at the Mumbai consulate on June 4th. The interview was super short, basically just one question about funding. Everything seemed positive and officer approved my Visa, and the status online went to "Approved" shortly after.

Fast forward to yesterday, June 14th, and my heart sank - the status changed to "Refused." I haven't gotten my passport back or any email explaining the decision. I'm feeling totally lost and devastated.

Has anyone else experienced a visa approval turning into a refusal with no explanation? Is there anything I can do to find out why this happened or possibly get the decision reconsidered?

Updated :received my visa after long wait

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: post history says you've given multiple interviews, one in may, one in delhi

screenshot says 3june, post desc says 4june

whats up with all this varying info?

- New Comment: Just for the record , refused is different from " Rejected" refused means they will put you into administrative processing till they do a background check or ask you to send them some further documents. Don't lose hope. Unfortunately, it can take from a week to 6 months

- New Comment: Do you have any idea what might have gone wrong (social media, background etc.)? This is something I never heard of.

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- New Comment: That's terrible tbh.

But I read somewhere on reddit itself someone faced issue like this but not in India. It was just an error on the portal for them. Hopefully it's the same for you.

And what is the status on the visa scheduling portal because whatever the decision they have to send your passport back

- New Comment: You have been placed on administrative process wait for two-three weeks your visa will be approved

- New Comment: Yes! This was exactly my situation.

Your status will now change to ready for pick up or delivered depending on how you choose to receive your passport.

With the passport you'll be issued a 221g form. It's a piece of paper that'll tell you the reason of the refusal.

LOOK OUT FOR AN EMAIL FROM THE CONSULATE. You'll be required to submit that back with the 221g and Anything else they ask for.

This refusal is not a rejection.

It's just a term they use to say it's refused for now, until further clarification from applicant.

Reasons could be issue with finger print or request more more information etc.

Don't worry, they won't reject you without a cogent reason.

My 221g had NO reason highlighted. It just said resubmit the passport. Lol. I just resubmitted it and it got issued the next

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day. I'm now in the US.

- New Comment: Do not fret yourself to death. Their system default is set at refused. It will self correct later. Be happy!

- New Comment: Hi, did you receive any kind of a slip (221g).?

- New Comment: I'm facing same issue

My visa was approved at counter by the officer but the online status is showing Refused

Did any status changed for you again @MarionberryFar6638

- New Comment: It's administrative processing and not a refusal!

- New Comment: Same I went to an interview 3 may, 8 may I received questionnaire and 14 may status changes to refused. My passport was returned with 221g administrative processing letter. I am still waiting ?

- New Comment: Did you get a slip during interview? Refusals or rechecks are issued a slip. Approved ones go through direct. (f1 issued in 2022 for me)

- New Comment: Typically, if the Visa Officer (VO) needs additional documents or fingerprints, the status changes from "approved" to "refused." After receiving the required documents or fingerprints, they will issue your passport. If the status remains "refused" and you receive your passport, it might contain a slip requesting the submission of additional documents or fingerprints. Follow the instructions on the slip accordingly. Please keep checking your mails. If they need anything they'll follow up visa mail.

- New Comment: same here, I am from a sanctioned country and took an interview on 12 Jun for a CS PhD program. The officer only asked me a few simple questions (didn't even ask about my research area and experience) and told me my visa was approved. But several hours later when I first entered the CEAC website, I encountered the same notification of being refused as yours. So far no updates.

- New Comment: Looks like admin processing, try emailing them you might get a response

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- New Comment: My visa was issued 3 days after I re submitted my passport. Sometimes they just have some internal confusion or some officer wants to double check something so it takes a few days longer.

I wouldn't worry at all of the status has changed to admin processing. It'll change to issued soon.

Hope all goes well.

- New Comment: If they needed more info it would have been on the 221g. Just resubmit your passport with the slip and a copy of the email and you'll be good to go

- New Comment: I'm also in the same boat. I applied for a J 1 short term scholar visa and during the interview on may 29 the VO approved my visa. On June 18 I saw a refused status and asked to submit a questionnaire and my passport was sent back with 221g slip. My program begins in two weeks

- New Comment: Hi, did you end up getting any updates on this?

- New Comment: Hey, any update on your case? I am in a similar situation my status was changed to refused after a month of getting approved in the interview.

- New Comment: Hey

I am in exactly the same situation as you.

How long after that the embassy contacted you ?

Approximately how many days did you wait before your visa was finally issued ?

- New Comment: Hey there,

I'm really sorry to hear about the trouble you're facing with your F1 visa status. It must be incredibly frustrating, especially after initially receiving approval. At [\[https://pickvisa.com\]](https://pickvisa.com)(<https://pickvisa.com>), we've previously encountered

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similar situations with our clients and tried to contact USA Consulates several times. Unfortunately, it looks like the only way to figure out the issue is to reapply and ask the consulate directly. Yes, they usually don't disclose the reason for rejection, but you may insist and get something from them.

Title of the post: Going back to india after stem opt rant!

Body of the post: I have been researching and have come to the conclusion that by 2028, the Indian job market will be flooded with US Master's students returning to India after their STEM OPT period. The reasons are as follows:

Many students from India pursued their Master's in the US in 2022 and 2023. Given the H1B visa cap of 85,000, not all of these students will be able to secure an H1B visa. Consequently, a significant number of them will return to India and seek jobs. Additionally, the current US job market is quite challenging. Therefore, I would suggest staying in India as it is a growing market.

P.S. I am a Master's in Management Information Systems student, graduating in April 2025.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I would posit that it was the case even before 2022. There might be an uptick in the numbers but this isn't anything drastically different
- New Comment: This is only true for tech related fields. For healthcare fields, US is levels above India in terms of pay and quality of life.
- New Comment: I'm doing the same degree! What school are you at?
- New Comment: Most of said STEM master's students in tech have no clue how to run a file in Python. Ik sooo many people who don't do their own assignments, give it to others, transferred schools and only did only CPT. One guy apparently even spent whole masters sitting in a room smoking weed. On top of that, bad tech market.

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Without skills, India or the US they will remain jobless.

Also we don't have to return to India, we can go to Europe.

Also honest to God. Most of these people are a burden to both US and India.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Yep , ? hopefully soon been a month

Title of the post: I got vaguely emailed about the change in slot but the account does not reflect any

Body of the post: I got slots for my OFC and interview both and was able to get it rescheduled as well. The next day I received an email saying that my slot has been changed but it was not clarified if the slot change was for OFC or consular. And when I checked my account, I still see the same dates that were scheduled by ME. I'm really confused about the date, time and location for both OFC and consular interview. What should I do? (screenshot attached)

I already sent an email to them regarding this issue. Is there anything else I can do? Do you guys suggest I reschedule my dates again? I have one more chance for rescheduling the dates.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: look into the visa appointment portal and see if there are any changes. if not then contact the customer care

- New Comment: Update : Thank you for everybody's response but turns out that the email I received was the result of me trying to reschedule my previous appointments which accidentally caused my newly selected OFC date to get locked up without selecting a consular date. So now, I was getting redirected to consular page directly when I clicked on

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"reschedule appointment" because my OFC appointment got locked up. Fortunately, I came across a favourable date for consular while randomly checking for slot availability and decided to go with it which cancelled my previously confirmed OFC and consular appointments and confirmed my previously locked up OFC with this new consular appointment. I received the confirmation for both the appointments via the same email and I can see the same information getting reflected in my appointment confirmation and appointment management section as well (as compared to previous two OFC and one consular appointments.) All the previous issues seem to have resolved as well after I finally rescheduled for the consular date when my lone OFC was already locked up.

- New Comment: Idk but this looks a bit sus. Especially the "don't contact help desk" part. What's the email id it came from?

- New Comment: What's the full email address?

Title of the post: Freaking out about F1 Interview

Body of the post: I graduated from Masters in 2019 and was working on STEM OPT. Once that expired, I continued working on Day 1 CPT for the next 5 months. I had also applied and got a fully funded PhD at a reputed university and so after the 5 months, I quit my job and unenrolled from Day1 CPT to enroll in the PhD program full time. Now, I am scared that even though I went from F1 to F1 to F1 between the three schools, they may flag me because of those 5 months of Day1 CPT. :(

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I am doing day1 CPT got my visa renewed. It all depends on how you answer the interview questions. Make sure you state that the PhD aligns better with your career path and your intent to use this when you return to your home country

- New Comment: I was a visa officer for nine years. Remember that visa officers only take a few moments to read your DS160 and may not even notice your brief time at the day 1 CPT school. Even if they do, the fact that your current

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program is high quality and fully funded will likely outweigh any red flag the CPT might raise. Officers are looking for students who are actually interested in studying, rather than just working, and your current situation seems to fit that criteria.

- New Comment: Could you keep us updated on the outcome, im in the same boat!

Title of the post: F1 Slot booking tips

Body of the post: Few observation from today's F1 slot booking(India)-

1. If you keep getting stuck on waiting page try moving to incognito.
2. If you get cloudflare error try changing dns to [1.1.1.1](<https://web.telegram.org/a/1.1.1.1>)
3. If the page just keeps loading try connecting to a VPN
4. You can not reschedule just the consular appointment. If you try you will see "One or more receipts have expired. You cannot schedule appointments until your application is paid in full. Please navigate to the Visa Application Home page and use the Continue Application link to go to the Payment Options page to complete payment.". Don't panic, just reschedule the entire OFC and Consular combo and you are good to go.
5. You don't need an agent to get a slot, just continue monitoring the updates channel.
6. The confirmation page might not show OFC slot, that's fine it's a glitch the email from consulate will have both the appointments

PS: I booked slot for myself and 2 friends in today's opening. Good luck to those who are still looking to get one in the next openings, above points can come in handy and hopefully all of you get your slots. Cheers ?

Few direct URL's that come in handy during rush hours-

Appointment Manager :

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<https://www.usvisascheduling.com/en-US/AppointmentManager/>

Appointment Confirmation :

<https://www.usvisascheduling.com/en-US/appointment-confirmation/>

Reschedule Page :

<https://www.usvisascheduling.com/en-US/Schedule/?reschedule=true>

OFC scheduler :

<https://www.usvisascheduling.com/en-US/ofc-schedule>

Slot updates: <https://visaslots.info/subscribe>

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Today, I encountered another issue while trying to book my consular appointment. After booking my OFC appointment, I proceeded to select the consular date, but the webpage kept redirecting me to the 'appointment confirmation' page without allowing me to select a date for the consular appointment. Despite trying for half an hour, the booked OFC dates disappeared without any success of consular.

Just some history worth sharing : Earlier, I had to cancel an appointment because my OFC date wasn't automatically canceled after half an hour, so I manually canceled it from the "manage appointment" section. I'm not sure if this

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previous cancellation could have caused the issue I faced today, but I thought it was worth mentioning.

Any solutions or insights into this problem would be greatly appreciated.

- New Comment: Do you know around what time do they open slots generally?
- New Comment: 4. - Do you mean that you have to pay the SEVIS-fee before being able to reschedule?
- New Comment: Yesterday my consular got booked, but ofc hasn't...not sure what to do now...any suggestions?
- New Comment: Hi how did you find out about the slots opening? Is there somewhere I can check to know when bulk slots open?
- New Comment: whenever I try to book a slot I get an error

Any idea how to get past this?

- New Comment: Hey please help me out. The calender keeps on loading, it shows slots for Mumbai only. And I can see slots getting booked and its on checkvisaslots but I am not able to see it.
- New Comment: I?m getting stuck on submit after I select the slot date, it?s happened 3/4 times now.
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: any one able to book a slot for nov/dec later this year?

Title of the post: Finding OPT employment in the current job market

Body of the post: I was wondering how opt students have been dealing with post completion opt in this current job market. I graduated last December and applied for OPT with a starting date of Feb 1st. Although we are allowed 90 days of unemployment the current job market in the US is horrible. I read somewhere that the average time to get a job right now is 6-9 months which is crazy specially for us who only have 3 months.

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So my question is, for those of you on post completion OPT have you been able to find a job, if so how long did it take and are you a STEM or Non-STEM mayor?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Most people who aren't able to find a job volunteer to stop the clock.
 - New Comment: it's been 4 months since you graduated? how is your job search going on?
 - New Comment: STEM major (Elec.Eng). Found my job through my coop/internship since junior/senior year (2nd coop to be exact). I talked to my manager after my 2nd rotation (about 2 semesters before finishing my degree) and asked about return offer as full time after graduation. My manager is ok with it and support me with applying for h1b/eb3 so he took me down and talked to HR about that. I'm still on STEM OPT rn but the company is very supportive and doing everything they can to get me a visa to stay right now.
 - New Comment: STEM major. Did a co-op last year but it didn't convert at the time. Applied to a different team in the same company and got an offer literally a few days before the program end date in Dec 2023. Fortunately for me, the job that I did was in a niche area so they preferred people who had some experience in that area.
- Job search was hard and I was starting to lose hope. To this day, I haven't gotten any interviews or even assessments.
- New Comment: I was lucky enough to secure a job last Jan and company filed H1B and EB3 for me :)
 - New Comment: I have friends who graduated in May 2023 and are still looking for a job
 - New Comment: IMO the trick is to start a semester prior to graduate, that's the only way to be ahead of the unemployment restrictions. Since I was graduating last December, I actually started job hunting end of July and I had a job offer by September end. It really is a waiting game and a numbers game. And you really need to give yourself enough time to navigate this job market and the only way to do that is to start early.

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- New Comment: Please clarify , isn't opt gives only 60 days to find job after program completion date ?
- New Comment: STEM major. I did an internship summer before my junior year and was fortunate enough to get a full time offer for right after I graduate.
- New Comment: In my opinion, i will not spend more than 90days to get a job. I will travel to my country to find a job. I have good degree so it will not be hard for me to get a job that suit to me.
- New Comment: OPT started Feb 5, 2023, but got a job offer in April 2023. Applied at least 2 jobs everyday after graduation. Got a job in a vaccine production laboratory as a lab assistant. Applied for STEM OPT Extension on January 7, 2024 and still waiting for approval while still working full-time (USCIS now approved for those applied for the extension to work 180 days after EAD expires).

Also want to add that in order to stop my unemployment days I volunteered remotely as a project planner for a nonprofit organization that deals with helping kidney disease patients. I did that until I got a job offer as a lab assistant.

- New Comment: I have my graduation date as August 29th, and I'm very confused about the EAD date. I'm thinking of September 16th as the EAD start date.

Any suggestions are highly appreciated.

- New Comment: i found a job a year before graduation via in internship. why wait until graduation to look for a job?

Title of the post: Unpaid Tuition sent to Collections

Body of the post: If an international student leaves US without paying his tuition and gets emailed that his 5K loan is now going to be sent to collections, is there something I should be scared of if I'm not coming back in America again? Will it have any interest on the loan overtime and will they make me pay the money even if I'm in another country?

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: So many International students have unpaid tuition and bills and they are fine. Please ignore the other comment. Life happens. Also, it falls off after 7 years from credit report
- New Comment: Most colleges will hold on to your diploma. You will not get your diploma until you pay your tuition balance. And also in the future if you decide to go to grad school and need to get your transcripts, you will not be able to get them until you pay the balance.
- New Comment: Now is a good time to learn the whole collection process and how to deal with them :) you may have more options than either paying 0 or paying the whole 5k
- New Comment: Shame on you for not paying your loans off. You should not have gone to a school that you can't afford. Yes they will find you you can't escape your debt and it will just grow overtime

Title of the post: Should I renew F-1 Visa?

Body of the post: Hey everyone,

I'm currently on my first year of OPT and will be extending my STEM OPT. I need to leave the country about a month after my F-1 expires, and consulted the company's immigration lawyer about the issue. I have already scheduled an appointment to renew the F-1 in my home country, but his reply has casted doubts. Would anyone have a good idea of my next steps?

His reply: ?I would encourage you not to travel outside the U.S. this year, since you will have only a few months left on your 12-month OPT. Maybe, consider traveling next year after extending your STEM OPT.?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: yea i'd wait to get my STEM OPT and then renew
- New Comment: If it helps I just came back to my home country to meet my parents and got my visa renewed. I will not

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lie, I had mad anxiety the entire time thinking it might get rejected. Thankfully it didn't. Your call.

- New Comment: Recently, I discussed this case with some of friends who were in similar scenarios and guess what all of em renewed their visa and came back to US. No one got rejected they just asked for interviews even though they all qualified for Wavier. Do I see people will say dont risk they not wrong but dont keep waiting just do what you have to do. I never heard any got rejected.

- New Comment: When are you completing your college?

- New Comment: Bruh, they are lawyers for a reason. Listen to your lawyer, unless you have a really pressing issue to attend to, in your home country

Title of the post: F1 status terminated today, what options do I have?

Body of the post: I'm currently in my last semester of my Master's program, ending on May 17th 2024.

As I was applying for my EAD, I realized I didn't have a specific I20 with a CPT authorization for my unpaid internship that I'm doing at a friend's firm in India. I had received the department's approval and enrolled for a 1-credit internship course.

I emailed the Visa and Immigration department of my university and they said this is considered as an unauthorized employment. They have terminated my F1 status today.

Are there any immigration lawyers who have experience with such cases? Any insights into possible options would be really helpful.

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Receiving the departments approval is not enough. They are not aware of immigration procedures. You ALWAYS need to check with your DSO before engaging in employment - paid or unpaid.
- Unfortunately you worked without authorization. That results in a termination of your record.
- New Comment: Ask university if they can give you new i20 and travel outside US and come back to activate your sevis.
- New Comment: Talk to a lawyer please. This is the only way, Reddit will not help
- New Comment: Does it count as unauthorized employment if you did it outside of the country, though? Was it counted because you enrolled in that one credit course?
- New Comment: I thought you only need CPT when you are physically present in the US no?
- New Comment: Once it's terminated, the best way to reinstantiate your f1 but it will take sometime which means you can't graduate this may. Talk to your school to see what options you have
- New Comment: It was unpaid! I dont get why you were terminated.! Talk to your DSO
- New Comment: Hello the same situation I applied for reinstatement waiting for reply
- New Comment: How do you know your status have been terminated ?
- New Comment: Did you only have 1 credit course for the entire semester? If yes, your sevis termination reason could also be improper course registration along with unauthorized employment.
- New Comment: Did they send out an email for the termination?
- I guess your SEVIS ID might have been terminated not your Visa.
- New Comment: I don't think your DSO will be able to help you anymore cause it's out of their hands now. Best case is to consult a lawyer who practices in this space. Additionally you could try reaching out to the legal department at the university as well. I hope things work out for you

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- New Comment: I'm curious as to how they found out? Was it because you registered the internship?
- New Comment: Though what you did is pretty common. The employer being based offshore. How will you plan it was unpaid. What if you were working and someone was paying you in cash or paying someone else like parents for your employment. Normally in these cases the judgement is always given against the student. Sorry to say you don't have a strong case. Also never trust DSO. At the end of the day they do what's best for schools name.
- New Comment: If your internship in India, is it considered employment in the US? Can you ask your DSO that question?
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Which univeristy?

Title of the post: Got 2 offers but no authorization

Body of the post: Short version:

I am in between my bachelors and my masters. Met with my international advisor today and she said I'm not eligible for either Cpt or Opt so I can't accept any of the two internship offers I have received for this summer.

Long version:

I graduate with a BS in May and start an MS in August at the same school. They reprinted my I-20 with a change of degree level and told me I have to go back to my home county to renew my visa anyways.

I told the school my job offers were extended Knowing I was going to work remotely bc as an international student I have renewed my visa every year (I always go home to see my family for a month). School says it doesn't matter, I am not eligible for neither CPT nor OPT in between programs, and even if I was eligible for OpT I wouldn't receive papers in time for my internship start date in June.

Reddit Posts

Anyone can say this is inaccurate? Emotional support is also greatly appreciated as this news has put me through a major crisis and I'm currently reconsidering my entire life trajectory.

Thanks.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The issue with it is they already print your master i-20, because if you use OPT, you are using your bachelor and seems like you move on already. You can't use CPT because you have to use it before graduate. i might be wrong.

- New Comment: Sorry, but this is accurate. Your only option is to work on campus in between programs.

- New Comment: I'm sorry you have to go through this. Immigration laws regarding employment are so rigid to the point it can get unfair. But you're getting offers in this economy. I can only imagine how successful you'll be once things bounce back!

- New Comment: Yeah, you can't work in between programs, my guy. CPT is only used during the program, and it sounds like you never applied for OPT, so how would you work? You can work on OPT but you have to stop once your SEVIS has been transferred and you get a new I20.

- New Comment: If the I-20 for the new level has not been issued yet, can you still apply for OPT under premium processing for the summer? If it has been issued, will they issue you an I-20 for pre-OPT for summer? Granted, you use part of your post-OPT time but you will need to weigh out the pros/cons.. for example, when you get your masters then you can apply for opt and still have a stem 24-month extension (assuming MS is stem eligible in your scenario). And the last question to pose to your DSO is? if you are working remotely, can you do this internship while you are out of the country and visiting home this summer since you are not in the US.

- New Comment: Wait you have to renew your visa? My college told me that it doesn't matter if the visa expires as long as I have an I-20 that is not expired

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Another option is to have a chat with your employer and see if a remote internship is possible without any work authorization. I had a classmate who managed to do that, because it was an unpaid internship. He didn't apply for any CPT or OPT. If it is paid, it is a different story.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Send one my way?

- New Comment: So what would have been the ideal way to go about this if you want to intern in the summer after Bachelor's and start Master's in the fall? Do you have to apply to OPT before Bachelor's conclude, use it for the summer, and get new I-20 quickly after internship ends?

- New Comment: You didn't apply for OPT when you got your undergraduate degree?

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: F1 renewal Dropbox Timeline

Body of the post: Since I was pretty stressed and overestimated the processing times for Dropbox renewal, I thought I'd share my renewal timeline so that none of you would make the same mistakes I made.

Feb 23, 2024 : Dropbox appointment at Kochi VFS

March 6, 2024 : Application Received at Chennai

March 13, 2024 : Application Approved

March 15, 2024 : Visa issued

Reddit Posts

March 20 : Picked up from Kochi VFS

Apparently it's taking almost 15 working days to do the complete processing. Please have this in mind while booking your return tickets.

Feel free to comment any doubts or concerns and I'd be happy to help.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: How is the status changed in usvisascheduling website?

Application received is changed after delivered to post status? Could you please explain

- New Comment: Were you on OPT or STEM OPT? Do you know if there's any difference in the processing time if on opt/stem. I'm on stem extension so was wondering about this.

Also would you recommend having an interview or a Dropbox? I have been told to use an interview to have the visa processed faster. Thanks.

- New Comment: Did you visit Chennai VAC for drop off? In the ds160 Chennai location was mentioned not kochi address.

- New Comment: Do we have to check the usvisascheduling website everytime for seeing status changes? Or will we be getting any notification/email when it happens?

TIA

- New Comment: I dropped off my application at Chennai VAC on March 4th. On the website it's still showing as 'application received' after 13 (working) days of waiting. What's weird is that ceac shows that my case was created on 14th March. Any idea when I should be expecting my passport. I already have to cancel my return ticket.

- New Comment: Did they make the Dropbox renewal thing permanent? I remember seeing it was through the end of 2023 only. Or does it depend on the country?

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- New Comment: This is not a choice. The Embassy decides on drop box vs in person visa appointments but yes, this is correct. Start to finish, this process is AT LEAST 15 business days.

Title of the post: How do I convince interviewer that I can work without H1B sponsorship.

Body of the post: Hi everyone,

I have a recruiter screen scheduled and the employer does not hire if they get to know that candidate requires sponsorship. I have disclosed in other companies? interview that I can work until 2026 without sponsorship as my STEM OPT expires then. But I know disclosing this in the upcoming call will discard me from process and I really need the job.

Should I flat out say I do not require sponsorship ever? What if then they find out about my status while onboarding?

What are my options?

Edit: I am not willing to lie.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: That strategy rarely works if they don't sponsor visas. The reason being that they know ppl will keep searching for other jobs that sponsor their visa while temporarily staying at the company.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: If the job says it needs someone able to work forever, then don't bother applying. At best, you can disclose it to them and see what happens.

Remember the at-will employment clause. This is USA, not France or Indonesia.

- New Comment: You really don't mind not being sponsored for the H1B?

I did the same at my job and they hired me. I was being truthful. I told them I am on STEM OPT which allows me to work max 3 years and that I'm just there for the experience and I don't need sponsorship. That is true because my end

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game is to pursue my studies not to just work.

- New Comment: Just tell them the truth, saying anything else is deceptive.

- New Comment: Just be honest. Say I have a work permit until year xyz but I do not need sponsorship after that. I am taking this opportunity to get some experience.

Once you get in, show how invaluable you are within 6 months.

- New Comment: Just tell them the truth, if they don't hire you, it is what it is. If they intend to hire USC/GC, don't bother.

- New Comment: Sometimes you have to educate the recruiters on OPT and explain that not everyone needs an H1 right away - you can work while the company applies for it in the lottery. Also, don't bring this up unless asked. And finally, do so well in the recruiter screen that they feel that interviewing someone else would be a massive waste of time compared to just going the whole nine yards with you.

- New Comment: Don't bring up your concern until they ask it. You can use whatever tactics to avoid work permit related questions, but the company set multiple checkpoints to know you really don't need H1b later to continue to work in the company.

1. On application, they ask you about sponsorship
2. HR might ask you about sponsorship questions
3. Some companies do background checks
4. When you join the company on the first day, they must check your I9.

You already mentioned it, but these are the reasons why lying is not worth it

FYI:

Reddit Posts

It is kinda suck for all international students, including me, but many companies want a person who has no problem with work permit issues permanently like GC holder or usc. Because those people don't cost extra money(H1b lottery costs money for the company). Ultimately, they don't want to use the energy for educating new hire people who might not join their teams for a long time. Since they are already too much H1b applicant these days and super low chance to be selected in that lottery.

I know these arguments do not make you feel better, but I just want to tell you "the thing" why many companies don't hire international students

- New Comment: dont lie cuz they already know lol and even if you get hired they find out u are out so whats the point anyway you will look for job sponsoring you which you will use this company just to reduce grace period and get some pocket money arent you ?

- New Comment: So, question is are you getting recruited through some staffing Agency like Addeco, Randstand, Insights Global, Mindlance etc...If thats the case, you will get rejected in the agency BCG verification, you wont reach to onboarding level...BUT, if its an inhouse Talent acquisition Team of the Company itself, then you might stand a chance, not sure, but stand a chance, if Hiring Manager feels you are a 'cultural fit' into his Team

- New Comment: Just be honest. Any idiot can be taught how to do the work, code, manufacturing process etc. integrity & honesty cannot be taught. Be honest and upfront. It is always in your and their best interest. They will know this anyway when they do the I-9 Employment eligibility verification and enter your details. Trust me, no one likes a nasty surprise. If they like your work & see you as a valuable asset to the organization, they will definitely work with you to file for H1b.

Title of the post: OPT processing got longer all of a sudden?

Body of the post: Hi everyone,

Reddit Posts

I applied for OPT on Feb 21st.

I checked my case decision progress a couple of days ago and it said two weeks, now it says 3 weeks. Has anyone had the same issue? Should I get premium processing?

I'm starting in September but leaving the US late May, which I guess is in a while but I don't want to have to be stuck here waiting for my EAD card.

Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: ****USCIS PROCESSING TIMES** ***CHANGE CONSTANTLY.***** THEY CHANGE ALMOST DAY TO DAY. THEY CAN CHANGE FROM TAKING FIVE DAYS FOR SOMEONE WHO APPLIED FOUR DAYS BEFORE YOU DID. THEN BY THE TIME THEY GET TO YOUR APPLICATION SUBMITTED FOUR DAYS LATER, THEY MAY BE TAKING 6 WEEKS. FOR SOMEONE WHO APPLIED THREE WEEKS AFTER YOU DID, USCIS MAY BE TAKING THREE MONTHS TO PROCESS THOSE APPLICATIONS.

It is very common for USCIS to be processing applications within a few weeks and then suddenly start taking three months or more to process applications. ****THIS IS NORMAL.****

Do not expect the same processing times as someone who applied three weeks before you did. The people who apply three weeks after you should not be planning their life around getting the same processing time as you received.

What you should NOT expect is that USCIS processing times will stay the same. They will not.

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Again, the best way to protect yourself from this USCIS processing time chaos is for you to take timely action to apply as early as USCIS will accept your OPT application. Taking timely action to apply early should almost certainly save you from having to pay an additional \$1685 for premium processing.

The later you apply, the more likely you will have problems. The more likely you won't have your EAD when you want it. You have less time to deal with any questions/RFE's from USCIS. If your EAD gets lost in the mail, which happens not infrequently, you have less time to request and receive a replacement.

Apply early. Sit back and relax knowing that doing so will probably result in you getting your OPT EAD on time. Or, you can delay your own application and spend months stressed out trying to ask others to speed up their work for you to make up for you not having the responsibility to apply earlier.

- New Comment: Those numbers on the USCIS website don't really mean anything. I applied on Feb 11, and I still haven't gotten any updates. You can see here that most cases are processed in 3-4 months without premium:
https://opttimeline.com/IOE?CASE_TY=EAD

- New Comment: My previous 2 OPT both took 1 month. Then I applied my STEM OPT in December 2023, and I am still waiting for it now.

- New Comment: Not sure if this helps, I applied Feb 8th and got my approval notice March 5th. Still waiting for the actual card.

- New Comment: Applied on March 21st. Work starts on June 3rd. May I screwed??

- New Comment: The EAD part is fine, but you probably want to reconsider starting in September. You can choose to start around your EAD start date in July and you still have two months to visit home. You only get 90 days of unemployment days in your first year of OPT(what's unused is rolled over if you can apply for Stem OPT extension), and by starting in September you consume almost 2/3 of it before you even start to work.

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- New Comment: Don't worry I don't think processing timeline is super accurate, and you still got plenty of time before traveling. Mine showed one week yesterday but today it became 3 weeks, so I'm on the same boat! I applied on Feb 22.

- New Comment: Applied on 7th Feb, haven't heard anything back. The status on the website still shows as 'Case was received and receipt notice was sent'

- New Comment: Don't worry, I applied on 02/09

Got my card produced today. 03/13

- New Comment: Anyone with a receipt date of 3/12 still waiting? Considering PP?.its been almost three months even though UCIS website shows average time for 2 months.

Update: JUST GOT APPROVED TODAY 5/26. Hope to get the card in soon. UCIS website is still down so I cannot access the documents but received the email that action has been taken and Lawfully has been updated to show that it has been approved.

- New Comment: What are you starting in September?

- New Comment: Have you checked the documents tab to see if there is a standalone approval?

- New Comment: Is it possible to get my EAD in May 1st week if I apply today?

- New Comment: applied 02/14 and approved exactly 2 weeks later on 02/28, still waiting for the EAD card

- New Comment: I applied on Jan 18 and still waiting on decision. Anyone else waiting with an earlier receipt notice date?

- New Comment: Application date: 2/26

Receipt date: 2/27

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End of March: 3 weeks until case decision

Early April: takes longer until case decision

April 11: 3 weeks

April 18: 2 weeks

April 24: 1 week

April 27: 3 weeks (frustrated!!!)

Work start: 6/20

I'm still waiting for approval. Has anyone else been approved at the end of February or same situation? Also, has anyone been approved within a week after it said as 1 week until case decision? I am worried if my application will be approved. Please give me advise: /

- New Comment: Anyone with stem opt receipt date in dec 2023 still waiting? I even applied for pp on may 13 and still nothing.

- New Comment: Anyone got approved 5/26 get your card yet? Im hopefully that it will arrive soon. Just got the approval letter.

- New Comment: Hi guys,

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I had filed for the OPT (non-STEM) on March 22 and after waiting i did premium processing on May 27. I got the below email on June 4.

"The Potomac Service Center has approved the following I-765 Application for Employment Authorization that had been filed under the Premium Processing Program..."

However, i am logging in to the portal and i dont see any status updates or documents. Should i wait or reach out to them? What is the process here if anyone knows.

- New Comment: Applied on March 29. Shows that it's on the decision-making step. Still waiting. Does anybody else who applied at the same time have any updates?

- New Comment: I have my graduation date as August 29th, and I'm very confused about the EAD date. I'm thinking of September 16th as the EAD start date.

Any suggestions are highly appreciated.

- New Comment: I applied on April 19 and still waiting for the case decision. Did anyone apply in April as well?

- New Comment: 1. Application type: OPT

2. Premium Processing?: No

3. Receipt Date: 31 March 2024

4. Approved Date: July 26 2024

5. Card ProducedDate: August 6 2024

6. Card Shipped: NA

7. Card delivered: NA

- New Comment: Dont risk it get PP

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I'd get premium processing. Consider it a hedging cost... Takes your mind off of it

Title of the post: Visa termination

Body of the post:

I am a masters student in computer science and I did an internship back in Nov 2023 which has a maximum of 4 credits and out of 4 credits I opted for 2 credits for that internship. Everything went fine and now just before 3 months of my graduation I got to know that if I don't do another internship worth 2 credits my previous internship will be deemed illegal and my visa will be terminated and I will be deported back without a degree.

I am now concerned about how to find an internship in this sluggish job market.

Did anyone else encounter a similar issue? Also can i convert my 2 credits to 4 credits and drop option of doing another internship?

Is there any loophole in this? There has to be some way to make this right.

All suggestions are welcome.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >my visa will be terminated and I will be deported back without a degree.

No. Your school cannot terminate an F-1 visa and even a terminated F-1 visa is not grounds for deportation.

>Everything went fine and now just before 3 months of my graduation I got to know that if I don't do another internship worth 2 credits my previous internship will be deemed illegal

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Nothing you shares would make the first internship illegal if you had work authorization.

You are misunderstanding or misconstrued information conveyed to you.

- New Comment: This is my guess.

By opting into CPT, you switched to a professional track within your program that mandates that you finish 4 credits worth of internships before you are able to graduate.

By not enrolling into an internship course by this summer/next fall, you would not be making satisfactory progress within your major and thus you could get in trouble.

My suggestion would be to either to find internship programs, to look into volunteering for your school/doing a supervised project for credit. Let your DSO know that you are having trouble securing professional opportunities and see if they can help.

- New Comment: I've never heard of retroactive invalidation of sevis record. Are you sure you are understanding the situation correctly?

- New Comment: I don?t think how that?s an issue??

In my university, internship class is 3 units but we can take it either for 1 unit or 3 units.

Please confirm with DSO why taking 2 units/out of 4 is illegal? What?s the reasoning ?

- New Comment: This seems very unusual. Is this a school policy?? Did you hear this directly from your Academic Advisor and the campus DSO?? Pls add more context. Schools cannot "deport you" only DHS can do that. It may be a case of you not having been a full time student during the term you did the internship. I think you need to check with

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your DSO to see what is really happening here.

- New Comment: Do a unpaid internship

- New Comment: When you did the internship in November, was it a full time or part time internship? Because if it is a part time and you took 2 credits on top of the course load you also had, then you have no issue. Now, if you did a full time internship and no other courses on the side than that 2 credit course, maybe you did not respect the minimum credit hours requirement for that semester (especially if it was not in the summer which has less requirement than regular semesters)

- New Comment: Which program are you in and what kind of role are you looking for ? I have my own startup and I work with a few , I think there should be a role that can fit your requirements. We currently have two interns on CPT.

- New Comment: Do you have an option to take a 2 credit course in your university ?

Title of the post: Does visiting the US prior increase your chances of getting an F-1 visa?

Body of the post: Basically the question. Do your chances of getting approved for an f-1 visa increase if you have already visited the US with a B-2 visa as a tourist? Interviewers do ask if you ever visited the US.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >Does visiting the US prior increase your chances of getting an F-1 visa?

Yes.

- New Comment: I would say so. I had a B2 visa my whole childhood/teen years and visited frequently with my family, then later when I was older I got a J1 visa for a summer job and it went suuuuper smoothly, so when I applied for an F1 a few years later, they barely asked me any questions. They have your whole travel and visa history so as long as you have proven to follow the rules, I think it helps you!

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Not sure if visiting drastically increases but I had b1/b2 before applying for f1 but never visited . During interview, as soon as embassy heard I had a visa but never used it, they immediately approved my application so ymmv

- New Comment: I would say most definitely. A big concern when granting you a visa is whether you'll come to the US and overstay. Since you've had a visa before, you had the opportunity to do that but didn't. So that makes it an easier decision for them.

- New Comment: Yea

- New Comment: Yes.. it definitely helped me.. I had B1/B2 visa and during my F1 visa he did asked me about my previous visit.. Q- How many days did you stay and when did you visit last time.

If you have B1/B2 visa and if you have visited it shows that you are financially capable also incase if you don't have any USA visa but if you have any other countries visa and have traveled prior that also helps you to show your financial capabilities. Hope this helps.

Title of the post: Have 3 years of STEM OPT, but also American fiancée - Should I mention to employers?

Body of the post: While looking for a job in the US, I'll have 3 years of OPT (STEM MBA). However, I have an American fiancée that I plan to marry in the coming years. Therefore, it's probable I won't ever require sponsorship from employers. I don't have a green card now, but will likely have one before my 3 years are up.

How should I answer the question on applications: ?Will you need sponsorship for employment, now or in the future??

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Don't overthink it, just say no you don't need it. File green card after first year opt though, because processing takes ages.

- New Comment: It won't change anything. Don't mention it

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- New Comment: For your employment purposes feel free to say that you don't need sponsorship and elaborate about your upcoming marriage if needed, but for your personal sake, don't bank on it until you've received your GC.
- New Comment: Until you are married and have EAD/GC in your hand, it's all speculative and doesn't change today's reality.
- New Comment: You need a sponsorship, at this point what you are trying to say is akin to claiming to have a college degree just because you are studying in it. You cannot claim being a degree holder till you graduate, same rule applies here, you need that green card in hand before making any such claims.
- New Comment: Until you don't have a gc ur still an alien foreign :(. Whenever u get ur gc adjust ur status with your employer
- New Comment: Example of someone in a similar situation as you being fired for answering no to the question.

https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/1anrpek/fired_for_being_on_f1_status/?utm_source=share&utm_medium=web2x&context=3

- New Comment: Before you get married and get GC, your company won't assume you will have GC. Even you mentioned it, HR probably would just say show it to me when you have it. Otherwise you will need sponsorship.

From HR perspective, it is really troublesome to verify your marriage plan and your gf will marry you, and your gf is citizen, and the list goes on. It can even cause some legal issue if HR asks your gf ID (passport) to verify. So much hassle. Your resume may be trashed the first time when HR thinks about this.

Title of the post: OPT ending?need to switch to a job that sponsors

Body of the post:

My non-STEM OPT ends in July and my current university position does not sponsor, nor do they sponsor non-faculty

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jobs. It was not ideal but it was my only offer when I graduated. I'm pretty junior in my career (have american ba and ma) and I feel like it's nearly impossible to switch to private sector this year in time (apply, interview, file) knowing the filing period is near, although I have not given up trying. I am talking to my manager in a few days to discuss my situation and will ask for her help and try to apply to other cap-exempt schools in the New York area, but I am so overwhelmed, my boyfriend is here?worst case scenario I switch to my tourist visa and look for jobs after my OPT expires, but that only gives me one more year?I don't really want to get a PhD, too late to apply now anyways?I'm in non clinical research and will have some small publications, is J1 an option? guys what else can I do?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: In a similar situation but how do you plan to look for a job after OPT expires? How would you be able to use STEM OPT if you don't apply?

- New Comment: Maybe try starting a pre-doc? Im not sure how popular they are in your field. Even if you dont want to do a doctorate, a lot of them sponsor for j1 visas, which can hold you off until you get something else.

A good place to start is predoc.org

Good luck!

- New Comment: I don't know why f1 students(not from china or India) don't study nursing. You could just get an associate degree, not even bachelors, get sponsored, get your green card, quit after 2-3 years max, then do your bachelor's in a field you really love and pay in state tuition.

- New Comment: May I ask about your field of education?

- New Comment: If your opt ends in July why not start a master's program in the fall semester?

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Title of the post: F1 Visa approved in Vietnam (I am from India), interview experience

Body of the post: Hey all! This is to put it out there that I got my F1 visa in the second half of July, 2023, after my visa denial in India in the year 2022.

It was quite hard to get visa slots for previously refused in the months of June/July in India, so I was willing to risk it and go to Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh) and give it a shot.

My visa interview experience:

Officer: Hi there!

Me: Good afternoon officer! Here are my documents.

Officer: Why US?

Me: I am going to pursue Ph.D. in Computer Science at UT Dallas.

Officer: Do you already have a Masters?

Me: Yes officer, I have a Masters in Computer Science from xxx in Delhi.

Officer: Oh Delhi! (Typing) So why UT Dallas?

Me: Well, I would like to research in the fields of misinformation and hate speech. There are two great professors, Prof. X and Prof. Y who are doing interesting projects in these fields.

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Officer: Y? Is that her first name?

Me: Yes officer, I didn't know how to pronounce her last name which is Z, and I didn't want to mispronounce it.

Officer: Can you tell me about your Masters Thesis?

Me: So I worked on XX project which is on various NLP tasks on tweets. It could be sentiment, humor, parts of speech etc. So given a tweet, my algorithm could classify the tweets into a set number of categories that can further be used to study the tweets better and take proactive actions on inappropriate tweets.

Officer: Oh, that's great, quite interesting! (Typing) So your program is fully funded?

Me: Yes officer. It is fully funded by the university as I have got a graduate teaching assistantship offer from UT Dallas.

Officer: (Typing for 45-60 seconds, I thought that's it) So I see you have applied for a Master's course previously, why did you change your course? (I applied MS CS in 2022 and got refused)

Me: Well, I wanted to research further in the field of Computer Science. After I was refused last year, I reconsidered my options, and since I already had a Masters, a PhD program objective adds more value to my research interests.

Officer: Makes sense. (Typing) Alright, your visa is approved!

(Returned all documents including passport)

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Me: Don't you need the passport?

Officer: Oh yeah! (Took the passport from me)

Me: Thank you, officer!

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There was no hostility towards me for having come to Vietnam to apply for a visa. It felt like a regular interview that I would have given in the Indian US Consulate. In fact there were four other Indians I could spot during my slot! (With the passports they were holding)

Tips and steps for visa application and getting your passport back:

\- There is no online payment for MRV fee. You need someone physically go to a Vietnam post office to make the payment on your visa application number (They just need one page printout of application number and your passport Bio page printout).

\- You just need your passport, DS160, and i20 to attend the interview. The rest are just supporting documents that you intend to carry.

\- Vietnam does not discriminate appointment slots for residents and non-residents. (Singapore and Thailand US Consulates do) So you get earlier dates

\- I attended my interview in Ho Chi Minh and everything was smooth. I believe Hanoi should only be better since it is a

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bigger one.

\- You can opt for premium delivery of passport to your hotel address which should be quick (I hope as claimed on their website). I opted for pick up and it took two more days after the US consulate dispatched my passport. Also if you are opting for pick-up, you will get an email with the airway bill number. Once you get that email, just give a shot at the passport pick-up center (of that post office) since their website does not update the current status of the parcel correctly. I luckily got mine when I went there at 4 pm that evening, so I could leave the same night.

\- Rest you can check out places in Ho Chi Minh when you are around there, you have to just wait it out till you get your passport. You can't leave the country without your passport :P

\- Grab is a good app for taxi and food delivery. Currency exchange rates are good enough in the airport so you can change everything needed there.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This is so so helpful. So happy for you. Amazing story and experience. Please. Was this the first time you were ever granted a student F1 visa or had you ever been granted a visa before?

- New Comment: Hey i am thinking of doing something similar due to no availability of dates in India at this point. I have a few questions if u could ans.

1. When u made new profile on scheduling website what local address you mentioned. As in updated profile section they ask you details of vietnam credentials. (Address, phone no)

Reddit Posts

2. Did u get evisa or on arrival visa for vietnam?

- New Comment: This is really insightful, thank you for sharing your experience with us.

Title of the post: I want to give up

Body of the post: Hi guys,

I am thinking about to give up of school and go back to my country. I find myself feeling very depressed and overwhelmed with all the difficulties of being an international student. Sometimes, I feel so suffocated about this whole visa thing. It has been in a point that I am not feeling happy anymore.

But at the same time I have no plan B, and I find myself stuck in this situation.

have you ever felt this way? what did you do to feel better?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hey,

I'm sorry to hear that.

I've been there, long patches of just grayness and everyday feels the same. You lose sight of the big picture when the day to day is so overwhelming.

I even took a gap year to figure it out. But nothing will change unless your daily environment changes.

I used to think the visa system was overwhelming but then I also saw all my friends and seniors getting what they want and managing life while being happy. I realised I deserved that too.

Reddit Posts

Just take a break, snap out of the daily routine. Eat something you like. Speak to people back home. It will give you some clarity and vision as to why you were brave enough to come here all alone in the first place.

But don't leave anything incomplete as that comes with a lot of regret and over thinking.

Every time I felt like that , I would imagine my 17 year old self who came here with a lot of hopes and dreams, can't let his bravery and sacrifice go to waste.

Just eat well, talk to loved ones. And take it one day at a time. Trust me you will figure it out. And whatever decision you make ,just stick with it and be brave.

Praying for you.

- New Comment: I feel you. Been there. Same feelings. Best thing to do is keep pushing and exhaust all opportunities.

All we need is one ?Yes.?

- New Comment: Change your environment from people you are around with currently.

- New Comment: Put all your energy into yourself and try make it work here OP. I understand your feelings all too well.

The U.S immigration system treats international students so poorly, but do your best to not let it get the best of you.

Rooting for you.

- New Comment: I feel you. My depression has been getting worse and overwhelmed with all circumstances of living in the state. Also, I had an episode related to visa matters last semester. So, I can imagine how stressful and insecure it must be to deal with visa issues. You are not the only one struggling as an international student in the state. Rooting for you!

- New Comment: Are you doing a Ph.D. with an abusive advisor? If so I have been there, talk to other advisors for chances to transfer to another lab. Things will be much better from now on since it cannot get any worse.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Try eb3 unskilled if you can afford to pay an agency and if you're not from India or china
- New Comment: What exactly are you having issues with?
- New Comment: What are difficulties about visa?
- New Comment: this is me right now

Title of the post: Tax Question Megathread 2022 Tax Submissions

Body of the post: **All Tax Questions must be posted here. All other tax posts will be removed**

[Please see last year's (2021 tax season) post for more information](https://old.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/rn0huq/tax_question_megathread_2021_tax_submissions)

[Please see 2020 tax year's post here](https://old.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/ljb2hk/tax_question_megathread)

>Do I need to pay my 2023 taxes?

No, tax filing now is for the calendar year 2022 and begins January 2023, and ends April 18, 2023. Most student will file in February/March after receiving all their tax documents.

>I did not work in 2022, do I need to file taxes?

[You should have filed the 8843 even if you had no income.](<http://blog.sprintax.com/tax-form-8843-filing-instructions>)

"There are 3 things that every US international student and J-1 visa holder needs to know about American tax:

*Every US international student and J-1 visa holder has a tax filing requirement.

Reddit Posts

*It doesn't matter if you have earned income. You must still file your documents before the deadline.

*The IRS takes this stuff seriously! In other words, if you don't comply with your tax obligations, you may encounter complications when applying for US visas in the future. "

>Do I have to pay/file/submit taxes?

Yes, all F-1 visa holders regardless of employment or not need to file their taxes.

If you worked in 2022 you received tax documents from your employer (likely a [W2](<https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-form-w-2>) or a 1099 of some sort). You will need that form(s). You also need to file a [form 8843](<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8843.pdf>). If this is you continue on to the next question.

If you did not work then you need to file a [form 8843](<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8843.pdf>) That is all that you must do if you otherwise did not work or receive taxable payments.

>What tax programs/software can I use?

Many, but not all tax software can file taxes for you. However, most are not set up with Non-residents in mind. As such, see the next question.

>Can I use Turbo tax, HR Block, Tax Slayer, or another program to file my taxes?

Yes, but you need to find out if you are a "Resident for Tax Purposes" or a "Non-Resident For Tax Purposes". You can find the questionnaire [here](<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/determining-alien-tax-status>)

Reddit Posts

Alternatively, you can go to [Sprintax.com](https://www.sprintax.com) sign up for their program and use the tax determination questionnaire at the beginning of their software. You do not need to pay to use this portion of their software.

If you are deemed a non-resident for tax purposes and you like Sprintax's software you can continue to use it for your taxes and pay them for convenience. If you want another option there is [Glacier tax Prep](https://www.glaciertax.com) Both of these companies specialize in Non-Resident Taxes. You can also just complete the 1040NR

If you are deemed a resident for tax purposes you can use any other tax software designed for an American. Such as turbo tax, Tax Slayer, etc.

>Is the tax rate for residents and non-residents on F1 vastly different? When I enter the same details as a resident on tax estimator sites like turbo tax and hr block I get much higher refund estimate then what I get from sprintax.

The tax rate isn't different. But tax obligations are different. Both Turbo Tax and HR block are generally NOT for non-residents. They almost exclusively process resident taxes and all estimates are based off of tax residency. So as a non-resident for tax purposes, you will never get a valid estimate there. Non-residents pay fewer taxes and are eligible for fewer refunds as a result. So the number you enter will be with fewer taxes and they then Turbo Tax and HR block add the greater discount. Also, there is NO difference between programs or software in what taxes you get. The tax rate is the same for everyone. So no program will give you a benefit as the tax laws are the same. However, they can be programmed to not ask the correct question to obtain your tax filing status.

>I was deemed a "Resident for Tax Purposes" am I now eligible for permanent resident benefits?

Your **TAX status** is separate from your immigration status.

Reddit Posts

Your **TAX status** is informed by your immigration status.

Your **TAX status** has no impact on your immigration status.

That's why it says, "Resident for tax purposes". You are not an actual resident of the US and your immigration status has **not** changed. You are just now given more flexibility with your taxes and qualify for some additional tax benefits you didn't otherwise qualify for before. That said, you also have more tax liability now compared to before.

It is 100% separate from your immigration status and does not, can not, and has not granted you any sort of permanent residency in any way shape, or form.

>I got a 1098-T, can I use it?

You can only use a 1098-T if you are a Resident for Tax Purposes. Otherwise, it does not apply to you.

>I received a W2 and/or 1042-s and/or 1099, what do I do with these?

These documents are used for filing your taxes. If you worked or received taxable income/benefits you will receive any combination of these. If you did not, work or receive taxable benefits you would have none of them.

>I have Dependents on F2

You need to file your taxes based on the above and file an 8843 for each dependent.

>My spouse on their own F1 needs to file

Reddit Posts

Have them follow the procedure above and file their own taxes separately.

>I arrived in the US in December 2022. My friend arrived in January 2023. I heard that if you were present in the U.S. in F/J status for any portion of the previous calendar year (the year for which you are filing), you need to file Form 8843. Do I need to file form 8843 for the 2022 tax year since he arrived US in Dec, 2022?

Correct. You have an I-94 with any date in 2022, you file. Not employed in 2022? Then just the 8843 form.

>My friend got a refund and I had to pay

That happens, there are many reasons it could happen. Taxes are VERY individual. It is possible your friend also filed using the incorrect status Resident vs. Non-Resident etc. You also could have filed wrong. If you are concerned, then use the software linked above to get an answer. If you are still confused after that contact the software provider for support.

>How do I use tax form 1099-A/M/J/L/Misc

You can use the tax software above to file your taxes or follow the instructions on the 1040-NR for non-residents or 1040/1040-EA for Residents

>When do I get my refund?

If you are eligible for a refund you must submit your application as a non-resident via the mail to the IRS on/before April 15 and will receive the refund in July-October. If you elect to have it be a direct deposit, please list your valid US bank account. If you want a check, give them a mailing address where you will be later this Fall.

Reddit Posts

Residents and Non-Residents who can file electronically can receive the refund in a few business days depending on how you filed your taxes. Via the mail, it takes several weeks. If you elect to have it be a direct deposit, please list your valid US bank account. If you want a check, give them a mailing address where you will be later this summer.

I don't know where I will be in the Fall/Summer or I am leaving the U.S. this Spring/Summer! Ask a friend you trust to use their mailing address.

>Can I file my non-resident taxes online?

Yes, but e-filing can be limited by the tax filing services.

>I do not have a Social Security Number (SSN) Can I file taxes?

Yes, but if you are not filing only the 8843 then you need an ITIN or an SSN.

You can get an ITIN using Spritnax (for an additional fee) or via a private company using the [Acceptance Agent Program](<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/acceptance-agent-program>) (for a fee) or you can schedule an appointment with the IRS at one of the [IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers](<https://www.irs.gov/help/tac-locations-where-in-person-document-verification-is-provided>) to both submit your taxes and the ITIN request form in person at one of their offices for free. You will need to call, schedule an appointment and bring all completed documents to the office for the submission of the ITIN request and submitting your other tax forms. If you use one of the software above as a non-resident then you can print and bring the documents from that software to their office.

Reddit Posts

>How does one pay for taxes on the medical ratio refund? But if you don't pay for insurance ex it is covered by a fellowship/scholarship then how do you account for it on your tax return?

I assume you mean the 1095 forms.

****Form 1095-A: ?****

Healthcare coverage purchased through Health Insurance Marketplace ? ?ObamaCare?? or the Affordable Care Act

* *Generally not applicable to international students & scholars? unless you have a special tax treaty*

* Can be used on a ?resident? tax return, in limited circumstances?

****Form 1095-B: ?****

Healthcare coverage provided through an insurance provider or self-insured employer?

You do not need 1095-B for your non-resident return?

****Form 1095-C: ?****

Healthcare provided through an employer (generally more than 50 employees)?

You do not need 1095-C for your non-resident return

*****Additional Helpful Resources*****

Get your past tax filing transcripts which include your tax information and which returns the IRS has from you.

<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript>

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: One resource that I found helpful is <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript> . It shows a transcript

Reddit Posts

of your tax information and which returns the IRS has from you.

It helped me out because especially early on as an f1 student I didn't know what I was really doing and I sent it in physical mail. I found that the IRS was missing one of my tax returns, so I sent it again late and got my refund still (within the 3 years). Maybe you can add that link, perhaps under a question "How can I find what tax returns the IRS has received from me?" just a suggestion

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Are international students able to submit electronic returns this year? I

was informed otherwise last year so I went ahead with paper returns

- New Comment: hi

so I am extremely confused on the tax. I know that as F-1 within first 5 years of the visa you don't have to pay those taxes but after 5 years you are considered resident aliens for tax purposes. However I have these questions and I wonder if someone can help answering them.

1. my f-1 expired in June 2022 and my company has been taking money of out my paycheck for my OPT (begin Jan 2022). I wonder if I am entitled to the taxes I paid from Jan 2022-June2022?

2. Now I just got my for STEM OPT Jan 2023-2025. I have been paying and I know that I should be paying after my F-1 expired. I heard some people renewed their F-1 visa for STEM OPT and they still don't have to pay for those taxes. Which one is it?

thank you!

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Hi! I have a question: If I arrived here on December 30th, does it counts as me being in the US the previous tax year? I was only in the US as an F1 for 2 days.

- New Comment: In 2022, I was under an F1 visa from January to August.

Starting October, I started as an H1B. How do I file the FICA refund for just that period? I am confused and can't find this info anywhere.

- New Comment: Non resident alien

My employer incorrectly took FICA taxes out of my paychecks for 2021, so I submitted a FICA tax refund in May 2022 after submitting in federal income tax return in April 2022

my address has changed. i no longer live at my old address or have communication with anyone there.

In federal tax refund form you enter your bank info. I got my federal tax return as a bank deposit. but In my FICA refund forms there was no bank info option. I am guessing they sent a cheque to my old address. I dont know if someone claimed my cheque or threw it away.

what do i do? who do I contact?

- New Comment: Non resident alien on F1 visa since Jan 15,2021.

In 2022 I worked for 2 different employers (one on campus and another off campus through CPT). Would I get two W2 forms then from both employers?

Also my parents sent me money from India in 2022, would I have to report that? The total amount sent to me was \$8500

Reddit Posts

in 2022. They send it directly from their Indian bank account to my US bank account.

I also earned \$0.76 in total from my checking and savings account in 2022. Do I have to report that?

- New Comment: Non resident alien on F1 visa

I'm planning to file my taxes for 2022 and I'm unsure if I need to file jointly or separately from my spouse.

My spouse is on a H1B, but was out of the US the whole of 2022 and only earned some interest on savings here in the US. So does that mean we file separately and spouse files in the country of residence (including the interest earned in the US?) or file in the US jointly and report wages earned in country of residence?

- New Comment: After 5 years on F-1 do we start filing using TurboTax?

Here is the info I saw does it sound accurate?

"If you are in the United States on an F-1 visa and have been in the country for over 5 years, you may be considered a "long-term resident" for tax purposes. In this case, you would typically file your taxes in the same way as a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, using tax preparation software like TurboTax."

- New Comment: As someone on F-1 visa, and if your state considers residents to have a permanent home here, what tax do you file for the state you study/work in?

- New Comment: I submitted a paper mail tax return last year in February and I was supposed to receive a tax refund. The state (NY) tax refund came through but I never received the federal tax return. Since I sent my documents through

Reddit Posts

USPS, I suppose there is a chance that they mistakenly misplaced the documents or someone else picked them or they delivered it incorrectly so that the IRS never got them.

Nevertheless, I understand IRS officials are always decreasing in number. Is it possible they never processed my federal tax return? If so, are there any other documents I should send this year? Since I qualify for a tax refund this year also, can I somehow request them to send last year's refund to me this year?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: This is regarding taxes on crypto and stocks. Have any of you F-1 students had more than 4 trades a week like once or twice a year? Since we have to report every transaction, will this make me lose my status even if for the rest of the weeks I've maintained 4 or less transactions?

- New Comment: Hello, guys!

Thank you for this post. I found it very helpful. I'm in a very stressful situation with my taxes and I would appreciate if someone could give me a light, orientation or any help!

I'm an international student in my second year of the PhD. I think it may be something wrong with my forms for this year taxes. When I got to the final step in the Glacier system it's saying that I must pay more than \$2,500. I'm not sure if as an international graduate student, I should pay that amount in taxes since I just have one income source which is my stipend. I'm filling both W-2 and 1042-S. I live in Louisiana, btw. I tried filling just the 1042-S and the result was completely different. I even got a refund. What do you think this could be? Do you think I can just submit the 1042-S?

Thank you in advance!

- New Comment: Hi

Reddit Posts

I got my work permit card from SSR program, am I still able to eligible for FICA return? Since the work permit allowed to work anywhere while being an F1 student, unlike OPT where I can only work related to my study fields.

- New Comment: Hey guys. I am an F1 visa international student, moved here in August 2022 and started working in November 2022. Can I use TurboTax or I can only use Springtax? I am asking because I started doing it on TurboTax, I even asked an expert if international students can use it and she said yes. However, since I lived in the Us for only 6 months I don't think I qualify yet as a resident tax payer.

What is your recommendation? And if only Springtax is an option for me, how much will it cost? Thank you!

- New Comment: Hello,

I want to buy an item that is let's say \$1000~. I will go home to visit my country next month (have plane ticket) while I'm currently on STEM OPT. I wonder if I am eligible to get tax refund for the product I purchase?

- New Comment: Non resident alien on F1 OPT

Can I deduct the state tax I paid for big purchases from my tax return? (i.e buying a house or car)

- New Comment: Hi,

I'm currently on POST OPT working as an independent contractor for a startup. Which for should I submit to them for the tax exemption of my pay? Form W-8BEN or form 8233 or something else?

TIA

- New Comment: **Please help** \- am I considered non-resident or resident for tax purposes? I've never filed FORM 8843 so I plan to file it for previous years.

1. **Am I still classified as non resident or resident considering the fact that I've been in the United States** *(never left since)* **2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022?**

Reddit Posts

2. ****Is 2021 or 2022 my fifth calendar year?****

3. ****If 2022 is my fifth calendar year, then I'm not required to file FORM-8843 this year right?**** *(correct me if I'm wrong)*

4. ****If I'm deemed as a resident for tax purposes, what else should be filed?**** *(I can only think of 1040 since I earned income in 2021 and 2022)*

- New Comment: Owing a lot of federal tax

I'm toward to end of my OPT. For tax year 2022, I went through Sprintax and it says I owe \$1000 in federal taxes (though the state owes me \$300). Is this normal?

I don't understand how this is possible because I just worked my one normal ass job the entirety of the year, and had taxes deducted from each paycheck.

My work only gave me a W-2 form. They don't think I need a 1042-s form.

A while back I did ask my work to not pay into Medicare/Social security because I'm a non resident have only been here 3 years, so I'm wondering if this is tripping the system up thinking I need to pay those contributions.

- New Comment: Hi, I'm a little bit confused for filing my taxes this year. My current situation is :

* I am F1 student on OPT (self-employed).

* I am still a non-resident for tax purposes.

* I've been filing Form 8843 since my first year as a student since I didn't earn any income.

* This year (2022) I started my OPT, received SSN, and have earned income from my small business.

* My source of income last year is only from my small business and also some money that my parents sent me from my home country.

* I followed all the instructions above and tried to use Sprintax to help me file my tax return, but Sprintax doesn't have

Reddit Posts

option to file schedule C. I know I can also deduct business expenses from my taxes, but I can't do it through Sprintax.

Is the only way for me to file taxes this year is through offline filing? I'm confident to do my taxes by myself, but would using a tax preparer service worth it since this is my first year of filing a tax return? Also, do I still have to file form 8843 along with form 1040NR + schedule C?

- New Comment: If I had no income and was not given a W-2 for the same, but I was employed (on-campus), do I need to file anything other than Form 8843?

- New Comment: Hi,

I've a question regarding pre tax forms and tax withholding for f1 students working as independent contractors during their OPT period. The company I'm providing services for asked me to fill form 8233 for tax exemption. Generally independent contractors are taxed 30% federally, since f1 students don't pay FICA anyone knows what's the treaty under which the benefit can be claimed?

- New Comment: Looking for recommendations on which software to use to file taxes this year. I received form 1099-SA and 5498-SA because of HSA contributions. I am non-resident for tax purposes. I contacted Sprintax and Glacier, but they don't support those forms, so I cannot use them.

Has anyone been in this situation and know what software is out there to file?

- New Comment: I'm posting this question after reading all the tax threads and I still don't understand, I hope someone can help me in my situation! I read up the substantial presence test and did not understand it at all. I arrived the US Sept 2018 and I just started opt and earning income Aug 2022. Am I considered non resident alien or resident for tax purposes? I don't know what to select and filing taxes are coming up and I'm really starting to stress out in case there's incorrect information on my w-2. Does anyone know who I could talk to that specializes in taxes who can explain all of this to me and even help me file taxes for international students?

- New Comment: I submitted my federal and state tax , 7 days ago , my state tax refund is processed, but my federal tax

Reddit Posts

form dint even reach Austin IRS , I used springtax tool.

Did anyone face delay in delivery of federal tax form by USPS ?

- New Comment: Hey! I was on STEM OPT and I left the US in early September. I'm pretty sure I'm considered a US resident for tax purposes for 2022 via the substantial presence test.

However, I'm trying to file my state taxes in FreeTaxUSA and they're asking me which state I was a resident of on December 31 2022, but I'd already left the US at that time. Does anyone know what the best path forward is? Thank you!

- New Comment: Galcier tax prep is asking for entry exit dates for all prior visits to US. As a Canadian I have visited the US many times over my life for which I do not have the date records for. What do I submit for this part

- New Comment: Hi r/f1visa!

In February 2022, I married my German wife who currently lives in the US on an F1 visa (she's doing OPT right now). I am a US citizen.

She worked in the US throughout 2022, and has an EAD / Social Security Number.

My questions are as follows:

1. How should we file our tax return(s) for 2022?
2. Can we use TurboTax to file?

Thank you so much!

- New Comment: For non-residents (Indian citizen) can we claim the tax treaty standard deduction on sprintax on the income from a company on CPT? Or is this restricted only to income from our universities? Thanks.

- New Comment: I am considered a resident alien for tax purposes, on f1 visa.

My wife just came to the US in August 2022, she does not have ITIN yet, and she doesn't have any income.

Reddit Posts

I went to Sprintax, it says I go to TurboTax.

I go to TurboTax, it says I need my spouse SSN or ITIN in both case of "married couples filing...."

I use Sprintax for her, it gives 8843 forms for her.

In my case, how can I file tax under "married couples filing jointly"?

I keep stuck at that step.

- New Comment: Hello!

So, 2022 was my 6th year on F-1 and I plan to continue my non-resident status by ticking ?Yes? for Q12 on Form 8843.

This requires me to ?provide sufficient facts on an attached statement to establish that I do not intend to reside permanently in the US?.

Is there a format for the statement? Basically I?m looking for guidance on how to put together the statement. Thanks in advance!

If this post is better asked in another channel, please suggest.

[Form 8843](<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8843.pdf>)

[Closer Connection Exception for Foreign Students](<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/the-closer-connection-exception-to-the-substantial-presence-test-for-foreign-students>)

- New Comment: Hello. I'm trying to figure out if I am an Exempt Individual and therefore allowed to file Form 8843. I arrived in the US in September 2022 on an F1 visa.

Reddit Posts

I receive \$19k in financial aid. My university tuition cost is \$24k. I believe this financial aid is therefore a "qualified expense" and does not count as income.

Other than this, I have earned/received no other income.

Am I right in thinking that I am exempt, and can file a Form 8843 without needing an ITIN/SSN?

Thank you!

- New Comment: Filed electronically as a non-resident using Sprintax 3 weeks back but the status on where'a my refund still shows "Return Received", is this normal?

- New Comment: So I'm on my F-1 STEM OPT and I'm trying to file my taxes on Sprintax. But whenever I'm entering my W2 details for the 12d (W) field, a window pops up saying that I'd be led for office tax filing. What does this mean? Anyone who faced this? Is there something else to be done?

- New Comment: I still haven't figured out if I'm a California resident for tax purposes, and if so, when I became one.

I'm on an F-1 visa. Got married to a US citizen in 2022 but did not apply for a green card. We are filing taxes jointly. We lived in CA for most of 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022. Am I a CA resident or is my domicile still my home country?

I earned income in 2022.

- New Comment: Hi. I live in Texas which means I have to file no state tax return. I earned about \$2600 in 2022 and I only have to file federal tax return. I just finished filing my taxes and apparently I owe the IRS \$269. I was wondering why this is the case. From my little research, if someone makes below \$12950, they don't need to pay any taxes which is in my case. Then why do I still have to pay 10% taxes? Is it because I am on an F1 visa or is there an issue with the Sprintax website? I am a little confused.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Back filing Form 8843

Hello,

I'm trying to back file form 8843 for 2021 tax year, however the ISSS director position at my school was replaced by a new person in 2022. For the form 8843 of 2021, should I put the contact information of my current director or the previous one? Thank you for the advice.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: This is the first year that I have to file state taxes and I'd like to confirm if I may be eligible for an exemption (upto the eligible amount) based on the US-India tax treaty in the state of Massachusetts? My tax advisor tells me that MA does recognize the tax treaty, but I was quite surprised to see that the Sprintax did not reflect this on my state return (though I see it on the federal portion).

Live chat is very unhelpful as they just say the system will automatically detect it without even bothering to look into the details of the case. Has anyone whose previously filed in the state of MA been eligible for this either through Sprintax or a different tax preparer?

- New Comment: So Sprintax and Taxact allow e filing for F 1 visa holders.

1) Do they also e file Form 8843?

2) Do they also e file the corresponding forms for the Tax Treaty, specifically Canada?

Can't seem to find an answer from google other than them explaining what the forms are for.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Hello,

I have a question with regards to ****Stipends from International Organizations (United Nations) as a Foreign Non-Resident Citizen****

To put it simply, I am an international student from France and I worked as a Legal Intern for UNDP (based in NY) on OPT from August 2022 until February 2023. As part of my assignment, I received a monthly stipend \$1000 stipend, specifically from September until December 2022 for tax return,

Because UNDP is an international organization benefiting from Privileges and Immunities, I understand that as a foreign citizen without a Green Card, I am not subject to self-employment tax and income tax as stated here: [\[https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/employees-of-a-foreign-government-or-international-organization-how-to-report-compensation\]](https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/employees-of-a-foreign-government-or-international-organization-how-to-report-compensation)(<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/employees-of-a-foreign-government-or-international-organization-how-to-report-compensation>)

I have not received a W2 from UNDP nor anybody from my organization could provide me with a clear answer as to whether I should declare this stipend in my 1040 NR. However, after some research I found that foreign citizens that are non resident (not green card holders) are NOT subject to tax from International Organizations whether it could be the World Bank, IMF, UN etc... Only US citizens are and they can claim reimbursment. It was confirmed by many people I asked too including Permanent Staff member at the UN that have been working here for some time and did not pay income tax on their salary from the UN. Hence I have sent my tax return thinking that was it.

However, other interns recently told me that they have included it and others were still unsure, I am now doubting again.

Could anyone help me with this? Should I amend it or not?

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Thank you so much

- New Comment: If I am a resident for tax purposes in 2022, can I use 1098-T to get AOTC tax credit?

- New Comment: Hello, I met the substantial presence test and now have to file tax as a resident alien.

Just wondering if I have to report my foreign bank/ investment accounts that I have at my home country? And do you have any suggestions as to which tax filing website to use?

- New Comment: My F1 visa's start date is from Oct 2022 but I've just arrived in the US on Jan 2023 and earned no income. Do I have to fill out the form 8843 now?

- New Comment: Hi, What should I put in the "Current nonimmigrant status" in general part if I only been in the US until august and then withdrew from the program and went back to my home country until now ? Since I no longer in US soil at the end of year, should I just left the "Current nonimmigrant status" blank ? or what should I put in ?

edit : obviously I didn't work / receive any income, so I'm talking about 8843 form, particularly in the "general information" section

- New Comment: I used Sprintax and filed my taxes through them with e-file. My status is currently pending. I owe money. I'm not sure how to pay the amount I owe. I'm confused. Should I wait for the status of tax return before paying. Or am I able to pay only through check and mail it?

Year 2022 has been my first year as international student so this is my first time doing taxes. I don't have a PIN number or able to be identify my identity and pay direct through IRS website.

I need help in how to pay the amount I owe?

- New Comment: Hi - I'm on STEM OPT and work full-time in Washington state. I have paid a ton in student loan interest and believe that I'm eligible for a tax credit. But while filling out my tax return on Sprintax, it doesn't provide the option to upload my 1098-E. One of the online agents said it's because the software deemed that I'm not eligible based on info

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that I've entered. Any ideas what could make me ineligible? I may have erroneously entered some info.

Thank you!

- New Comment: Hi,

I have to pay back \$3100 for the '22 as a result of my tax return. Can I do an Online Payment Agreement with IRS and pay it with installments? Even if I do, would that be a problem from immigration standpoint for future visas?(h1b, gc etc)

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Is it true that people living in certain parts of the country have a later deadline this year due to flooding? I live in the Bay Area and someone brought this up recently

- New Comment: Hello everyone!

So I am trying to file my taxes on Sprinttax for the last year.

A little background before getting into it:

My F1 5-year visa expired on Nov '22. My first day in the US as an F1 visa student was in 2018. I've been in and out to go back home for vacations and started working on OPT since June '22. I've been in the United States since the last time I entered (August 21') and never left.

Now a couple of things is happening on Sprintax:

1- On the "Residency Status" page, I am forced to enter a "leave date" for the last row, even though I never left the States since my last entry. The website instructs that the F1 visa expiry date shall be entered if the person is still in the

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USA.

2- In "State Taxes" section and particularly "Living in the US" page, it's forcing me to say that I was outside the States from the date my visa expired till the last day of the year. This is definitely inaccurate. I contacted the live chat and an agent explained to me that this should be fine if I entered all my information correctly.

However, this is still not making sense to me and I just don't want to file my taxes incorrectly. So I was wondering if anyone else is facing the same issue. I am being kinda extra careful with this because I am afraid that this might affect the results of my substantial presence test on the website and whether or not I should be getting my FICA taxes back.

Another weird thing is, I entered my info on TurboTax just to compare. The state tax refund matches on both website. However, Sprintax says I owe some federal taxes and **"I am getting my FICA taxes refunded"**, while TurboTax says I am getting a federal tax refund **"excluding"** the FICA taxes.

​

I am getting getting so confused about this and any input will be super helpful!

- New Comment: Hi! I was on an H4 visa from Jan 2022-Dec 2022. I went back home and switched to F1 and entered US on F1 in January 2023.

I?ve two questions:

1. Can my husband and I file taxes jointly? He?s on H1B visa.
2. Also with the extension of the deadline due to flooding, we are thinking of filing the taxes in September now. Whereas I apply for my OPT in June. Will I face any issues if my taxes get filled after my OPT application?

- New Comment: Capital gains tax for nonresident aliens:

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For nonresident f1 students, Robinhood maintains a W8 on file and treats these accounts as NRA, which is fine mostly. In case of capital gains however, anyone who is present for more than 183 days or more in the USA in the calendar year (irrespective of the substantial presence test) [needs to pay a 30% capital gains tax](<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/the-taxation-of-capital-gains-of-nonresident-alien-students-scholars-and-employees-of-foreign-governments>)(unless there is a treaty with the home country).

Robinhood only sends 1042-S for NRA accounts for dividends and portfolio interest income, but nothing for capital gains. Their policy team does not seem to have any idea and maintain that for NRAs, that is all that's needed.

[Sprintax mentions](<https://blog.sprintax.com/investment-income-tax-requirements/>) that capital gains should be reported as income tax code 09 on 1042-S. Has anyone dealt with capital gains tax as a nonresident, in context with Robinhood or other brokerage firms?

- New Comment: I read on different university websites that international students only have to file if they were actually present in the US during the tax year. Does that mean that, if you were not, you do not have to file taxes, even if you received U.S. income?

- New Comment: Is it possible to get any of the 30% withholding tax back on student grants? I'm from Canada but can't seem to find any way to get it back, also not sure if I can claim it in my 2024 tax returns.

- New Comment: I moved to the US on F1 visa in August 2017, with my first tax filing in 2018. Should I be paying FICA taxes for calendar year 2022, or should they be paid starting 2023? Still on F1 visa.

- New Comment: Is there a way to file state tax returns besides Sprintax for non-resident aliens? I can file my federal using Sprintax, but it is not able to get around double taxing in multiple states for state taxes.

- New Comment: I was on my F-1 OPT from January 2022 to September 2022. I switched to H1B from October 2022. I

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have switched jobs this year. How do I file for a FICA refund for the duration of my F-1 visa status?

When I go through Sprintax, it only gives me the federal tax refund and there's no option for a FICA refund..

- New Comment: Hi, quick question. I am an F1 student and usually file my taxes using Sprintax. However this year I filed my 2022 taxes using H&R block. They filed my 1040NR and OI but they did not include Form 8843 which I usually file with my tax return every year. Is 8843 mandatory to file? (I earned income in 2022 fyi). Thanks!

- New Comment: Hello,

I have a question. One of the questions is "Country of Tax Residence," however I lived and worked in 2 other countries other than my home country before I came to the US. So which country will I put here, my home country or the last country in which I lived and worked (it was for 2 years though). Thank you!

- New Comment: Any idea what happened to "Qualified Education Expenses" deduction? It used to be in line 10 c till last year's form 1040 NR.

- New Comment: How does the F2/J2 file 8843? Just part I or copy the information from part III or II on the F1/J1's form?

- New Comment: I understand that it is disadvantageous to not file 8843 because I cannot claim days as exempt from the substantial presence test.

However, is there really a legal requirement to file this? I know that every university says this in big red letters on their website but I can't find a law or IRS article that says I have to file it even if I don't want to have days exempt.

- New Comment: I'm in PA and a non-resident alien for tax purposes (been in the US since mid 2018).

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During 2022, I got a student travel award to attend a conference in my field. This was delivered to me in the form of a mailed-in check after the fact. The money came from the organism that put together the conference. Do I need to report this in form 1042-S (pr anywhere else?)

Thanks in advance :)

- New Comment: For those of you who claimed US-India tax treaty benefits through sprintax: my schedule OI has no info on the treaty, but the deduction of 12k is claimed as an itemized deduction in my 1040NR under line 12 instead of line 1k. Is this fine? Did you also have the same issue?

- New Comment: I'm a graduate student on F1 visa that get paid as an RA. Previous years, I always used Glacier that my school provided for federal tax return and for state since it was always net 0 (return/owed) I filled it with hand. Same with local tax.

For 2022, in addition to the regular W2 form, I have a 1042S (withholding credit of \$400 for health insurance I believe) and I also have a total gain ~\$3000 from selling some crypto on coinbase. Coinbase doesn't mail any forms to you but have a pdf of transactions (calculated FIFO I believe).

Now, I have multiple questions:

+ If I were to file my taxes myself, could I still use glacier and will it have a simple place to add my crypto gains there. I read somewhere online that I need to include 1040NR NEC (gain taxed at 30%)? What about filing for state and local taxes and how to include the crypto gains there?

+ Should I go with sprintax? (Do they handle this kind of crypto gains without a specific form from coinbase but rather just a list of transactions). Other problem I have with sprintax is that it is too expensive and my school only gives an insulting \$3 discount.

+ Should I go with somewhere like H&R block? I know they are even more expensive in person and I have had some friends who have used their services before and they had made some mistakes (mainly having trouble with non-resident

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alien students and not knowing what to do, so they essentially ended up doing it themselves).

\+ How should I deal with 1042S form?

- New Comment: Hi,

I am an international student who has studied in illinois through last year, worked in illinois for four months on cpt, and worked in nyc for ten weeks for an internship on cpt. When I try using sprint tax it tells me I don't need to file state taxes, but I know that's not true as I have filed state taxes for just illinois before. What should I do?

- New Comment: I am really sorry for asking a question that has previously been asked, but I really want to make sure to not mess up. I am a resident for tax purposes, do I need to file form 8843? I received an email from my school saying that all international students must file this. However, I understand that if you are a resident for tax purposes it is no longer needed.

- New Comment: Do we have to file taxes on the financial support we receive from our parents back home?

- New Comment: For form 1040NR, do I need to attach schedule A and schedule NEC if I do not have any information to provide to those 2 documents?

- New Comment: Just one quick question : I am an international student who filed his taxes today. Do we had to sign form 8843? It mentioned that it is to be signed if being filled by itself alone and not when submitting it with other tax forms but for some reason it's freaking me out by tiny amounts. Though I did sign form 1040 NR properly.

- New Comment: Hi please help!!!!

I was in US for undergrad from 2015-2020 (I was on OPT from 2019-2020 then went home when my visa expired). When I was filing taxes for year 2020, I was deemed a US resident for tax purposes so I had to fill out another form on turbo tax, as well as one that indicated I moved from NYC back home to HK. All was fine and for the next two years I

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was back home.

In August 2022, I moved back to NY to pursue my masters. From my understanding, I became a nonresident for tax purposes again right? Since my visa was over and I essentially had no ties when I was living back home. So now that I'm filing taxes for year 2022, I'm filing as a nonresident again right ? except that I can use the SSN I used before?

My school is getting us to do it on Sprintax. When it says "when was your first visit to US?" is that ever? Or for 2022? My first trip was in 2010 and I've pretty much been flying in and out either on a f1 (summer program) or tourist visa.. does that mean I have to provide details for ALL my visits from 13 years ago o.O.

Is that actually necessary for the tax form? Can I just put like the last three years of entry dates?

- New Comment: Hi there! I was an Illinois Institute of Technology international student from 2018 - 2020 and I received room and board scholarship. I am trying to file my old taxes. I looked at my history of emails and I never received 1042-S form. I have been contacting payroll office and the person at the university who hands out that form since last 2 years but no responses. Can I file my taxes without 1042-S and just mention how much I received? Or are there any other ways? Or can I call IRS office and ask them to request it?

- New Comment: Hello, I understand that after 5 calendar years, I'll be considered a resident alien for tax purposes. Would this also apply to long term capital gains? Currently I'm paying a flat rate of 30% for my 1042-S which are dividends, I'm wondering if that 30% rate for capital gains would change to the rate for "resident alien". Thank you!

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I am on F1 Visa in the US and currently working through my STEM OPT. I recently bought tickets for a soccer game via ticket master and later figured I won't be able to make it. I listed it on ticket master naively without knowing that it has tax implications and it got sold. Now they are saying that they will be sending me a 1099-K to be filed next year.

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Am I allowed to have an income through such a 1099-K while on F1? I didn't intend to make a profit, it just happened so as I couldn't make it and wanted to sell it. Tbh a little scared on the implications for next tax year. Anyone who has some idea, I'd appreciate some clarity, TIA!

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hi,

Quick question regarding family transferring me money from our country's bank to my US bank account. a little background: I remember for tuition and living my parents transferred me those money without any issue. now that I am on STEM OPT, I wonder if it still is ok for my parents to transfer me money or is there a limit on how much she can transfer? they would like to help me buy a vehicle.

what is the limit until i have to pay taxes for those?

Thanks!

- New Comment: If I pass the 183 days in the Substantial Present Test but I have not been 5 or more years in the USA as an F1 student, am I still considered a resident alien?

- New Comment: If I was considered a resident alien for tax purposes prior (I've been here for more than 5 years), am I still counted as a nonresident alien? My OPT employer's payroll system gives me 4 options: 1-Foreign Earned Income Exclusion; 2-Nonresident Alien (form 8233); 3-Continue in English; 4-Quieto continual en Espanol

- New Comment: Hello!

Has anyone here been able to claim an electric vehicle tax credit while being on OPT or STEM OPT?

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Thank you

- New Comment: Am I required to pay income tax as a person on F1 visa in the US if my income comes from the internet?

Let me further explain: we have some sort of a family business on the internet that makes a very good amount of money. While I don't do any work I was the main funder of the project and my cut of it would bring me around 7k-10k USD a month (possibly triple or quadruple that in the future possibly). Do I have to pay income tax for this money since I earned it online and not from working in the US? If not, I heard something about sponsorships so I'm not quite sure but would it be possible to forfeit my cut to one of my family members and have them send me the money as a sponsorship tax free or at a different tax rate?

- New Comment: I received 1042-S from my bank and I filed my return back in march. Should I amend my 2022 return? Gross income only \$1 and the chapter indicator is 3.

<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/foreign-source-income-form-1042-s-reporting-not-required>

If I understand it correctly from this link, it's not required?

- New Comment: I am currently on F1 visa, and am working with my OPT. I entered U.S. with an F1 visa in August 2018, and have been going to school and then working in the US ever since.

As of 2023, I've been filing tax as a non-resident alien. However, the general tax policy is that I need to start filing as a resident alien if I reside in the States for more than 5 years, and now it's my 5th year.

My company has not been withholding my FICA tax for 2023. Through their communication with me, they sent me a few links from IRS saying that there could be scenarios that I will be exempt from FICA, and continue to file as a

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non-resident alien.

Here's the communication sent from my company's payroll department with a few links for me to read through:

"Regarding F1 5 years FICA/FUTA status, we would like to inform you that any individual who has completed 5 years with F1 visa and if he/she is resident alien then eligible to pay towards FICA taxes (Social Security & Medicare). As stated in the overview of the ticket, First year of F1 visa was issued:- 2018, so you are exempt from FICA taxes for 5 calendar years (till 12/31/2022) and eligible to pay FICA taxes from effective 01/01/2023 if you are resident alien. Please find the below links.

<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/the-closer-connection-exception-to-the-substantial-presence-test-for-foreign-students> Request you to review the below link and confirm if you are exempt from any of the points listed.
<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/alien-liability-for-social-security-and-medicare-taxes-of-foreign-teachers-foreign-researchers-and-other-foreign-professionals> We are requesting you to go through the above links so that we can tax you accurately. Upon your confirmation only, payroll team will proceed with next steps. Please let us know if any further information required from our end."

My company has not been withholding my FICA tax for 2023. Through their communication with me, they sent me a few links from the IRS saying that there could be scenarios that I will be exempt from FICA, and continue to file as a non-resident alien. if it determines them as non-resident aliens, then they are exempt from FICA. If you are a resident alien and completed 5 years in F1, then eligible to pay FICA from start of the year. outside tax advisor will help you if you are unable to determine as a resident alien or resident alien. Please confirm so that we can proceed further with corrections if needed.

Questions:

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\- Am I qualified for the exemption described in the Closer Connection exception to the Substantial Presence Act? From my own understanding, my family is all in China, and I do have a permanent home there.

\- Or should I work with my company to file as a resident alien, which means I will need to pay back FICA tax for 2023 when I file in 2024, or justify myself as a non-resident alien when filing for 2024?

- New Comment: Hi! I worked as a freelancer prior to applying for a student visa and my past clients made me sign a W-8ben form. Will the visa officer see a record of that and would that affect my student visa application? Thank you!

- New Comment: If I do not receive income from the US, and file the necessary taxes, do I need to prepare show my US bank statements?

If I have income from the US, do I need to prepare show my US bank statements?

Thank you.

- New Comment: Recieved a form 1099-MISC from state government for tax rebate?

Moved to the US in early 2021 and filed taxes every year since then. Got a mail today from MN state government that they sent me tax rebate (which they did, it's in my direct deposit) and I need to put it on my 2023 taxes when I file them using the info on the 1099-Misc form they have provided. The tax rebate is from year 2021.

I'm just confused if I was even supposed to receive the tax rebate? I got the 1099-MISC but google says international students on F1 visa don't get 1099-MISC.

I know I will be getting 2 W2's because I worked on campus part time and internship through authorized CPT. But is this correct, that I received a 1099-MISC? Am I in trouble?

- New Comment:

I am an f1 student that currently has a high yield saving account. I have read around that if you have a HYSA you should

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be filling out a 1099 tax form for the interest that you make at the end of the year.

But i also saw on the IRS website saying that

"Filing

IS NOT required by nonresident alien students and scholars who have income ONLY from:

Foreign sources; Interest Income from a: U.S. bank U.S. savings & loan institution U.S. credit union U.S. insurance company"

So current i am confused if i am required to fill the form or should i ignore it?

- New Comment: Hey Guys, I got a 1099-MISC for \$640 for doing some research studies. I can file that just fine right? I provided them my SSN and everything. Currently a Canadian citizen on F1 for Masters in the states.

- New Comment: Hi everyone. For the 2022 year I was on F1 status and working full-time. Employer withheld Medicare and social security taxes and according to everything I'm reading, it looks like I qualify for a refund. I filled out all forms (843 and f8416) and sent these out last year in April 2022. I have not yet heard back. I am thinking of resending these. Does anyone know where these need to be mailed to? I'm wondering if I sent it to the incorrect office the first time

Title of the post: Which port of entry is considered most chill?

Body of the post: Basically the title. My friend will be entering the US for the first time with an I-20 that's different from the one stamped on his visa. Although that it is allowed, to prevent intense questioning, which port of entry do you guys recommend?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Never go in with JFK/New York. We had terrible experience at the immigration. The officer threw out passports to the floor twice just because we didn't arrange the documents in proper order.

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- New Comment: SFO. The experience level of the staff there is higher and they are more focused on real immigration problems and violations.

Enough unpleasant experiences that I would avoid DFW, ORD, and LAX.

- New Comment: DSO on the west coast. (So west coast bias).

A Tier

SFO, SEA, Oakland have been very relaxed, and when there have been issues they contact my office to work with us on resolutions. Denver is surprising cool too

B Tier.

LA has been fine for me but bad for others. Vancouver BC is also okay (CBP does pre-clearance there). Honolulu

C Tier.

Chicago, Dallas, anything in texas, Anchorage, Portland OR

D Tier.

Boston, Washington DC, Atlanta, Miami

F Tier

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JFK

Not a complete list. This is just off the cuff from memory.

- New Comment: EWR is pretty chill. Immigration wasn't even 20 secs
- New Comment: Idk what is the most chill, but I can talk about my experience.

I entered the US with an I-20 different from my stamped visa (I graduated from my initial Master's program and joined a PhD) and I was screened for secondary processing at Abu Dhabi port of entry.

I almost always travel through Abu Dhabi and this was the only time I was asked for secondary screening. I wasn't asked any questions. They made me wait for 30 mins and asked me to proceed.

But I don't think this is a port of entry thing because I consider two possibilities: 1. The border protection agent simply didn't know if this was allowed and made me wait while he confirmed with someone else. 2. This had nothing to do with the mismatch, it was a routine luggage check.

- New Comment: Is IAD (dulles) a good port of entry?
- New Comment: what do you think about Philadelphia International Airport (PHL)??
- New Comment: Chicago is pretty chill
- New Comment: Is Houston Texas horrible?
- New Comment: There is a tv ? show called : airport - USA/ airport - Canada and so on for some countries. Very interesting interviews from both side CBP and passenger about getting in at port of entry.

I traveled using tourist visa and student visa many times. Many experiences. But I do prefer to first find a good price in

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the tickets and check the port of entry isn't messy : delays or too long waiting. Then if I can pick up and pay for it, I always go directly to my airport city/school.

- New Comment: Follow up? Where did your friend enter and how was the experience?
- New Comment: hi,did your friend travel to the states well,how was his/her experience

Title of the post: Response from US Embassy to NIE application for F-1 Students from India

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Update: I was able to travel back in July. All the airlines asked for is a letter from my advisor stating that my resume date is August 1. The US immigration didn't ask for anything.
- New Comment: Does this mean that students on OPT can return after July 1?
- New Comment: Does this mean that students who are enrolled for summer and have the fall semester starting (say mid Aug) can travel after the 1st July rather than 15th July?
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: this is insane
- New Comment: Well UTD and MIT have it on their ISSO website that OPT and STEM OPT can travel after Aug 1. I even got an email from my DSO saying same thing.
- New Comment: US embassy, so the one in Delhi right? I got a similar, but less clear, response. They said that returning students can resume their program from Aug 1, and can travel up to 30 days before the resumption date (which adds up to a travel date after July 1, though they didn't explicitly mention this).
- New Comment: How many days did it take for you to get the reply from the embassy

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- New Comment: Hey so this reply is confusing. I got a less clear reply from Mumbai consulate and an email from CBP that does not mention the July 1st at all

- New Comment: Hi guys, I was able to enter the United states on an F1 visa on 13th July. I am a continuing student who joined in 2019 if that helps. I hope this clears things up. Please feel free to DM if any returning student has any questions or concerns.

Title of the post: Experience renewing my F1 visa in Panama

Body of the post: For anyone considering going to another country to renew your F1 visa, I highly recommend Panama

I'm from Brazil and the embassy there has been closed for over a year now. I needed to return to US to apply for OPT so I decided to come to Panama to do it after seeing a post here that someone else did that and it went well

Everything went great. People in the embassy were super nice and I got my passport 2 business days later (with the new visa)

Panamas embassy (for now at least) does renew visas of third country residents however people coming from the travel ban regions must quarantine (be outside the travel ban countries) 14 days prior to their interview. In my case I spent 10 days ish in Dominican Republic (at the time we scheduled the trip, there were less cases there and things were also cheaper there than here + I wanted to learn to kite surf). Then came to Panama for the interview

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Thanks for sharing, super useful to know. A possibly ignorant question: do you think your being from Brazil made a difference in them processing a visa for you? Do you think there's any reason someone from Europe wouldn't be able to? Thanks again

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- New Comment: Hello!

I'm also from Brazil and I was approved for a PhD starting in Fall 2021. Can I do the same process that you did for a new visa? I'm kind of worry about the US embassies closed here, I'm trying to find out some solutions.

Thanks :)

- New Comment: I just want to say that this is a godsend of a post. Found this on a whim and I've been trying to rack my brain to renew my visa without returning home because of covid related issues. thank you so much!

- New Comment: Interesting. Would you say the process was easier than when you did it in your home country?

- New Comment: Thank you for the post, I was trying to see if this is a possible option or no! Do you know where I can find the Panama Embassy email to contact? I can't seem to find it on their website.

Title of the post: Ways to pay for college as an F1 student with financial struggles

Body of the post: Does anyone know any ways to pay college tuition apart from your family money? I'm just a couple semesters away from graduation but my family business has hit bad and I have no way of getting a loan back home. I need to pay off my Spring tuition to even be starting with fall in the next three weeks. I really want to complete this degree, especially when I'm this close. Please share if you know how and where I could get any help from.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Certainly. Search for GTA & GRA. Try to reach out to your specific department directly, & even more effective would be to reach out to professors directly and ask if they have positions available in their research labs or need grad students for teaching labs. This is an excellent way to get your entire tuition fee waived and get a bit of stipend which could help you with your rent, etc.

- New Comment: Reach out to your school financial services office immediately and explain your situations

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- New Comment: I have been struggling with this for the past 8 months?

- New Comment: Hey! If you can prove that what you are saying is correct, then you can apply for an EAD i.e Work Permit that allows you to work off-campus.

Talk to your DSO about unforeseen change in financial circumstances in your family, and ask them about how to apply for EAD.

Again, please don't abuse it it isn't true.

- New Comment: Let your DSO know about your family's financial situation. They can approve you to apply for a work permit to work (EAD) off campus based on "unforeseen financial difficulties". Your work does not have to match your major or be related to in any way. You will need things to prove that you're not lying though, so be prepared to show proof.

- New Comment: 1. Talk to your DSO and explore options on financial hardship. Some may qualify for semester break allowing you to work temporarily

2. Get a job on campus, if not already

3. Not legal but some folks take cash jobs off campus

4. Apply for scholarships. Some time a competitive scholarship may qualify one to be eligible for in-state tuition

- New Comment: Also try asking your school and see if they can help you set up with a payment plan. It won't hurt

- New Comment: Sad to hear. Mpower loan (not all qualify) and also talk to the school to see if they have any grants available. Also, see if there are other loans that cater to international students.

- New Comment: Check out Prodigy loan for international student, I got mine from there to fully fund my studies and I just graduated recently.

Reddit Posts

I think they should also provide if you only need for Spring. You could check their website & I think I might be able to give referral for that as well. I could take a look.

- New Comment: i was in a similar situation. i had two days remaining to register for classes and an unpaid tuition balance. I applied for Mpower loans bc they don't need a cosigner. I honestly do not want any family/friends of mine in the US to be cosigners and risk their credit score, it creates a bad relationship and others shouldn't suffer for my misfortune.

Mpower interests are definitely high though so be prepared to have monthly installments after a while. But it did save my ass and I wouldn't have graduated without it.

- New Comment: there's always some emergency fund/ financial aid appeal thing that universities have. They might not disclose it straight away. Please contact people from your school and Financial services and ask them if they have anything of that sort. It's usually in form of a scholarship and thus much better than loans.

- New Comment: Try and get Mpower loan if you don't have a co-signer. If you have a co-signer try discover student loan.

Search for GA roles in different school and transfer there

- New Comment: What if you can't get mpower or a co-signer

- New Comment: Reach out to your department in particular and explain your situation and see how they might help you.

- New Comment: Read somewhere about SOFI loan in the US itself. Check it out

Title of the post: F1 student that went into NBA-NFL-MLS-MLB draft

Body of the post: I know most questions in here are serious. But I'm genuinely intrigued. Have you heard/known of f1

Reddit Posts

students that made it to any of the US leagues? I know my school had a good soccer program and brought in players from benfica, Liverpool, barcelona, etc (all academy).

If, an f1 student were to make it to the US leagues of their respective sports (could even be olympic sport). Would they sponsor H1b, would they get other type of Visa, Greenland, citizenship?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: they would put you on a work visa pretty sure

- New Comment: Yeah it happens quite often! Zach Edey, the best player in college basketball for the last two years, couldn't do sponsorships and endorsements in the US because he was on an F1 visa and couldn't work off campus.

He got drafted into the nba this year and recently had his first sponsorship so I assume they got him a work visa of some sort.

Nika Muhl is another example. She got drafted to the wnba this year but couldn't play for the first few games because her visa hadn't come in yet

- New Comment: >Would they sponsor H1b, would they get other type of Visa, Greenland, citizenship?

This happens ALL the time. Every year. I have several of my own students that have done this.

They would get a P-1 or O-1 sponsored by their athletic club.

To address your specific concern, on rare occasion we may deport the good players to Greenland if they were going to be a concern for our Olympic dominance.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Any athlete with a major league sport in the US just needs their league contract to qualify for a P-1 visa

If they are in the minor leagues they will probably be on an H-2B, tied to the duration of the season.

- New Comment: It happens every year.

- New Comment: I know a guy from my school named Johnny Furphh just got drafted by the Indiana Pacers. I believe athletes have a special visa category (can't remember what it was like O visa or something). Im assuming they apply for a change of status

- New Comment: Yes! I have had couple of my team mates who made it to MLS. I believe the visa they get is called P-1.

Couple of months ago a women's bball player from UCONN got drafted to the WNBA. And she couldn't play right away because she was on F1 visa. She has to sit for about a month before she got the proper visa to be able to play.

- New Comment: happened with nika mühl of the seattle storm (wnba) this year. she's croatian and had to sit out a few games to start this season due to a work visa issue.

- New Comment: If you get drafted by a pro team, they can apply o1 visa and eb1.

- New Comment: Oh yes! We had Johny Furphy here at KU! :D

- New Comment: Now that the US Cricket team is a thing, maybe we'll see some intl students getting athletic scholarships for cricket in the next 5-10 years? That would be cool to see

Title of the post: STEM OPT Extension - Multiple Jobs? Do they all need to be 20 hr *each*?

Body of the post: Need help figuring out multiple jobs in STEM OPT!! ???

I'm currently working Job #1 that's 20 hours, which I used to apply for my STEM extension + it was approved. I got an offer from another part time job (also 20 hours). I'm thinking of reducing my hours for Job #2, so I can increase my hours

Reddit Posts

for Job #1... is that possible? Do I need i-983 for Job #2?

Edit: took out some info but leaving this up to help others!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You're working illegally in your second job, you must have an I-983 approved before you can work there.

Stop working there immediately: you're risking your entire STEM OPT being cancelled for both jobs, and also being ineligible for H-1B/green card/other work visas at the end of your STEM OPT.

- New Comment: Why not work more hours in the first place? Also get out of the second job before it gets hairy

- New Comment: Did u file i983 for second job? Looks like you are hiding information of your second job to uscis by not filing i983 training plan. This is ILLEGAL imo. Contact lawyer.

- New Comment: Good luck with paperwork stuff but either ways, each job you have must be 20+ hours per week, paid, and related to your field while on STEM Extension

- New Comment: Dude quit your second one right now you're risking it for no reason. Well obviously a bit of extra money but on the long term it's bad

Title of the post: I need advice

Body of the post: Yesterday, I called 911 for help because I had trouble breathing. I had taken an edible (About 30 mg gummies and 1.2g joint). I wasn't taken to the hospital but the police did take the edibles and my details they didn't say anything they just left I am worried if I would receive a citation in the mail soon. I am an international student and I am worried on what to do/ expect. (I am 18 and in Louisiana)

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The police are unlikely to do anything.

However there is now a case with your information tied to a federally illegal substance. So, if that comes up in the future it can seriously jeopardize your future immigration options.

What can be done? About the past situation? Nothing. Going forward? Stop utilizing a federally illegal substance as a non-immigrant.

- New Comment: For future reference, it's usually better to contact university campus police if possible instead of 911.

How many mg of marijuana did you have with you?

- New Comment: I'm not an expert but after googling a bit - [edibles are legal](<https://www.arcannabisclinic.com/post/are-edibles-legal-in-louisiana>) and there is a limit on the strength, eligible for Louisiana residents, and require a doctor's prescription. I think your best bet is to hire an attorney. Explain to them how you obtained the edibles and where you consumed them because public consumption is illegal. **Again, I want to stress - I'm not an expert.** I'm worried there are most likely going to be consequences, especially given your status as a student.

- New Comment: Bro you're 18 and doing 30 MG edibles and 1.2 g joint?? That's a lot ! Happy that you're safe though

- New Comment: Are edibles legal in your state? If it is then don't worry you are good.

- New Comment: Nola area? They don't care

- New Comment: Well i didnt know this. But maybe you should move on from that and maybe not call 911 next time.

Also its not like its a hard drug or something or you imported it. I wouldnt worry but will keep an eye open

- New Comment: arent u protected by some law? i rememver my uni telling me that calling 911 for a medical emergency doesnt open up investigations because u are protexted if you made the call

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: bro greened out ?????

Title of the post: DUI on OPT/STEM OPT

Body of the post: Hi guys,

This is not a concern for me it's because I know a student that got a DUI but not on OPT or STEM OPT. I know your visa gets terminated and you have to leave the country immediately. What happens if the same happens but you are on a OPT or STEM OPT and you have a full time job? Will the same happen?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: A DUI results in the revocation of ALL of your valid nonimmigrant visas, regardless of what types of nonimmigrant visas you hold.

- New Comment: Criminal + immigration lawyer will be needed for this. The visa is gone but they can still maintain their stay in the country if they get a good defense lawyer. What state?

- New Comment: Why did you DUI? Visa revocation is well deserved for DUI or any crime.

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Past F1 & B1/2 Rejection

Body of the post: Hi everyone! I had a previous student visa rejection in September 2021 when my intention was go to US to improve my English, and a tourist visa rejection at the beginning of this year. I have an upcoming F-1 visa interview in the coming months. I've been admitted to the University of California for a major in Business Management. I am a 20-year-old unmarried Brazilian male with a travel history in 5 European countries. I am worried that this might affect my upcoming interview.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Absolutely, your previous visa rejections and persistent applications is showing desperation.

The consulate will definitely suspect you won't leave once you go to the US.

- New Comment: Going to US on study visa to improve English from Brazil itself seems like a red flag. And if the travel history was in last three years it shows desperation to show travel history to get into US.

- New Comment: Learn from your past interviews. What questions did they ask the last time? What were your answers like? What was the last question before they said you were ineligible? Most rejections are caused due to stupid and inconsistent or incoherent answers. The officer is really just trying to see if you understand the terms of your visa and gauge whether you are or not likely to violate them. Usually past B1/B2 rejections don't matter all that much if they're more than a couple of years in the past but in your case it's a lot more recent and you also have a previous F-1 refusal. That doesn't play well in your favor because it shows that you are desperate to leave the country. So this time you need to be thoroughly convincing in your interview. Feel free to DM me if you have more specific questions.

- New Comment: I will not agree with most of the replies on this thread, I got my f1 visa rejected twice and approved on my third attempt. Also, I have seen videos on YouTube people getting rejected 6 times and approved in 7th attempt. So you have to be confident while answering and show strong ties with your home country.

- New Comment: What UC Campus?

- New Comment: One way I'd like to gauge your visa application is your funding from the school. Is the school funding up to 50% of your program? Apart from home ties, another serious criteria the visa officers look at is your tuition and expenses. If you're not able to demonstrate ability to pay those thousands of dollars, it's a big problem

- New Comment: Think the best way to improve confidence is to get into a top University - maybe work on that.

- New Comment: I have had a F1 and B1/B2 rejection and managed to secure both visas eventually. You really have to make the case for yourself that you don't have immigrant intent. In my case, for the B1/B2 I waited 7 years and applied

Reddit Posts

from Brazil where I had become a permanent resident and established a business. About 2 years later I had naturalized in Brazil and eventually applied for F1 (rejection) and pretty much immediately reapplied and persuaded the visa officer to trust my non immigrant intentions. This was all in Porto Alegre, btw. I'm from Florianopolis so it's about the closest consulate.

- New Comment: Quite difficult to get an approval with 2 rejections
- New Comment: Contact ARGO and practice with them if not you will be rejected again. I know.
- New Comment: Don't mean to disappoint you but I don't think you will ever be able to enter the US (ofcourse if you get married then yes)

Title of the post: Stem OPT Fall 2023

Body of the post: Hello I applied for my STEM OPT extension on 11/16/2023 and it is still pending. When I track my progress it says still 2months but my friends received it almost two months ago. Is there anyone with the same problem as me?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 5 months is insane , but I wouldn't trust the estimation that's basically never accurate.
- New Comment: I wouldn't trust this website, my card is currently in my drawer and it's still saying case decision two months. Also when I got my approval letter in the mail, I was at 2 weeks at that time.
- New Comment: I've been waiting for mine since Dec 8th, no response at all.

Paid premium on April 10th, and now it says 4 months. So no clue. It seems to be happening at random at this point

- New Comment: Sometimes it seems they just decide to skip half of the old applications and continue to move on to newer applications.
- New Comment: Did you check your document section for approval notice?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: It shows 2 months for me as well but when I went in the documents section, there was an approval notice. I applied on 11/28/2023.

Title of the post: Current F1 visa student doing my post graduation OPT and got laid off have a few

Body of the post: Hi, I was working at a company for a year and then got laid off last friday. My Employment Authorization Card expired in February and I applied for the STEM OPT extension back in January. However this extension is delayed due to the volume of applications that they have and have not received this new employment card. I have a few questions

1. If I was to get a job, how would I explain to them my Employment authorization card? Can I even apply for jobs?
2. How do I know how many days of unemployment I have left?
3. I know I have 90 days of unemployment, how long can I stay in the US? Do I have to instantly leave after this 90 days?

I'm pretty sure there's a lot more questions left but I'm too stressed to think about them right now. Anything answers will be helpful. Thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You should talk to your DSO, they will help answer questions for your specific situation. I believe after 90 days unemployment you lose your OPT unfortunately.. so try to secure a job or volunteer work ASAP! I think you get 60 grace period days to leave the country. You can't work until your EAD arrives, so I think it's best to apply knowing when you will get it or closer to that. You should be able to get employed like a regular person in the US with an EAD, you can let the employer know after the interview, or during but usually its best after so they hire you.

- New Comment: The bigger concern for you is whether your stem opt gets approved. I am not sure what happens to the automatic 6 months extension when you get laid off while stem opt application is still pending. Talk to your DSO as

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quickly as you can.

You should have possibly asked your company to keep you on payroll for a couple of weeks more while you file for premium processing which would have made your life a lot easier.

- New Comment: Please talk to your DSO asap.

Two things:

You can still apply for i-907 premium processing for the stem opt extension even after submission of your I-765. They will process it max in 30 days. They normally process it in 1-2 weeks.

Your total amount of unemployment days is 90 before your EAD arrives. After that it's going to be 150 days. The opt extension gives you 60 more days.

- New Comment: Which company

Title of the post: Receiving Relocation Bonus Before Starting Work?

Body of the post: Hi everyone! Originally asked my DSO this but realized it might take long to get a response as our international office is moving so thought I would ask here. I got an internship outside my state, and they offer a relocation bonus for those who have to move for the summer. I just received an email to start the onboarding process, and was told the bonus would be funded once I completed it, and on their next funding/payroll date. Considering that my internship starts late May, and it is likely that payroll will run late April/early May, would it be okay to accept the bonus before I started working? Technically the bonus isn't for working, just relocating, and I have already received CPT approval with no plans to work before my start date. Just wanted to make sure this wasn't some grey area, and to know if I should ask them to hold off until I start.

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes, this is okay. No work was performed, this bonus is simply for relocation.
- New Comment: This is never a problem, valid concern though.
- New Comment: You're good OP. I did this several times, the money is purely for relocation purposes. However keep in mind you will need to pay tax on it. Sometimes companies pay you an extra "tax assistance" lumpsum to offset that relocation bonus.
- New Comment: Just a heads up, there could be tax filing related implications with the relocation.

I didn't have any problems filing through Sprintax while relocating for my internship the prior year, but for my current full-time job, my W2 reports state wages as greater than the federal wages, and this was primarily due to my relocation wages plus benefits combined.

All things considered, the tax softwares I tried (Sprintax, TaxBack, Glacier Tax etc.) all seem to get stuck at some point (due to the different relocation schemes + gross tax assistance amount), hence went with a CPA due to the same.

- New Comment: You don't need to worry OP. I've been in a similar situation and it's all fine
- New Comment: Hey! I am in a similar pickle. Could you confirm if you have gotten any more new information?
- New Comment: Which company and place are you relocating to?

Title of the post: Twitch affiliate on F-1

Body of the post: I have the opportunity to become a twitch affiliate.

am I allowed to on an F-1 Visa?

Reddit Posts

does it really count as working? If it's just donations? Like if someone would walk up to me on the street and give me a dollar I'd get deported cuz I took that dollar?

how are donations seen as compared to a paycheck? There shouldn't even be a tax on donations right?

And if it's definitely not allowed, are you able to become an affiliate but disable money earning and keep the non money related benefits like emotes and channel points?

Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Be careful.

Not sure if this is related but some lady got her visa cancelled because she started working with brands on her YouTube channel.

- New Comment: IIUC twitch ?donations? are not actually donations. Channel memberships, bits and so are legally seen as products, not donations.

So yeah it would count as income and therefore it is not allowed.

- New Comment: >I have the opportunity to become a twitch affiliate.

>am I allowed to on an F-1 Visa?

Not unless you have employment authorization (CPT/OPT) and this is related to your degree.

>does it really count as working?

Reddit Posts

100%

>If it's s just donations?

It is not legally donations. It's payment.

>Like if someone would walk up to me on the street and give me a dollar

This is not a fair comparison. Imagine you are a performing on the street and someone gives you a dollar. That's busking and a violation. Twitch is just that on the internet

>how are donations seen as compared to a paycheck?

They are identical.

>There shouldn't even be a tax on donations right?

Hahaha haha, no in fact there are MORE taxes.

>are you able to become an affiliate but disable money earning and keep the non money related benefits like emotes and channel points?

Yes

- New Comment: [deleted]

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: If you think the equivalent of your twitch income as donations (even though I don't think it's quite the same), then I can compare your situation to busking for cash. Also not allowed.

- New Comment: Don't do it. My attorney asked multiple times whether i got such donation or income when I applied for GC, because it is not allowed for F1 students. He has handle cases like this before, some girls got donations and money when they stream online or whatever.

Title of the post: Doubt regarding TA job and my graduation date.

Body of the post: Hello everyone,

I am currently working as Teaching Assistant at one of the SUNY campuses. I am graduating this semester and I have applied for OPT. On my OPT I-20 the last day of this term is mentioned as May 08 but my TA job on the portal shows till May 22. The job gives me stipend instead of hourly pay. So is it fine as the last date of this term on my i20 is coming first than my TA end date.

Thank You.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: According to my university my last day of TA and work authorization would be on the day of graduation. Technically you can't work after you graduate but you will still receive the salary till May 22 if it is not hourly.

- New Comment: Yeah, it's the final day of the semester I won't be working after that but my stipend is till May 22. It's basically the same for every TA working this semester. Would it cause any issue?

- New Comment: What is your date of completion on your I20? Is it also May 8?

- New Comment: No issues. I worked as a GRA and graduated on December 15th. I got a full month's pay since it's monthly and not hourly.

Reddit Posts

Edit: my email and everything was deactivated on the 16th. So keep your HR and international office in loop.

- New Comment: Is anyone in this situation as it's a stipend based position the paychecks are distributed from Jan 04 to May 22. Even though I started working from Jan 17, my paychecks started from Jan 04 which is in the winter break. They said when I am signing the paper work you will get 10 paychecks for the position. So what can I do now. Any suggestions from people who are in similar situation or people doing TA from any SUNY campus and in their final semester.

Thank You.

- New Comment: Sure. I will do that.

Thank You.

- New Comment: you might be deported if you over work a job

- New Comment: ask them to change last date for TA job

- New Comment: Yeah, I get it but the Teaching Assistant position isn't an hourly job. I cannot stop the paystubs if I stop filling the timesheets. It's fixed stipend which is spread over several paychecks. So I am confused what to do in this case. That's the reason I posted this to check if anyone is in the same situation or faced this situation previously.

- New Comment: In our university they put the end date for graduation as the TA/RA contract end date. They did say that if I get an end date before the RA/TA end date from DSO, they will only pay me till that date. I don't think the stipend part matters check your paystub it will have a pay period written on it. this pay period should end before the program end date. Talk to DSO and your department HR, they will know better.

- New Comment: Do not work after the semester end date according to your i20.

Very clear rules on this in my university. Talk to your professor and then HR / Payroll. They will find a way to pay up

Reddit Posts

pro-rated until your last day of work.

Title of the post: Guys who don't have any job offer letter yet and are graduating, what start date are you guys getting?

Body of the post: Hi,

Just the title question....

Am just confused, if I should give some time in Late June or July start lol.

Also, any idea if we can add premium processing later on?

considering how late sometimes the card comes, maybe it's fine to apply for june end or mid, if card comes late am good by July lol...

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can opt for premium processing after submitting your application as far as I know.

- New Comment: I graduated on Dec 2023 and had no offers back then. Submitted documents on Jan 30, picked start date on Feb 11, which was the 58th day of grace period. I used regular process and thought I would fill premium one once I got an offer, but I never need so. My EAD approved just three weeks later. Shockingly fast since I expected 3-4 processing months.

- New Comment: If you haven't submitted by now, ur case will prolly take a long time

- New Comment: I put my start date a month and a half after my graduation day bc I didn't have an employer when I was about to graduate... I was lucky to find one one week before my start date!

Good luck!!

Reddit Posts

Edit: grammar

- New Comment: What if I choose an early date say June and then do not decide to go for premium processing ?
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: The simple unsaid rule is if you have a job in hand, pick day 1. If you have no job, pick day 60.

Title of the post: Laid off on OPT, what are my options?

Body of the post: Laid off as a software engineer on OPT expiring July, I did not apply for STEM OPT yet. I had about 70 days between graduation and the start of this job so I don't think I have a lot of unemployment days left.

I have a 10 year B1 visa before I applied for F1, but unsure if that got cancelled because of F1.

When would my legal status expire? Do I have to leave asap?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Start volunteer job immediately to stop unemployment days. Find something before opt expires. This is tricky situation since you need to have a paid and e-verified job to apply for STEM OPT. If you don't apply for stem opt, f1 gets terminated.
- New Comment: Do not exceed your unemployment days or its game over. Stop your clock: Get an internship, paid/unpaid asap. You have until your last day of OPT expiry to apply for a STEM extension, so that gives you enough time between now and then to find a paid, e-verified job.
- New Comment: Once your 70 days of unemployment are over, you have to leave the country.

Title of the post: Purchasing in a Smoke shop as someone who submitted Asylum application

Reddit Posts

Body of the post: Background: I came to the US under F1 visa, because of the civil war going on back at home, I applied for asylum in August 2023. I just received an email saying I can apply for EAD.

Question: I went to Pro Vape Smoke Shop, that sells a lot of CBD, cigar, cigarette and delta 8 products and used my card to purchase some (legal in this state). The seller just puts the price in the machine, no info about the CBD product I purchased, and charged my card. It also reads same in my card transaction history. That's Smoke vape shop, and then the price.

I am afraid it will come back to bite me in the ass if in the next year or two, I am called for interview, and they ask for my transaction history. I guess I want to know if I should be worried.

Thank you! ??

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I can tell you it's illegal for you to buy, but I can't tell if it will bite back.

- New Comment: >Question: I went to Pro Vape Smoke Shop, that sells a lot of CBD, cigar, cigarette and delta 8 products and used my card to purchase some (legal in this state).

Its not legal for you. It legal for them to sell it to you. It is illegal for you to buy it. Federal law states it's a severe violation for you to buy an marijuana products as a non-citizen.

>It also reads same in my card transaction history. That's Smoke vape shop, and then the price.

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You can tell them it was cigars and cigarettes if you want, but if you get caught in a lie, good luck.

>I am afraid it will come back to bite me in the ass if in the next year or two, I am called for interview, and they ask for my transaction history. I guess I want to know if I should be worried.

Be aware, but don't be worried. If you lied about drug use and they catch you however, then it is a problem.

- New Comment: Think about this rationally. They're gonna somehow review your credit card history and spot out this suspicious transaction at a smoke shop (where you could have bought anything, they sell snacks and whatnot too lol) and will get a warrant to review the sales history of the smoke shop and decipher the receipt to determine that you bought a mary j byproduct. They're really gonna do all that when they barely have the time and budget to clear out the piles of applications on their desks.

I know people are gonna say the same thing over n over here: it's the law and it's illegal!!!! REEEEE!!!

But they're just repeating what's already been written; not actually being realistic.

- New Comment: Never heard about asking for transaction history for an EAD. My wife got an EAD and didn't had to submit nothing like this.

- New Comment: Yeah bro it's over, might as well leave yourself. They are watching you rn too

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Can't say if it will bite you or not but you'd be lying on the immigration form or interview about the drug/marijuana consumption question which has major consequences if you're caught.

- New Comment: Illegal for you, legal for them. I have never heard of getting drug tested for green card application, but

Reddit Posts

if they do it to you, you have little defense. It's not fair, but this visa was never fair.

- New Comment: You will have to lie on the green card interview. I think they ask a drug question. Sure, everyone lies, even the guy who went to liquor store daily, right? But, if they catch you, good luck. Why do you think they ask you for a physical exam? If they pick up chronic infectious disease or cancer, I think they want to say no immigration. Drug addiction is a hard to cure illnesses, by the way. You think US government doesn't know that? Like I said, this was never a fair, equal route. But, I would say it's the route of the educated and perhaps the best people of the world.

Title of the post: My DSO messed up my I-20 and got rejected my EAD.

Body of the post: Just like the title says, I got a rejection for my OPT application, in the letter says that my I-20 is wrong because my MS program lasts 1 year but the dates issued in my I-20 are less than 1 year (by 8 days) therefore they rejected it. I applied since November and I had a review with my university to validate everything was ok. I already contacted my university and I expect some answers but I want to ask if you think that the university should pay for the new application?

I was afraid to make a mistake in my application and the reason I got rejected is because my DSO sent me a wrong file and now, not only I lost my fee (maybe is little to most of you but for me was a tremendous effort) but also the time, I don't have 3-4 months to apply for OPT and not have some income, I'm seriously dissapointed right now and I am looking for advice on what could I do?

If I make an appeal by submitting more evidence but I don't have certainty I will get answer soon (less than 3 months).

Any word of advice is welcome. Thanks everyone.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: I'm sorry this happened. Your school may help you file a USCIS motion to reopen your case so that you can present the new I-20. This has to be done within 30 days of the denial. Alternatively , You have 60 days from

Reddit Posts

the programme end date to apply for OPT , so check if this is still an option and submit the correct documents in the new application. You can also consider a higher level of study . Your DSO can help you get into classes late .

- New Comment: Been there. But mine was a denial after 60 days of graduation . Say your OPT application is REJECTED/DENIED and you are still within the 60 day time period after your graduation , you can re apply/appeal depending on your situation (MAKE SURE TO CHECK WITH DSO TO UPDATE NEW DATES IN SEVIS PORTAL ALSO).

But as of my knowledge it is always better to reapply than challenging the decision/appeal. If you are past the 60 day time period after your graduation then you have a very narrow situation. Again it depends on if you are rejected or denied. DM me for any other information.

- New Comment: So I had a situation where my OPT got denied and it was because my DSO forgot to update my Sevis to say I am on OPT and USCIS terminated my status. When I called USCIS they told me I got rejected because I wasnt in status. Called my DSO and explained the whole thing. Because it was a mistake on her part, she handled the whole thing and I got my OPT approved in less than a month. I didnt have to pay extra. So, go talk to your DSO, they should be able to fix it. Will be praying for you??.

- New Comment: The rule is one ACADEMIC YEAR so being short by 8 days doesn't really make sense unless your program doesn't meet the USCIS definition of an academic year

>effective October 10, 2014, SEVP defines an academic year for an F-1 program of study as a minimum of: Thirty weeks of instructional time for programs offered in credit hours. Twenty-six weeks of instructional time for programs offered in clock hours.

- New Comment: When is your graduation date or program end date mentioned on i20 ?

- New Comment: It is the responsibility of the OPT applicant to verify all documents prior to submission. It is also important to know the OPT regulations prior to applying to highlight the implications of incorrect data being submitted.

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- New Comment: What do you mean the date is less than one year? Like the end date if your program is wrong?
- New Comment: Will the reject the EAD if the master's program is less than one year even by a couple days? ?

Title of the post: F-1 to GC having 2 jobs. Risky?!?!

Body of the post: Hey everyone,

I'm currently on an F-1 STEM OPT visa, and my company just began the green card process for me. We kicked off the PERM process back in December 2023, and our attorney mentioned that I'll likely start the I-140 and I-485 concurrently around December 2024 - January 2025.

A friend recently offered me a weekend job at his company. I know F-1 STEM OPT allows me to have two jobs as long as they're related to my field of study. I plan to keep my current job from Monday to Friday and take on the new one on weekends. However, I'm unsure about starting a new job while my green card application is in progress. Can anyone advise if it's okay to have two jobs during the PERM process, which lasts about a year, and then quit the second job when I begin the I-140 and I-485 process?

Thanks a lot!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Your perm has no bearing on your STEM OPT. As long as you comply with the requirements of STEM OPT for each job you are fine. You need both companies to be in E-verify, both jobs have to be related to your major, and both jobs you must work at least 20 hours a week. Each one you will need to complete the I-983 training plan for.

I would be a bit weary of your lawyer saying that you'll be able to concurrently file in December. Priority dates are impossible to predict in the future.

- New Comment: Once you're on STEM OPT , if your priority date is current, just file I485 . Epic shit . Boom green card

- New Comment: I don't know all the intricacies of STEM OPT and GC process, but I would not risk it.

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- New Comment: Did you end up keeping both jobs? About to pick up 2nd job as well and I'm in similar situation

Title of the post: I left my old passport with valid visa in the US

Body of the post: Like the title states, I have a new passport but my F1 visa is in my old passport. I usually travel with both passports but I forgot my old one at my apartment in the US.

My old passport isn't lost or stolen and I don't have anyway to get someone to ship out my old passport to me.

I have thought about applying for a renewal with the new passport. Will I need the old passport with the valid visa physically present or can I use a photocopy of the visa?

I will be going through the visa renewal interview waiver process. Please give any assistance on how to remedy this.

Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Just explain what happened. They will understand and just cancel your old visa in the system when you interview for the new one.

- New Comment: >have thought about applying for a renewal with the new passport. Will I need the old passport with the valid visa physically present or can I use a photocopy of the visa?

You can explain your situation. It won't be a problem.

- New Comment: May I ask what did you do in this situation?

- New Comment: You need to present your physical visa if you are applying IW. It is a requirement. If you cannot send your old visa, you will be refused 221g for an interview.

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- New Comment: I recently renewed my F1 visa back in September and my visa was in my old passport and I also had gotten a new passport. I inputted only my new passport details in the DS160 form and when I showed up for my interview, they didnt even ask for my old passport. They just told me to submit my new passport for the new visa so you will be good! But yes as others mentioned, if they ask for your old passport during the interview, just explain your situation and you will be fine!

- New Comment: Is it possible for someone to ship your passport to your home via UPS or something? I?m not sure someone pls verify this

- New Comment: You cannot get a new visa stamped if your existing one hasn?t expired. New passport does not mean you get a new visa stamped. Also for a dropbox appointment you need to provide the passport with your most recent US visa.

Title of the post: F1 students applying jobs in different countries

Body of the post: Hello, I?m an F1 student on my OPT in US. As everyone knows how bad the situation is in US and the companies not coming forward to hire F1 students due to visa constraints, I?m planning on moving to a different country where there might be someone who?s willing to hire me. So my question is, can I apply for jobs in other countries? If so what is the process? Should I be applying for visa first and jobs next? Or wait for the potential company who?s gonna hire me (hopefully) to apply it for me? First of all, can we even apply in different countries? I really need some help in this matter and it would be helpful if you could point me in the right direction.

Thank you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Legitimate question here for you all. Tangential to this topic.

The students at my university are not seeing/experiencing this job hunt issue that I keep seeing posted about here. Our

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employment numbers are still high for job reporting on OPT.

We have a robust job placement program and provide a lot of support with resume, cover letters, and interviews.

Are you all not getting interviews or are you just not getting sponsorship?

Title of the post: Alot of jobs/internships at large firms say if you need sponsorship, dont apply.

Body of the post: How common is it for students to obtain jobs at large firms on OPT in fields like finance? Is it really very difficult? What tips do you guys have?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: apply everywhere hope for the best

- New Comment: Apply for temp positions through recruiting companies. Get your foot in the door. Constantly outperform. A lot of old school companies (using old tools) have very few specialists knowing Advanced Excel, and they would want to retain such people.

I got such temp job through staffing company, didn't tell them I was an international student. Revealed them after I demonstrated my skills.

- New Comment: Very hard.

The rate right now for full-time roles is at 1 interview for approximately 2000 applications. Internships may or may not be as hard.

It completely depends on your luck and the contacts you have in the industry to get a role in this country. There's no way around it. You can pad your resume as much as you like, and you can apply to as many jobs as you can, but it will all be

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left to chance in the end.

I don't know how South Asians are going to be able to get work here in the future if this continues. There's just too many of us around the world! There's no stopping this onslaught.

Title of the post: FACT SHEET: Biden-Harris Administration Actions to Attract STEM Talent and Str

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: is there a list for those 22 new fields?

Title of the post: 100% remote position on STEM OPT?

Body of the post: Hi, I currently have an offer for a 100% remote position. Form I-983 states that student must receive training ?on-site?. Right now SEVP guideline is allowing remote work due to COVID until at least academic year 2021-2022. I?m wondering if this would be allowed post-COVID and if there are anything I should be keep in mind when reporting to DSO? Would I be able to use my home address as work-site address?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Didn't know one has to receive training on-site. Upvoted to push it up.

- New Comment: At my school, we advised students prior to the pandemic that their STEM OPT work should be in-person due to the "onsite" language in the regulations. With the current exception, remote work is fine but we are recommending that if the guidance is removed, students should not continue working remotely. We have no idea when the guidance would be removed, so there isn't really any helpful guidance in terms of timeline.

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Title of the post: Any (legal) actions I can take against my evil DSO?

Body of the post: Hey all. An F-1 student in NY here. I got a DSO (Designated Students Official) in international student office who willfully neglects duties (refusing to extend I-20 when I have all the all the legitimacy), jeopardizing my academic career and ability to stay in the US to complete the degree successfully -- basically trying to screw me over for whatever her crazy reasons she'd probably never admit to.

Other than speaking to other people in the institution, is such thing punishable by any means, including legal? Or do you just have to sit there completely vulnerable and helplessly watch the complete absurdity unfold? Please share any experiences or thoughts.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Talk to the Dean of Students or whatever office is responsible to keep other departments in check.
- New Comment: Reach out of the school ombudsman. Usually, they can direct you to people who can solve this issue.
- New Comment: Maybe try talking to the director for the international student center?
- New Comment: My 2c -
 1. Try talking to one of the student assistants in the international office. Our intl office had a few f1 students working the paperwork - they tend to be compassionate, helpful and have some influence around the office. Not saying they may take it up with the DSO directly, but they may have seen similar cases before and can advice.
 2. I realize meeting in person has been tough in these times, but try that it possible. My exp has been several in academia lack email etiquette. Maybe they are genuinely busy, but whatever. Just go talk in person, be persistent about your issue if you're stonewalled - and finally it gets done.

Title of the post: Hope for emergency F1 visa India

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Body of the post: Hi!

People don't give up(I did till now). My emergency appointment request was approved today at Mumbai!

I hope everyone who needs to make it will make it for Fall.

Edit: it seems like you can change the location as well while selecting the emergency appointment date.

Edit: BUT THE CONSULATE ON TWITTER SAID YOU CANNOT!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hi!! Congrats that's really good news. what date did you get. Just wondering if it's still possible to reach on time.
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Did you have the option to change the location of appointment?
- New Comment: How long did it take to get your emergency request approved?
- New Comment: Can I get an interview date if I apply now for visa?
- New Comment: Oh. Okay. So, even when there's an option to change, we cannot use it?
- New Comment: Got my emergency appointment approved too!
- New Comment: Hi. You got your visa ?
- New Comment: My visa was approved today. They mostly asked me about my previous visas and my research and wanted to know my opinion about somethings in the field. I was impressed by their knowledge.
- New Comment: Hey guys. Any news on emergency F1 slots approved at Chennai?

Title of the post: F1 during covid?

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Body of the post: Would anyone like to share their current situation and the country they are from? I think this would help everyone understand what's going on globally and what embassy are opened and what not.

This is mine:

I'm from Italy, my consulate has scheduled appointments from August 17th all the way to the end of September. I was able to get an appointment for August 19th. However, I emailed my consulate and I was told the appointment could be cancelled in the future as they still don't know when they are going to open. I also tried getting an expedite appointment, considering the fact that my visa would have been issued at a very close date from my classes start date (August 31st). My request was rejected and the reason was simply the travel ban, I was told I was going to be able to reapply for an expedite appointment once it was lifted

Please share your stories if you want to, I'd like to know who was able to get their visa and who's in my situation, thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: UK here. Currently the embassy is not open, nor is it offering any future non-emergency appointments. Then there's the issue of the ongoing travel ban on entering the US when you've been in the UK/other countries that is also yet to be revoked. Have my I-20 and paid the appropriate fees, just waiting at the moment.

- New Comment: I'm from Bangkok, Thailand. I emailed the embassy here to ask if it would make any differences in the process of making the visa interview appointment if I use the official passport instead of the regular one. They said they cannot interview F-1 visa candidates at this moment regardless of the type of passport. As for expedited appointment, the call center here said it is for life-death emergency e.g. attending a funeral or obtaining medical care, not for the beginning of the semester. She also told me I can try if I want.

We can schedule the interview here, but it's subject to cancellation. Mine was cancelled 3 times, and I had the latest one

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rescheduled for August 10. As far as I know, the situation is the same in Singapore.

My department insisted on conducting face-to-face class, and they said they could defer my admission until Spring 2021 if I cannot get the visa in time.

- New Comment: Please see my comments here:

https://reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/hlbc4u/any_new_info_about_the Visa_situation_f1_gang/

OP, as you are from Italy, unless the travel ban is amended you will not be coming to the US in the Fall. Full stop. The embassy and consulates have continued to make visa appointments since the closure in March. They continually over the last 3 months canceled those appointment dates as they got closure. Additionally, we have been told that European embassies and consulates will not be issuing any non-immigrant visas unless the travel ban is amended. So for two different reasons you cannot travel to the US. One because you are in Italy and would be required to travel to a third country not on a travel ban list for 14 days before you can enter. Second, it is highly unlikely at this time that we will see any movement on visas given the current political tensions on travel between the US and the EU. The Trump administration is taking it personally and I expect that will inhibit any adjustment to processing of student and other visas (save family immigrant visas)

So far none of our several hundred new students have received a visa. This represents over 85 countries.

Additionally immigrant visas are not being processed. Until we start seeing spouse and other immediate relative visas being processed assume your appointment will be canceled.

I'm sorry the situation is shit and I wish it was better, but maybe something will change. However I would start to plan for either a Deferred start date or starting classes online and entering the US later.

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- New Comment: India here. The Embassy in New Delhi has been showing available dates in the month of October since the lockdown in March. But it's just a few scattered days in October and nothing before or after. Nevertheless, I booked a random date in October in the hope of rescheduling later.

Last week I became eligible for the expedited appointment and applied for it. It's been 7 days and I haven't heard back from them yet. Still awaiting a reply although the website mentions that it takes 1-2 business days.

The worst part is that I deferred my admit last year and it feels like I might have to go down that road again. Ideally I would have been done with my degree by May 2021. But now by the looks of it, I might get to start my degree by Aug 2021...

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: No embassy world wide is currently processing visas. Immigrant and non-immigrant.

You can see this as indicated on both the local embassy websites as well as on the state department's web page right at the top of their web page.

Also, if you are from Europe all visa appointments will be canceled and rescheduled. They will not process visas for Schengen citizens until the Schengen travel restrictions are removed.

- New Comment: Im from El Salvador, was studying in Virginia when this thing hit in March. I drove to my parents in Texas getting away from the virus but now we are one of hardest hit.

My school already announced there will be limited in person classes, only for nursing, automobile and welding careers, and this will be only at 50% capacity.

Every other career and classes are either going to be fully online or Virtual via Zoom following schedules just like in person. The decision was based on many campuses being infected and had to be sanitized. Our community is highly

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international.

USCIS, SEVP (ICE redirects to SEVP) haven't posted new instructions, the only announcements are from March. There was going to be a big International meeting but was cancelled due to no recent news.

Lets see how this goes.

My country is closed until August, well that's what they say, but cases worldwide just keep adding up.

Gonna take 2 CLEPs this month, lets hope they don't close again and this Fall is my last semester so the timing has been marvelous.

Cheers to all, and good luck. Don't overexpose yourself, hospitals are at capacity, distract yourselves, do exercise, keep your mind working and keep posted on anything new that happens.

We will get through. Our last pandemic lasted about 1 year and half so be prepared for this time and for this second wave which is the worst.

Be safe my dudes!

- New Comment: I saw some news about the embassy in China reopening for visa appointments. It's no harm to look into that. Good luck you guys!

- New Comment: I am from Greece with a valid F1 visa, obtained in 2018. Still waiting for the restrictions on the Schengen area to be lifted.

- New Comment: Hi, I'm Indonesian, lived in South Korea. The consulate has scheduled the appointments on October 26th but the class will start on August 25th, with the last entrance on Sept 24th. I will try to expedite the appointment

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two weeks before my class started (too tight tho, but it is what the consulate inform on the website).

Anyway, I've been thinking to defer my admission to AU21 tho and re-apply the GTA that I got for this Fall semester :")

- New Comment: Random question...do most of the kids with visas come from wealthy backgrounds? Apologize for the rudeness in advance...genuinely wondering.

- New Comment: Hello everyone! I have two questions regarding this topic: did you all already pay the SEVIS and visa fees? Does anyone know if in case the embassy won't open for fall 2020 we might be able use the same receipt for visa application during spring 2021?

- New Comment: Germany here. I keep checking the application portal for new appointments every day but there have been none since I started checking in early June. The embassy did issue a message on their FB page about a month ago telling us that they were preparing to expedite F1 visas as soon as they had word of reopening, but no new information has come out as of late. I also tried getting an expedited appointment but they are not giving them for student visas right now.

Title of the post: Can F1 students donate plasma and get money off of it?

Body of the post: I'm a junior in college and just found out that some of my friends make ~\$500/month extra by donating their plasma. Is this legal to international students? Does this violate my visa status?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Damn that's dystopian

- New Comment: You need ssn to get approved for donating plasma. So yes if you have ssn.

- New Comment: i donated blood and they just gave a visa gift card

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- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: If you make more than ~\$600 per year (can't remember the exact number) they will give you tax document during tax season and you have to file that. I don't know what the consequence will be so do not recommend start donating.
- New Comment: Please don't donate more than just once every two weeks. It takes time for the body to recover. At the plasma place they might say it's okay to give plasma weekly, that's bullshit!
- New Comment: I asked this same question to my advisor and told me that international students cannot do it. You can confirm it with your advisor.
- New Comment: Just get a job at your college. Not worth
- New Comment: Is this a real question? I can't tell if people are trolling. Lol, the other person is telling to report them what a crazy timeline.
- New Comment: damn i also wanna but im just 95 pounds agh
- New Comment: Yes if you have SSN which is the only reason I haven't done it
- New Comment: It's not legal. Report them.

Title of the post: F1 Visa Renewal on STEM OPT

Body of the post: I am in a complicated situation. I am on STEM OPT with a valid paid job at an e verify company. My visa stamp expired but I am in valid status. I wish to travel to my home country to renew visa but I'm concerned about getting denied because of the following factors:

1. I have a US citizen girlfriend and we live together, but we are not married, neither do we have any intentions of getting married right and/or filing GC for me. No civil union/domestic partnership/any other legal registration either, the only

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thing is we live at the same apartment.

2. I have finished my degree and I am working right now.

3. I have had unpaid internship on my initial OPT (legitimate companies that were small businesses, not fraud/blacklisted OPT consultancies). When I applied for STEM OPT, I got approved without any RFE.

How risky is it to go home to renew F1 visa if I have not enrolled in another degree program? How do I establish strong ties to home countries when my job is in the US?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >1. I have a US citizen girlfriend and we live together, but we are not married, neither do we have any intentions of getting married right and/or filing GC for me. No civil union/domestic partnership/any other legal registration either, the only thing is we live at the same apartment.

Not married. Irrelevant information.

>2. I have finished my degree and I am working right now.

Yes... You are on STEM OPT. This is a given.

>3. I have had unpaid internship on my initial OPT (legitimate companies that were small businesses, not fraud/blacklisted OPT consultancies). When I applied for STEM OPT, I got approved without any RFE.

Yes, because you followed the rules and had employment. Payment is not required for OPT.

>How risky is it to go home to renew F1 visa if I have not enrolled in another degree program?

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That has no bearing on your ability to be renewed. You are maintaining your status on STEM OPT.

>How do I establish strong ties to home countries when my job is in the US?

Same as you did before you started OPT. OPT/STEM OPT is not held against you.

- New Comment: I'm pretty much in the exact same boat, except that my STEM OPT renewal is pending. If anyone has any advice on that, I'd appreciate it a lot

- New Comment: u/codetornado u/GRRAWorld?

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Leaving the USA while studying on F-1 visa

Body of the post: Hello friends,

I've completed my visa application and was thankfully granted my F-1 visa. I will begin studying in California for one year starting this September.

I would like to travel home for a wedding in October. Do I need special permission from my host university to leave the states? Has anyone done this before? If I do need some special permission, what is it called and who do I ask for it?

Thank you for reading!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You are free to come and go as you please as long as you attend your university. Get your i20 signed regularly and take it with you every time you enter the country.

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- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: If your visa is still valid in October, then theoretically you don't need anything else, but it's good practice to ask for a verification letter of your status as an active student from school.
- New Comment: As long as your Visa is not expired and you have current i20. There has no issues.

Make sure you notify your professors or lecturers about your absence in advance.

- New Comment: Since everybody already answered OP's question. I just want to point out how concerning that this is still a question asked by F1 students on the daily basis on reddit. Shouldn't the school go over this with F1 students during orientation? I've attended 3 schools as F1 students and each time they made me go through additional orientation for international students.
- New Comment: You freed to come and go as you want but make sure your DSO signs your visa on the last page, each signature is valid for a year and allows you to be in and out.
- New Comment: I had the same situation. Just get a travel I-20 from the university before you land back in US and you will be all good.
- New Comment: No issues at all. Just get your I-20 travel endorsement signed and it'll be valid for a whole year and multiple uses. I've exited and entered the US three times in the last year with no problems.

Title of the post: Should I take a a job that I don't see a future of just to stay in status

Body of the post: Starting OPT next week. Getting 0 callback for software engineer jobs after trying for 3 months, 500+ applications. It is harder for me because I am in my mid-30s with shorter industry experience but longer irrelevant experience. Really want a swe job. But only get a CS lecturer offer so far. The uni will also not help me to get a PR in the future, and they are not E-verified so they cannot do STEM OPT either. In a nutshell, the contract is only good for 1 year and during this year, I still need to find another job so I can proceed to STEM OPT later. I think that putting this job

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in my CV might actually hurt my chance of getting swe job in the future. Basically, taking this offer will only help me to stop the clock and does nothing else for my cv.

My question is, is there a scenario where taking a non-industry cs lecturer job could turn into good points for my cv for swe jobs in the future?? Especially in the US. For example, I am thinking to put this job + setting up a LLC to do side projects (web apps) that could be relevant.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Take the job and keep looking for the kind of jobs you want. Universities are cap exempt, meaning even if your university is not e-verified you can still work there on h1b after your opt. Hope this helps!
- New Comment: You can stop the clock through volunteer work as well, but take the job to help with the expenses but make sure that you keep applying as much as you would have without this job.
- New Comment: If you think you are confident in landing a desirable job then I would suggest holding on for a couple of more months by getting an RA position under one of the professors or a volunteer position somewhere related to your field. Keep applying meanwhile.
- New Comment: You can ask them to sponsor you H1B instead and it shouldn't take time for you as I think universities sponsorship is different than what we have.
- New Comment: well u have no better option than go
- New Comment: Consider accepting a job offer if you are experiencing financial difficulties. Otherwise, pursue a career as an independent freelancer in the software engineering field. Prioritize companies that sponsor H-1B visas and green cards. You can find a list of such employers on the USCIS H-1B Employers Data Hub or the MyVisaJobs website.

Gaining experience through an internship can also be beneficial. This can potentially lead to a full-time position. You can do that on OPT.

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- New Comment: I would take it as a stop gap and I would try to convince them to get it verified. I had a similar situation, and they did it. It's very easy, try talking to them about it

Title of the post: Cancelling F-1 Visa

Body of the post: Hi all. Back in December 2023, I got an admit in NYU for the spring intake. Due to timeline issues, (less than 1 month between offer letter and start of semester) I got my F-1 visa one day after the spring semester in NYU started in Jan 2024. I was not allowed to join late and as a result they cancelled my admission. And following that I was rejected by all of the colleges I had applied for for Fall 24. I am planning to apply again for spring 25. My question is, I still have a valid F-1 visa on my passport. What am I supposed to do? Do I have to cancel it? If I get an admit for spring 25, do I have to appear for the interview again? or is it just a matter of restamping? Please guide. Thanks in advance!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'm not an attorney, VO, or DSO.

This is a question best directed at the DSO of whichever school admits you. What I personally can say for sure is that no action is required on your part about the visa right now.

As a side note, why did NYU refuse to defer admission until the fall?

- New Comment: VO approves based on your SEVIS along with other things. In your situation, everything has changed from when you got your visa and now. I'm not sure but it is likely that you need to take your interview again. Reach out to the school

- New Comment: The DSO at the school that I used to work for closely monitors F and J students for signs of non-attendance (didn't register or enroll or attend the mandatory orientation). If the student does not (or cannot) become compliant, the DSO will cancel the I-20 (corrected).

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Having a valid stamp in your passport won't mean anything if US Customs and Border Patrol have contrary information.

- New Comment: Email your DSO about your status and ask them if they revoked your SEVIS or terminated your Visa.

- New Comment: When apply for i20 for a school, they ask if you already have a visa or an i20 for another school.

Pretty sure there's a way they can help you.

Title of the post: Need Help: F-1 OPT CS Grad Struggling to Find a Job

Body of the post: Hello everyone,

I'm reaching out for some advice or assistance as I find myself in a challenging situation. I'm currently on F-1 OPT which is about to expire in 60 days. Since January, I've been actively applying for jobs, with over 500 applications sent out, but I've only landed a few interviews and unfortunately, no job offers so far.

I graduated with a degree in Computer Science in May 2024. Despite my efforts, I'm struggling to secure a position that aligns with my skills and degree. At this point, I'm open to any help, whether it's leads on potential job opportunities, advice on job searching strategies, or information about legitimate consultancy agencies that could assist me.

If anyone has been through a similar situation or has any advice on how I can improve my job search or any leads on consultancies that can help someone in my situation, I would greatly appreciate it.

Thank you in advance for your help and suggestions!

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Hey bro, you will get it, i also got very recently. But your number of applications is still less, I have been applying from august and the count is 7500+ not that it matters but what I am saying, do atleast 30-40 apps around ur work ex and also see other job titles which relates to you.

If you are a software engineer, search on LinkedIn with job title, software developer, programmer, Analyst, database developer, front end developer, backend developer, python developer or someother language, study tableau and apply for data analyst.

Find out job boards other than linkedin, search on the depths of indeed, zip recruiter, Glassdoor, discord groups, checkout staffing firms - apply on there job boards to.

You have to apply at a place where many people didn?t and give your best interview . Keep various versions of resume handy

Remember You are just N applications away from your first job.

- New Comment: I can help review your resume if you want. Do you have a github?

- New Comment: Try talking to your professors asking to volunteer in research. They can hire you for the first year without pay, this helps in stopping the unemployment clock as you keep on looking for a job. Gives you a whole year to look for one. Also you won?t be sitting at home and hence won?t have to explain any gaps in your resume. If they can play, even better!

- New Comment: Volunteering is the quick fix. The market is bad. To land a job, and then start within 60 days can indeed be very improbable to achieve.

- New Comment: I?ll be entering the pool now. Graduated and waiting for EAD

- New Comment: Job market it's bad for f1 students and American students. I am on f1 opt stem extension rn. I graduated on May 2023. I was scared of now getting a job since I had no experience on my field (econometrics and quantitative economics). I applied to my ead on June. Got it by early September. Got a job late October. Took me 6 months to get a job. 1000+ applications, a few career fairs, a lot of dedication. My advice would be be consistent to apply to x number of positions a day. Apply out of state! Don't be afraid. Practice interviews. Out of the 1000+

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applications probably got only like 30 interviews. I definitely lost some jobs opportunities because I didn't know how to correctly answer interview questions. At career fairs (at your university / local library/ town) talk to every company. I ended up getting a job from a company that attended a career fair at my university that was not looking for someone in my field (they were looking for an accountant but they ended up opening a position in their finance team to hire me).

At last, have a plan B. If you plan to stay here in the US. Apply for uni once again.

- New Comment: Does anyone know what are some good websites to get a volunteer job? Or are LinkedIn and Handshake the best website to get one?

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Stop the clock with volunteering

- New Comment: You need to find a way to stop your OPT clock either by volunteering or finding a part-time job. Job searching can be stressful these days, be patient and never lose hope. Good luck :)

- New Comment: I taught CS at a public charter high school (I graduated with a degree in Physics). I got admitted to a graduate program this year (Physics). This might be one option for you.

- New Comment: Dm me if you still need a job

- New Comment: I'm in the same boat but just graduated with an MBA, at this point I'm just saying that I won't need sponsorship.

Does anyone here want to hire me? I do anything related with business administration and I have product and marketing experience :)

Also, how would you reach out to professors for volunteering? They know to make an offer letter or should I hand them a pre made one? Thanks in advance!

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- New Comment: .

- New Comment: I would say no to do you need sponsorship question at least to get OPT experience rather than volunteering or leaving the U.S.

Title of the post: Status stuck on approved since my VISA interview

Body of the post: I had my interview on the 6th of June at the New Delhi embassy. My CEAC status changed to 'approved' the same day. However, there has been no change ever since. My passport is still with the embassy. On calling, I was told that my application is in final processing. Anyone else face the same? Is there anything I can do to expedite the process?

UPDATE: status changed to issued on 3rd July

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I am also facing the same issue, I had my interview on 7th June at New Delhi Embassy.

- New Comment: it's happening to a lot of people, just wait it out. It'll be fine don't worry

- New Comment: 10th june delhi embassy still approved

- New Comment: Hey, don't worry. It will be 'Issued' in a few days. I had my visa appointment on June 3rd. I got the 'Approved' status on June 7th. Visa was 'Issued' on June 18th. I know others who had similar timelines. I understand it is frustrating. But do not lose hope. It's just a matter of time. Good luck!

- New Comment: same! I opted for delivery (live in another state) and my interview was on June 5th lol

- New Comment: I had a similar experience. Gave my interview on 3rd June at Delhi. Status changed to 'Issued' on 20th.

Today I got an email saying that the passport is ready for pickup.

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Hang in there. You'll soon receive an update.

- New Comment: yah me too, i had it on 7th june at delhi. They said me the smae when i called costomer care.

- New Comment: any updates ??

- New Comment: Anyone still stuck?

- New Comment: don?t worry, it?ll get issued soon. There is a huge demand for visa right now, one of the reason it?s getting late for everyone - even for me it took approx 13 days to get issued and even after getting issued you?ve wait 2-3 days to get an email from the embassy if you?ve opted for pickup otherwise they?ll email you that it is picked up from the consulate and will be sent by the PO if you opted for delivery. You?ll be fine!

- New Comment: Anyone still stuck?

- New Comment: Same issue. I interviewed on June 6 at the US Consulate at New Delhi. The status till date is stuck on 'Approved'.

Spoke to someone I know at the Embassy and I was told my application is under Administrative Processing. My course begins on July 9 and the anxiety is killing me.

Update: Status changed to 'Issued' today (July 1)

- New Comment: approved on 11th June. Still stuck on approved ?

- New Comment: Any update?

- New Comment: Any update?

Title of the post: F1 VIZA REJECTED (need advice)

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Body of the post: Hello everyone, on 15th of May I had an interview to the USA embassy in Poland for F1 visa. I graduated my bachelor's degree in Poland on 26th of April 2024. Here is how was my interview was:

ME: Good Morning

VO: Good Morning, Please give me your I-20 and passport

ME: Here you are

VO: Where are you going?

ME: San Francisco city, California state in the USA to pursue my master's degree of Information Technology.

VO: Who is funding your education?

ME: My father is funding my education and all my living expenses.

VO: What he does?

ME: He is in Oil and Gas industry, currently he owns two gas stations in my home country.

VO: Retail gas station ?

ME: Yes

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VO: Sorry, I can not issue your visa.

and this is how he rejected me in terms of case 214(b), all the time he was looking in his computer and typing something. I really do not know what went wrong, I can surely say that I am a legit student who wants a master's degree diploma from the USA, I had a lot of docs apart from I-20 which he did not ask even. Can someone please give some suggestions or advise for my next interview?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Was there any false information you gave? Or something that was written but does not match with what you said? Seems very odd to deny.

Under 214 section B, the applicant was unable to show that their intended activities in the United States are consistent with the classification of the nonimmigrant visa they applied for.

Think of the document that was provided, does it match with what you said? Did you provide your father's financial documents? Was there anything that was falsely presented?

- New Comment: It probably has something to do with Retail Gas station. not sure what but it's that

- New Comment: Would recommend you to correct visa spelling before people start attacking you that it's because of that?

- New Comment: Your visa interview was a mere formality, you were rejected based on some issues in your profile based on what you have indicated in the DS160.

- New Comment: Another note, it's always a good idea to give your best answer in the very first question they ask and prove that 1. You are a credible student, 2. You have sufficient funding, 3. Will return back to your country after studying.

So this is how I would recommend answer the 'Where are you going' question?

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Answer: ?I have been admitted to study an MS Information Technology at Carlifonia State and I would like to attend the school this fall. My father will be funding my education as he owns 2 gas stations here in Poland and makes X amount of money annually. Upon completion of my studies, I plan to come back and help him to scale the new information technology tools that I will acquire in my degree to assist my father?s business to be more competitive in the 4th Industrial Revolution?. (I just made this up but you get the point).

This answer proves all the 3 requirements that they need to verify when interviewing you for an F1 because you?ve proven that you?re a credible student, you have sufficient funding & plan to return back to your home country after completing your studies. It?s always advised to answer the very first question this way and not ?leave it to chance?, essentially making the visa officers job easier to issue you the visa. It?s unlikely that one is rejected solely based on the last question, the decision was probably already made way before, i.e the first few answers.

- New Comment: Try look up ArgoVisa on YouTube, they have lots of videos that can assist, and also offer visa consultation to help you prep. Comes at a cost but it worth it. The team consists of former visa officers who have worked across the world so they would be able to guide you based on your profile. Goodluck!

Title of the post: Opening an LLC

Body of the post: Hi all.

I'm on the job market but it isn't easy to get an offer. My EAD clock kicks off mid-May so roughly three months to figure out to stop my clocks.

Through my research, one could be self employed provided that one could prove the legit business (licenses or whatever) which I think pretty good idea and flexible. I knew some of business owners that they are reluctant to hire int' employees due to headache. (even if it's not too much at all) Meanwhile they are willing to provide subcontract works.

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Though which, I'm not sure if I really be able to get the contract signed.

Anyway, I'm currently working opening an LLC, I saw a few here done this path either their motives were to stop the clock or really trying to do your own business.

I'm thinking of one from AZ since it has zero annual fees down to road.

Has anybody done that? Any words of wisdom I greatly appreciate.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I recently opened a LLC last week at my local accountants office for about \$650. They usually have the business paperwork done in a day. I took that and gave it to my international advisor with a typed out document as to what my business entails and how it correlates with my degree. I also submitted it to the SEVIS portal and stopped my clock while working on the business. You must be working full time on your business, but unsure how they would track that down so I have an excel file just tracking my ?clock in? and ?clock out?. I?m still looking for work in my field as I?m working on my business.

- New Comment: My friend owns a Web Design and development agency in India. If register an LLC under the same name here as an expansion of a new entity. My major is in computer science and i would be working on getting more clients for the agency.

I haven't figured out the logistics yet but will this be a good idea ? What all proofs do we need to be eligible for opening an LLC ?

Any suggestions.

- New Comment: [deleted]

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- New Comment: I hv heard people doing this to even sponsor through eb2 eb3. Theres always a loophole!!

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: So, in effect this LLC can file for your H-1B also and potentially a green card ? That?s a grey area.

Please check with one or two immigration lawyers first.

Title of the post: job market anxiety

Body of the post: The state of the job market currently is making me so anxious as an international student knowing it?ll probably just get worse by the time I graduate or as years progress and that it?ll just get harder from this point looking for jobs that will help me stay. Out of curiosity I just want to know what do you think are the most saturated industries at the moment? and what are the least saturated ones if there is even any?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: network network network!! i?m assuming you?re still maybe 1-2 years away from graduating, and if so then it?s the perfect time for you to start connecting with people in your desired industries. start with something small like a volunteer position or an unpaid internship. build your way up. connect connect connect! talk to your professors, to people you find interesting on LinkedIn, to those in your desired companies.

if i hear people correctly the most saturated industry is tech, while some of the least saturated ones are construction and environment-related.

- New Comment: If you are into construction and architecture, you will have easy 2/3 offers by the time you graduate, same goes for engineering management (Logistics and warehouse related jobs). Core engineering fields like electrical and mechanical are still good compared to the tech industry which is almost like a sinking titanic. Whats funny is people who majored in the unsaturated fields back in India choose to do Tech related masters and somewhat are fcuked (Not all).

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In this market all you need is abundance of Luck and a sprinkle of Skill.

- New Comment: What is your degree

- New Comment: Are you grad or undergrad?

If grad with 5+ YOE, then still have a chance of landing some (companies who are willing to hire international students) interviews.

If undergrad, but from top school, have a chance to land entry level jobs.

If undergrad, non-target with no internships. Then might be very tough.

- New Comment: Don't worry, make sure to network and be less defeating. I just networked my way through!

- New Comment: I can only tell you to focus on what you can control and pray about what is out of your control. You may be able to get a job in a saturated industry but not get one in an unsaturated industry or vice-versa. There are others factors beyond saturation that come into play during the job search. Make the right decisions like gaining marketable skills regardless, networking, Improving your knowledge etc.. regardless of circumstances.

- New Comment: Look away from Tech, like engineering. Any type of engineering. Civil, electrical, mechanical, or materials. You have a sure bet there.

- New Comment: Frankly it's your choice completely, if you have skills that are in short supply then you should be good regardless of the economy. Since everyone does a CS degree or related those field are not in short supply. Electronics, mechanical etc. still are booming

Title of the post: Will I get in trouble with immigration?

Body of the post: I am currently in my second semester in U.S. and for the first semester I was in a university but I

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transferred to a different university, which turned out to be very expensive. So, I transferred to a community college and I'm studying there right now. First semester in this CC. I have already lost hope in going back to my home country cause there will be a lot of transfer's seen in my SEVIS and I'm scared if I were to go back to my home, when coming back immigration will reject me and send me back.

How serious is this problem. If I were to change my college yet again, will I be facing more consequences. Will I get any trouble in the near future about green card and everything.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: As long as your F1 visa is still valid, you can travel in and out of the US without problems. But if you need to renew it, the consular officer may question why you transferred three times in your first year.

- New Comment: As long as your f1 status is valid and active you shouldn't have a problem. However, you will probably be questioned about that during an interview so just be prepared to give a honest answer about that. Don't lie and everything will be good.

- New Comment: My friend's sister from Nigeria was a 3rd yr student and when she went back for a visit and tried to renew it, they denied her visa renewal 3 times and she never came back. I think if your visa needs renewal, you should really consider our travel(IMO don't). But I think some countries are chill with USA and renewal of visa is no big deal for the embassy. If you're from a 3rd world country, that makes it really hard I guess.

- New Comment: Ok dude. Two things here. F1 status and your entry visa are 2 different things.

Your F1 status on I-20 allows you to be here for 4 years plus 2-3 months after your expected graduation.

Your visa is for entry purposes only. When I came, my visa was single entry and valid for 3 months. Means that I can only enter the US 1 time within those 3 months. So what's your visa expiration date? And is it single or multiple entry? If multiple entry, you can go in and out as many times you want IF the visa is not expired without having to request for a

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new visa.

I have been here for almost 5 years. Got my degree and doing OPT right now. Never been back home.

- New Comment: It's fine

Although you might be questioned. What matters most is that your SEVIS is active and your visa is valid, they do not care if you transferred that's totally okay. But if you for example was doing masters first, and then transfer to a community college, they will definitely ask you about it because that's a big jump, so you should have a convincing and a reasonable answer.

- New Comment: You're fine as long as your F-1 visa is valid

Title of the post: OPT Application- uploading every i20 issued for so far.

Body of the post: Hello, all!

I started filing for OPT and was in the process of collecting necessary documents for uploading on the website. My DSO suggested me to upload all the I-20s that were issued on my SEVIS to this date. I genuinely asked: why?, Is it necessary? He replied, saying that I need to demonstrate my timeline as a student in the US, and doing this would help me meet the requirement. I have never seen any of my seniors doing that but still managed to get their OPT approved. My question is: is it a common practice? Did any of you do this? I'm curious to know. What did you all do? Please educate me on this.

Thank you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No it's not an requirement. You'd only have to upload all I-20s with OPT or CPT endorsement.

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- New Comment: It is not a requirement at all. The only I-20 required for certain is your OPT I-20 created by the DSO at the time they made the OPT recommendation within your US government SEVIS record. You then have to get the OPT application to USCIS within no more than 30 days from that DSO recommendation date or the end of your grace period, whichever date comes first.

If you've had CPT at your current OPT application degree level, you may need to include a copy of each CPT I-20 as the evidence of CPT if your DSO does not otherwise provide you instead a screenshot of your CPT history out of your SEVIS record. If the DSO provides you with that SEVIS CPT record, you do not need to include the CPT I-20s.

Some schools may be smaller and DSOs may not have as much connection with other DSOs/our professional organization to be clear on this. Some may still be operating on very old information where *many* years ago you would submit copies of old I-20s. This information is no longer correct/relevant.

Note: For the OPT STEM extension the deadline is no more than 60 days from the date the DSO makes the recommendation in SEVIS or the current post-completion end date (as indicated on the EAD) whichever date comes first. For the OPT STEM extension, ONLY the OPT STEM Extension I-20 is required.

- New Comment: I uploaded only my CPTs. I got my EAD with no problems. Infact the instruction says upload CPT or OPT i20s if any

- New Comment: You need to submit all the CPT/opt i20s issued to you

- New Comment: Do you need to sign those CPT I20's and upload them?

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: RFE on STEM OPT

Body of the post: Hi, I applied for Stem OPT with an employer. I already worked for a month on my STEM with him and

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received my salary as well. Now I got RFE that my employer is not e- verified and found out that he is actually not e verified. What should I do? How can I justify this? What should my employer do? Please help me.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: How did you even apply for STEM without an everify number. That?s not possible. I765 form asks you the everify number when you apply.
- New Comment: Is your initial OPT EAD expired? If so you are TECHNICALLY in violation as you have to meet STEM OPT terms and conditions between the expiration of your (first year) OPT and the approval of your STEM OPT. Whether they hold it against you is up to the adjudicator. I?ve seen people say it?s generally not an issue if you provide then with a valid E-Verify number as a response to the RFE, but it?s up to the adjudicator.
- New Comment: Just curious, how did you apply for i765 without filling in the e verify number? Your DSO should have told you about this step during the i-983 filling, if there is no e verify number then how could your DSO agree and generate a new I-20 for i765 application?
- New Comment: Ask them if they can enroll to everify. They can do it in a day. They just need to create an account.
- New Comment: What is your priority date? When did you apply for STEM OPT?
- New Comment: whats an RFE? a newbie asking
- New Comment: anyone got RFE for submitting same photo for initail OPT and STEM OPT?
- New Comment: Did you get approval or denial?
- New Comment: The best course of action would be to reach out to the employer and let them know this .
Did they give your their e- verified number ?
- New Comment: Guys, I already apply for STEM OPT and got the receipt and after 1 month get laid off while I left 20 days on my initial OPT ? what is the scenario here ?

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- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: I want to give up.

Body of the post: I graduated last year from two master programs, in international business and business analytics... I do have 5 years of experience but hasn't been settled in something specific, since when I completed the undergrad, COVID hit, and in my country remote jobs were hard to find on things different to call centers, I came to the US after COVID graduated on April, is going to be a year now, I haven't been able to find a job for my STEM OPT, I really don't want to leave, but I'm finding myself in a pint where I don't know what else to do... I've been in so many processes, most of them getting rejected because my years of experience are previous to my master's, and because I can't find a company willing to sponsor, idk if it is me or is just that the current situation just makes applying for sponsorship so hard. I'm feeling like a failure, or maybe I'm not competent enough? I've been making it through my first year of OPT with small jobs as manager in restaurants, concierge jobs and so on but nothing where I can actually use my knowledge or "expertise"...

I have one month and a half or a little less to find a job for the STEM OPT.

Is it thinking on getting into an MBA part time that allows full time CPT a bad idea? I think that maybe if I can get into a company on other position that is not strictly related to data analytics, could help me to grow there and jump into something else...

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Uni name? Give me more details on your field and about you (history). No one can find out about you with that? That way we may be able to assess your situation.

Because, yes. The market sucks. And I believe your field would include roles in Data and more managerial stuff which I don't know much of, so won't comment. But yeah, with 7+ years experience too, people are not getting much, generally in the field of software, AI, data, IS.

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So I'd say, try applying outside as well maybe, or hope for something here.

- New Comment: Hang in there my friend!!

- New Comment: Dm resume

- New Comment: You can self-petition for a green card. You don't need a sponsor.

- New Comment: Do you have a girlfriend? Also which colleges did you attend for bachelors and masters.

- New Comment: F1 is for education, not a quick scheme for immigration. It's very common to do a degree in one foreign country, and find job in another foreign country, or to go home. There are literally so many international students doing this. You won't be the first, you won't be the last. Don't beat yourself over your lack of luck, look to the future.

Title of the post: Lost passport need suggestions for getting visa stamping

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Do we need visa stamping for opt ? Or can we submit old visa copy

- New Comment: Don't leave the country, get a new passport from the country's consulate in US. Report the lost visa to the US embassy in India which issued the previous visa. You can apply for OPT and H1B later without ever getting a new visa if you don't leave the US.

- New Comment: You only need the new passport for now. Obtain that from your nearest consulate for your country.

Until you leave the US you do not need a new visa for the passport, but there is no special process for a lost passport.

You are just reapplying for the visa again.

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Title of the post: Unemployment days and leaving the US

Body of the post: My EAD start date was 08/01/23 but I've had a hard time finding a job in the US. Today is 40 days since then ? so 40 unemployment days already used. 50 remaining.

My absolute last day of unemployment on my calculation is October 30th (please correct me if I'm wrong). I'm still actively looking for work, but if I don't manage to find a job or position, will it be safe to leave the US in the second week of October (October 17th)? I don't want to raise any red flags with immigration, and thus want to make sure it's okay to stay on US soil till then. I don't want to push my luck either.

Please let me know if this is alright or if I need to reach out to my DSO for confirmation! Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Bruh, get a volunteer or some shit and stop the clock. U will atleast get a couple of months to look for jobs

- New Comment: I believe you have a 1 month grace period after your OPT ends to go back.

Ask your professors (although that depends on if you have a good rapport with any of them - I don't), and/or go to your department and ask them if they have any position that you might be able to fill on OPT.

Sorry it has come to this. This is the worst market for trying to find a job. Have you reached out to consultancies, if you'd like to use their help to stick around in the US?

Edit: I'm a student too OP. DM me if you'd like to chat!

- New Comment: Hey I found a job 3 days before my 90 day unemployment date! Don't give up! I have also seen some of my friends on OPT working on contract jobs to stop the time if you are willing to work contract jobs.

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- New Comment: Which field are you in? DM for referral! I can help out
- New Comment: You can do some unpaid internship or something to stop the clock. Those unemployment days are extremely valuable. Don't waste them.
- New Comment: You are not a prisoner and you can leave at any time. Leaving before your unemployment period ends is not an issue.
- New Comment: I was in the same shoes as you a couple of weeks ago. I found a paid internship 7 days before my OPT expired. 50 days is still a lot of time to find a paid/unpaid internship/volunteer work - anything to stop the clock and give you more time to look for jobs. Reach out to everyone you know who can help/refer you. Don't give up!

Title of the post: How should I answer the immigration official?

Body of the post:

I entered the US back in august of 2021 on an F1 visa and I spent four semesters at my college. In the spring of this year, I was sexually assaulted in the school and due to that had alot of mental health issues and failed my classes, as I failed to maintain my status as a student my DSO terminated my SEVIS record with a 'failure to maintain status' reason.

I left the US in July and my record was terminated in late June, so I left as soon as I could , less than 15 days after termination. My F-1 visa is valid till 2026 and I received a new I-20 from a community college and plan to fly back to the US in September while my visa is still valid.

I know the immigration officer might ask what happened for re-entry and I am worried about that , that they will not let me enter based on my reasons as I do not have any medical grounds. I am not even sure what to tell the immigration officer. Should I carry some kind of proof or evidence with me ?

I am also going into a community college this time and I plan to transfer out of there and back to my old four year college after a semester as my previous school mentioned that they will allow that, but I am worried that this might also raise a red flag for the immigration officer as I will not stay with the school on the new I-20. Should I just tell them that I plan to complete my education at the community college and then come back to my home country after I graduate?

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I would be very grateful if someone could get back to me on this.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I am sorry this happened and I wish you the best going forward.

It shouldn't be a big issue on the return. I doubt you will be asked but if you are you have a few options.

If asked you can be honest and say that you were assaulted and your grades suffered. You are returning to do community college for a term or two to fix your grades and then transfer back to your school.

If you do not want to disclose, then you can State you had a bad personal situation that impacted your grades. That you are returning to a community college to fix your grades then plan to return to the four year and finish your original degree.

Also for any future readers,

if you have something like this happen please speak to the school.

If this happened and I or almost any other department was made aware, it would set off about 7-10 different support processes including reduce course loads, grade flexibility, offers for incomplete grades, retroactive withdrawal, and many other academic support items, and immigration flexibility.

Beyond that, we would also have a lot of mental health support, counseling support, and more. There is also crime victim support as well and investigations run if the perpetrator is a student and even if they are not.

- New Comment: fyi u can get a green card because u were sexually assaulted and that is a crime. this is under the u

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visa greencard program. i?m sorry for what happened to u

- New Comment: I am so sorry to hear about your condition.

It will be my last thing to do to add more burden to you, but I think I need to inform / ask clarification from others here.

Based on what I read in other thread, If your SEVIS terminated (you have surpassed 5 month outside of US Soil), you need to get a new F Visa.

u/Codetornado could you please clarify this ? Or do we only need a new F Visa (even though the old F Visa still valid)

if we do "authorized early withdrawal" (based on OP story, OP didn't do it, so OP might not need a new F Visa) ?

I just don't want OP get hold at the airport because her F Visa not linked to OP new SEVIS record.

- New Comment: any updates OP ?

Title of the post: Answering "No" to future sponsorship in job applications?

Body of the post: I am asking this on behalf of a friend:

Hello, I recently graduated from my master's program and am on a three month grace period where I will need to find a suitable job in the US in order to use my three year STEM OPT. This will authorize me to work for three years in the US without needing sponsorship. My intention is to work here for only 2-3 years and return to my home country; I currently don't have any intention of staying the in the US for a longer duration.

Many job applications ask the question, "Will you now or in the future require visa sponsorship on job application". In this case, would it be alright if I select "no" since I only intend to work in the US for a max of 3 years anyways? I have heard horror stories of companies finding out the citizenship status of applicants late into the application process which led to complications. Also, I'm not sure if explaining that I intend to only work for three years will sound bad to employers. However, I also understand selecting "yes" will likely hurt my chances of getting an interview in the first place. Would selecting "No" be a good idea?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes, you can say no. Since "technically" you are supposed to stay in the US only for STEM OPT and the company doesn't mention that you have to stay in more than 3 years. They will ask again but for now just say no. For me, never had a problem.
- New Comment: Don't do it! Once you are hired, HR will find out what type of visa you have and will probably terminate your employment before you even start
- New Comment: Totally fine to say no, if I was your friend I wouldn't even feel bad about lying about it in the interview process. If they ask if you plan to stay in the US just say yes so they believe your in for the long-term.
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: I graduated and got my stem opt as well for my masters degree. I did get an opt for my bachelors. One thing I can tell you that your first year of opt is really easy. Opt application and everything is easy peasy. However, once the 1 year of opt ends the stem extension process is complicated, long forms and you need to make sure the company is under e-verify because without it, they can deny your extension. I would not recommend saying no because you'd need your company's approval and managers help for stem extension.
- New Comment: Say no, OTP is actually not supposed to be for people planning to immigrate to the US, but just make sure you tell the recruiter that youre on an OTP and plan to go back after the 3 years are up.

Title of the post: EAD I-765 OPT Processing Time

Body of the post: Hi !

My OPT EAD I-765 receipt date is 25th April. Based on the data on <https://opttimeline.com/>, they are currently processing applications for 4th April. My job starts on 10th July. Do you think I'll get my EAD in time?

Reddit Posts

Also, can I do it now if I need to pay for premium processing?

Update:

I ended up applying for premium processing on 20th June

It got approved on 26th June

I got the card in 5 days

You can apply for pp by logging into your USCIS, clicking on your profile pic on the top right corner and clicking fill up form

Also - this discord group is really helpful for timelines/ updates - <https://discord.gg/acmeD4r5BV>

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I think you should get in time.

- New Comment: Has anyone's EAD got produced recently (Late May to early June approvals)? My approval date is June 2nd. No updates yet. I called the USCIS representative in the Potomac center and they said it is waiting in production, but they are experiencing some IT issues. They do not know what the actual issue is and have no estimate of how long it is going to take. If anybody's case gets produced in the meantime, then we can know that they have continued producing the cards. Any comments on the update will be appreciated.

- New Comment: Same situation, but I applied on 12th April. I will wait one more week.

- New Comment: Just got an approval notice on my stem opt EAD for receipt date 04/07. So yeah.. the wait is brutal. By 06/15, if you don't see any updates then start considering premium processing

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Go ahead with premium processing to be on the safer side (With premium processing itself, it might take a week for approval and atleast two weeks to get your card, which is nearly three weeks in total)

- New Comment: <https://discord.gg/acmeD4r5BV>

join here guys for the updates

- New Comment: Better opt for premium processing it' taking very long time. U may have to wait 2 more weeks or even more. And moreover card is coming after 2 weeks of approval.

- New Comment: I do think you can pay for premium processing at any point... It's so expensive though, you do still have a month. I think you have time, but maybe you can decide a point in which you will pay for premium processing?

- New Comment: Receipt date: Feb 6

Approval notice: Feb 22

I need my EAD by May 10 but the card still hasn't been produced (as of March 29), should I wait for two more weeks or should I go ahead with premium processing.

- New Comment: I've been waiting since late June 2023, I haven't had anything yet for EAD. I feel like my case is just lost somewhere? I don't see a point in pp when nobody seems to be waiting as long as I have?

- New Comment: Receipt date 04/08, no update

- New Comment: How much does it take in premium processing?

- New Comment: Did anyone who applied on the 7th of April got any updates?

- New Comment: April 15th, still waiting

- New Comment: Same situation, My OPT receipt date is 21st of April. I am to resume July 10th. Please what are the requirement to do premium processing.

- New Comment: I applied on 8th April regular processing.

Reddit Posts

Changed it to premium on June 14th and still no approval. This is Potmac center and they said there's some IT issue so can't tell what's going on.

Anybody in the same boat?

I swear it's anxiety inducing when I hear of April regular processing approvals. This endless wait....

- New Comment: Hey! I applied for my EAD on April 6th. On June 17th, my status changed to ?card is being produced?.

Still no change in status from past 8 days. My start date is 3rd July. Does anyone think I will get it in time?

- New Comment: My receipt day is April 13th no premium processing and it?s not even approved yet. Should I pay for pp now?

- New Comment: My receipt date was June 24th. Still hadn't received any updates as of August 7th, so I switched to premium processing. Approved Aug 9th, status is now "card is being produced."

- New Comment: Hi Everyone, I applied for my initial OPT premium processing i765 EAD card, approved by 11th and card was produced on 19th. 19th January card was picked by USPS and it was last scanned at Kansas city, MO distribution. After that the status showing in transit. I called usps many times, raised service request, filed missing mail search request but no help. Contacted uscis and explained the situation but they said "our work is approval and production of card" Once shipped not our problem you have to deal with USPS.

don't know what can I do next, feeling helpless.

Title of the post: F1 Visa got rejected

Body of the post: Hello, my F1 visa just got refused from a dropbox appointment. There is no reason given for refusal yet. Has anyone gone through this process? Can anyone help me with the process? I read a few posts but it didn't really help. Thank you. I am Scared as this is the last year of my Ph.D.

Reddit Posts

Update: I got an interview walk-in with a white slip. It mentions accompanying a legal guardian for an interview. Is it normal?

Update: Got approved. The counselor was also wondering why I brought my parents with me. But he later did ask them some basic questions. The counselor also asked me a lot of questions.

Thank you everyone for all the comments.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It's not allowed under U.S. visa regulations for them to refuse your visa 214b without interviewing you first, so you will at least get that opportunity!
- New Comment: Did it say refused after administrative processing?
- New Comment: Refused or rejected? Two different things. Refused means you will get a 221g and be called for interview or asked additional documents before approval. If denied a visa in the interview, that's a rejection.
- New Comment: I think it means that your visa is under AP so don't worry at all
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: You will probably need to provide more info or biometric info in person. Hope things work out for you.
- New Comment: What questions were you asked and what documents did they ask you to bring?
- New Comment: This is the message I got

​

Reddit Posts

"A U.S. consular officer has adjudicated and refused your visa application. Please follow any instructions provided by the consular officer. If you were informed by the consular officer that your case was refused for administrative processing, your case will remain refused while undergoing such processing. You will receive another adjudication once such processing is complete. Please be advised that the processing time varies and that you will be contacted if additional information is needed"

- New Comment: Country of application?

I would appeal their decision and do the following

I would do the following:

1- Talk to your DSO and ask them to prepare a letter to support your case explaining your need to return for your PhD as it's the last year, etc

2- Which state are you staying in? I would go and search for the representative senator of your area and there is a form you fill and tell them the issue you had while providing them an explanation of the situation you have

After you do that stuff hopefully, they will reconsider your case.

- New Comment: Same thing happened to me. When I went to collect my passport, it came with a slip that said I would need to come back in for an interview. So it could be the same for you.

- New Comment: u/HorseAdministrative6 could you update us with your experience once you get a response from the consulate here? I'm going through a similar situation and would be great to see what happened to your case. Thanks!

- New Comment: Don't worry about it. You should get it in 3-4 weeks from here.

They put me under AP after the visa interview at the Kolkata, India consulate. 21 days later on the CEAC website, the status showed "refused". I thought it was rejected. 3 days later the status changed to issued and I received an email that

Reddit Posts

my passport is ready for pick up with the visa stamped. Their online system is not super reliable.

- New Comment: Hey u/HorseAdministrative6. I am in the same situation right now and expecting my passport with instructions for interview, but my college is starting soon. How long did it take to get your approved visa after the interview?

- New Comment: Hey, how long did it take for you to get the visa..overall time length from the first Dropbox appointment to when you got visa at the end? I am in the same boat as yours...got refused...worried as hell....

Any suggestions do let me know

Title of the post: F1 STEM success stories

Body of the post: I am a senior at a university doing electrical engineering. How did you guys land a full-time job/internship in the US? Please share your success stories. Any tips would be appreciated.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Network network network. I cannot emphasize it enough. Even if you don't know anyone at the job you're applying for. Make a good impression with your connections and then use them as a reference for a job. Keep your LinkedIn/indeed profiles up to date. Use jobscan(highly recommended) and a good resume template (maybe from kickresume I think). That should give you a good chance to get an interview. The rest is up to you and how you sell/present yourself. Work on answering questions you think might come. Also work on turning your negatives into positives (for example, if the interviewer asks about what you think your weaknesses are and you say your weakness is that you often take your work home. You can add or shape it to say that yes, you do that but, that's because what you do is very important to you and you want to make sure that you plan ahead for any foreseeable obstacles that you might have/so that you have a good idea of what to do the next day). I think that's all of it from me. I'll let you know if I think of anything else.

- New Comment: I started looking for a job 6 months before graduating, you will create a network, and likely land a job

Reddit Posts

on your first month after graduation. You will go through 3-4 different resumes and you will actually learn to apply to jobs and conduct interviews. Sell yourself as a hard worker, GPA does count for some companies. After 5 months of searching for a job I got two offers on the same week, don't be scared to follow up, if they do not call you back it's likely that they won't hire you anyway, so send emails anyway, sometimes they will see you so interested that will give you a second chance. Apply for opt visa early, preferably on the first day you can. That way you can start working the week after you graduate! Does your university offer mock interviews and career advising? Use those resources, interviews can be very tough, you might think you nailed it, but in reality you performed sub optimally. Something else you can do is make a list of all the 'big' companies around your area, anything \$150M and 200+ employees is worth looking into, they have knowledge of visas, likely sponsor people. That's what I have done, looking for a job is a full time job itself, good luck!

- New Comment: You will hear a lot of success stories where the person has applied to 50+ some positions, has gone through multiple interviews, has gone above and beyond, and only after a long and arduous struggle, they finally succeeded - yay for hard work. And then you will hear a success story from a random girl while waiting in line at the DMV who applied to her first job on opt and got hired right away and they'd sponsor her visa too (true story). There's really no one-way to it but ultimately networking and having either an internship or some personal projects is a good start

- New Comment: Hey there I'm also an electrical engineer. In my case Long story short it was thanks to 'networking' but more specifically it was my dad's networking that helped me succeed. For internship: My dad worked at an engineering company and knew a lot of people there, asked around and got me an interview to work at a different department than his, nailed the interview and got hired. For full time job: After having done that intership, I applied to MANY positions everywhere but it all came down to a company where my dad had indirectly given my resume to the manager there, turns out they built the same product of the company where I did my internship so I got an interview pretty quickly based on my experience and got a job there. After I got fired from that place I landed a job at the company where I did my internship now as a full time engineer all thanks to the experience that I had accumulated from the past positions and the recommendation of my first supervisor and other work peers. Just trust the process and don't give up,

Reddit Posts

Once you land that first job the other ones will come way easier

- New Comment: I'm civil. For my first internship, I went to my school's career fair. I applied to as many positions as I could. One hired me for the summer and then they offered me a job at the end of the internship. I didn't take it since I wanted to go to grad school. In grad school, I did the same with the career fairs, didn't get any callbacks. But I applied to any position I saw online, I got three companies call me back for internships, two moved on to second round interviews. I accepted one offer before I got the second one. I interned there for the summer, at the end they said they liked me and that they wanted to keep me on board. So I interned part time while on my last semester of grad school, then went on OPT and then H1B.

I worked my ass off at those internships and extra curriculums in school though.

- New Comment: I graduated with B.S. and M.S. (the school had a 5 year program) in electrical engineering.

I have been applying for 3-4 jobs (via Indeed and LinkedIn) per week for 2 months, but only 3 companies wanted to do interviews with me so far. I am finally getting a job offer for my dream job (SoC Design Engineer) from my dream company.

I, unfortunately, don't have any internship experience outside my school (I only have 2 years of research assistance at my school). It is much better to have internship outside your school before you graduate (for networking and experience purpose).

Your Capstone project matters, so do your best on that. The interviewers will ask you about it during interviews since you will most likely have it on your resume.

EE internships are for students, so make sure that you do at least one internship outside your school before you graduate. Entry jobs for EE can require 1+ experience, but you should still apply to those jobs.

Reddit Posts

For OPT, currently paper based submission takes 2 months but the online based one takes 3 months. There is an OPT tracker website you can check, so make sure that you check the estimated time before you submit your OPT to USCIS.

Title of the post: on f1 visa on OPT, never filed taxes throughout college

Body of the post: Hi! So, I bumped into the 'Taxes Megathread' and learned that I should've been filing taxes ever since, but I never did. I'm honestly not sure how rare this situation is and if anybody has experienced this and could possibly give me some advice. I also worked on campus part-time. I haven't filed taxes in the last 5 years (from 2016), so is it possible to post-file taxes? If yes, can I do it all on Sprintax, along with my 2020 taxes from OPT employment?

Aghhh I'm honestly just so worried that I would run into problems in the future.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: US taxes are so confusing and terrible! I am always amazed when students remember to do them, and never surprised when they forget. :) It's definitely not *great* that you never filed them, but it's not the worst thing you could ever do. Especially if you were making a relatively small amount of money just working on campus! You can definitely post-file (usually called backfile) taxes and get them all in now. Depending on what you owe/are owed, you may have to pay a penalty. After you have done that, I would say try not to worry about it - that's really and truly all you can do. Timely tax filing can be a factor in later immigration stuff (like a PR application), but I do think documenting that you "tried your best" counts for something.

I am not too familiar with Sprintax so it might be possible to do through there, but tbh, if you can afford it I would highly recommend you hire a tax preparer for this year to help you with the backfiling rather than trying to do it on your own. Just make sure you specifically find a tax preparer who specializes in nonresident alien taxes so they file the right forms for you - a lot of tax prepares are NOT aware of this difference and will, for example, file Form 1040 instead of 1040-NR.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: For me I was filling the wrong form for years. Now I have to amend my taxes. Stress!!!
- New Comment: Yeah you need to file form 8843 regardless of not making any money. It's not the best but my question is what has your international student office been doing?????
- New Comment: In a similar situation, I never filed taxes for the last few years because I didn't work and didn't make any money, but I still made like pennies for interest on my bank account, but seeing the mega thread it seemed I still had to file the exempt individuals form as well.
- New Comment: Hi, so I know it's been a while since. I recently went to H&R block out of sheer anxiety knowing that I haven't been filing taxes (when I should've) and merely, not knowing how to file. They were definitely helpful and approachable in the office. It was obvious that they probably don't get cases like mine too often, so they were almost "navigating" it as we go along, at least that's what it looked like to me. Anyway, my advice is to not go empty handed to h&r block. I'm not earning more than 50k, so paying 200 to file my 2020's taxes and 500 more to back file from 2017 was definitely hefty. I obv don't know about their fee schedule and I just felt like I was helpless since I really don't know a lot about taxes, and so I paid that sum.

I was def wrong to not ask about their fees upfront before consulting them (please don't make the same mistake). I was also wrong to panic about the situation. Definitely ask questions and ask around first. I had so much fear in filing my taxes wrong so I went to a fairly reputable (or commonly heard) group, but also learned that some preparers can also do it correctly with less than that sum.

Here's just my little experience. Go see for yourself. (Hopefully, share yours too.)

- New Comment: Filing tax is your responsibility, and office of international students always send emails about tax during tax seasons - you should have paid attention.

That being said, there are two questions:

Reddit Posts

1. At any point last 5 years , were you a resident alien by IRS definition?
2. If you are a resident alien, how much did you earn in each year during the last 5 years?

If you became a resident alien at some point last 5 years but didn't file tax, unless you had some bizarre situations, the chance is that you are *owed* tax refund, hence bear no penalty. Still should file taxes, though.

However, if you were a non-resident alien, then you may have some tax penalty because of higher tax rate- but it is definitely fixable. What you need to do ASAP is to contact a department that handles international students' tax and see if they can help backfile your taxes. People make mistakes and IRS is more than happy to cooperate with well-meaning taxpayers, but once they determine that you are deliberately committing tax evasion, that is a whole another issue.

Title of the post: ABOUT TAXES - am I screwed!?

Body of the post: Hi guys!

So I have been an F1 student for roughly 4 years now. I am currently on OPT. I stupidly never knew F1 needs to file taxes!?! I know this is really stupid but no one has told me about this and none of my fellow F1 friends have ever filed either! I want to fix this asap.

Some info - I have been working for the most part, but only part time. Making NOT EVEN \$5,000/year.

Only recently that I've started my OPT (June 2020) that I've started earning more than \$12,000.

I have some questions:

1. How fucked am I?

Reddit Posts

2. Can I amend this and file backwards?

3. What the heck do I use (software etc)?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Tax preparer here. You can pretty much file your taxes even 5 years later. The IRS might just complain and refuse to give you a refund of your overpaid taxes(if any) I work at Sprintax and can guarantee you that it would be perfect for you. Not being paid for this, just trying to help out. Also if you did not work in the USA as a f1 visa you still have to file form 8843 in order to report your exempts presence in the USA.

- New Comment: You never wanna mess with the irs and the taxes bro. Hopefully u can find answers.

- New Comment: You can file taxes for previous years that you've missed, you just won't get a return from them. You should talk with a tax professional that knows how to file taxes for international students. Sprintax is good, or any CPA that knows how to file taxes for international students.

- New Comment: Hire a lawyer and work your way through. You most probably lost money to IRS and didn't get returns.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: The mod will probably give you the best answer, but if your employer withheld tax from ur paycheck and you don?t owe anything to the IRS, I think you are fine. You can definitely file backwards and possibly get tax return. I had to do that my sophomore year coz no one told me what to file at first either. Sprintax tends to be most used software for F-1

- New Comment: Go to H&R Block and explain your situation to a tax expert.

- New Comment: Please post this in the Tax Question Megathread

https://reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/ljb2hk/tax_question_megathread/

Reddit Posts

Also, you can file back taxes very easily. Either download the correct form from the IRS website for the corresponding tax years or do the same by filing with the appropriate tax software.

Title of the post: I20/Sevis might get terminated

Body of the post: Hey I am in a dire situation. I am a rising junior in the US as an international student and might get my i20 terminated bcz I had overdue balance and I paid it by 7th August but transferring money from the bank takes 2 to 3 business days. According to an official at my University I violated their policy of showing me intent to come back or no even tho I had told them I would. My fees is paid but now they are deciding on whether to let me return or no but based on that officials tone he really wants me to go back to my country and take a readmission to the same university. I can't go back bcz this is just a bullshit mishap and I don't have the expenses to. I am trying to convince but I don't know what is up. I know I would not need a new f1 visa I just need to be issued a new i20 when I return in January. But my expenses are messing me up and I need to stay in the US bcz travelling back and forth is a huge mess. Is there any way I can temporarily maintain my f1 status and return to my university in January? Kindly guide me as soon as possible

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Did you let your school know about your financial situation? Were you not able to register for the following term because of the previous balance? Why does the university want you to go back to your country and reapply?
- New Comment: Join a community college transfer your sevis and transfer back
- New Comment: Do you have written evidence (email, message, a form of some sort) telling them that you intend to stay? If you were overdue because of financial trouble, did you meet with the financial office, have a conversation about getting on a payment plan of some sort? Even if they said no to a payment plan or payment extension, the fact you had the conversation indicates your intent to stay.
- New Comment: This is crazy? which state are you in?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: The university officials sound pretty rude and racist. If they're gonna make everything hard, even the payments, they should NOT allow international students anymore. You don't deserve this.

- New Comment: wait indiana? well i wont ask what school you go to out of privacy but i'm in IU right now lol.

anyways back to the point. If the school officials dont budge and your visa gets terminated in your current school, at this point, you really don't have a lot of options.

Take my advice with a grain of salt because I'm not an F1 expert, only know about f1 due to my cousins and their status but I'm PRETTY sure that if your f1 is terminated you have a certain number of days to depart the country. Failure to do so is violating the f1 visa and it'll be nearly impossible to apply for a new one in the future if this happens.

Most likely, even if you change your status, I'm pretty sure you still have to leave the US and go back to your home country to apply at the US consulate there. So your options aren't great.

Not too sure about community colleges or what not, maybe you could enroll in ivytech? I have no idea about that but most if not all schools have closed apps so you wont be able to apply.

- New Comment: If nothing works out try joining a community college for a semester and then transfer back. Talk to your international office to get more info.

- New Comment: Is it a public or private institution?

Title of the post: is this normal? I-765 EAD OPT application

Body of the post: I submitted my application on April 1. It then told me that it would take approximately 2 months to process my case. However, at some point the estimated time disappeared and it's just said it's taking longer than normal etc etc. It's almost been 3 months since I submitted my application.

Reddit Posts

Am I screwed or do I just keep waiting? Can I contact someone? My work start date isn't until September but it stresses me out not having any updates. Appreciate all help

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >do I just keep waiting?

Yes. If you want it asap, apply for premium processing. Guarantees decision within 30 days. Given that next week is August, I would do PP.

- New Comment: Yeah that happens all the time. They keep updating the estimated time and then it runs out so it says it's taking longer than expected. I think the average time this year is 4 months. My STEM OPT took 4 months to complete, and I've seen others say similar things. My initial OPT a year ago only took 2 weeks from submission to my card being in my hands. It's crazy how much it increased

- New Comment: They are currently processing cases submitted around 30-31 March. You should hopefully get by sometime early next week.

- New Comment: Yeah this is normal. Applied mine on Feb 20th. I think it was approved on June 24th.

For the first few weeks it kept showing the timeline as 6 weeks. Then in April, it showed me one week. And in May it the timeline disappeared.

Only thing to do is wait or apply for premium like everyone is saying

- New Comment:

Reddit Posts

Yes, very normal.

My I765 was saying the same.

Then after like 3 weeks moved to 4 weeks, then after one week said 4 months.

Then after one week said case approved.

My card is on transit and i am expecting it in a few days from

- New Comment: Here is my I-765 EAD timeline for both OPT & STEM OPT.

OPT:

|Card Was Delivered To Me By The Post Office|March 29, 2022|

|:-|:-|

|The Post Office picked up mail containing your new card.|March 30, 2022|

|We produced your new card for your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization.|March 29, 2022|

|We are producing your new card for your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization.|March 25, 2022|

|We received your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, and sent you a receipt notice.|March 2, 2022|

STEM OPT:

|Card Was Delivered To Me By The Post Office|September 20, 2023|

|:-|:-|

|We produced your new card for your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization.|September 20, 2023|

|We received your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, and sent you a receipt notice.|May 9, 2023|

In my case, STEM OPT approval took much longer than normal processing time. Since it was past 6 months of filing ,

Reddit Posts

my case was considered under "Outside Normal Processing time". I contacted the customer care on 10th September, 2023 and asked them to take a look at my case. It was subsequently reviewed and my STEM OPT EAD card was produced in two weeks.

- New Comment: This is what I experienced. My receipt date was March 29. Initially, it gave me a three month waiting period and then no waiting period with just ?your case is taking longer than expected to process.?

I got my approval late last week, and my EAD card has been produced. I'm just waiting to get it in hand now.

- New Comment: the same thing is happening to me rn ? but the express one is like \$1900 ive waited 3 months already i feel like its not worth to pay it rn

- New Comment: I applied for PP on 07/16. Job starts Sept 9.

Currently out of the country, so waiting for EAD to be shipped to my uncle, then he will mail it to me.

Have a flight back to the US on Aug 31.

How did you enter US while OPT pending?

- New Comment: I've done OPT twice and the original estimate takes around 4 months. So if it's taking longer it might be because they've received a lot of applications to process

- New Comment: Piece of advice, if you can afford it, always do premium processing. I was waiting for my stem OPT 3.5 months and still nothing. Paid for PP, got approved in 8 days.

- New Comment: It's normal!

My friends who applied on march 30 and march 31 got approved last week.

Last night my other friend got approved but all of them still show the same status.

Dont be hasty, wait this week and expect the mail since you are in line next meaning April 1

Hope this helps!

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Hi

Any update on your OPT?

- New Comment: Its the same status showing on mine, I had applied on April 12, 2024. Don't understand why is it taking so long.

- New Comment: My concern is I have 2 dependents on me F2 (my kids).

I need to travel later in the year. My status shows the same and I have applied on Apr 12, 2024.

None of us can travel as stuck with this here.

We need to have patience.. nothing can be done and only wait.

Premium is too expensive, I can't afford.

- New Comment: I am too waiting for the case decision step, and my question for the people who went through all of this is, what date do you then put that you are available to work in job applications? I have started to apply since it's hard to get a job, and so far I have been mentioning that I can start work mid-August (3 months after applying for my EAD card), but now I am wondering if that is not gonna be the case ?

- New Comment: Every case is different, it's nice to have an estimate of timelines but don't make a decision based on other people's timelines entirely. I got the same notice saying "case taking longer than expected" and waited until 20 days before my start date. I asked my employer if they could pay for pp and they did! I got approved earlier this week but still can't start because the card is not here yet.

I suggest opting for pp, ask your employer first and if they can't pay for it, just go ahead and pay because I'm assuming

Reddit Posts

your salary for 3-4weeks would be more than \$1700. Run the numbers and see what makes sense for you :)

- New Comment: I applied on 4th april, the status turned to its longer than epected on 2nd june and on 22nd july it turned to 2 months, finally on 23rd july its showing 4 months

- New Comment: check the documents tab sometimes there will be an approval letter there. for example contrary to most people i never got any email from USCIS telling me that my case was approved. however it was approved in the documents tab, and then they mailed a piece of paper that was a copy basically what that document tab said. I applied Feb 17th or something. I believe the document approval was March 17th and then the physical card came almost 3 weeks ish after

- New Comment: Happened to me

Title of the post: [F-1 initial OPT] Is it legal to do part-time jobs with a full-time position?

Body of the post: Hi,

I just graduated from school with a Ph.D., and the current pay for my full-time role is low.

I want to earn more with part-time/ freelancing jobs, is it legal for an F-1 initial OPT holder to do so?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: OPT has a TOTAL hour MINIMUM of 20hrs.

STEM OPT has a TOTAL employer hours minimum of 20hrs PER employer.

- New Comment: Yes, it is legal

- New Comment: Yeah as long as the part-time job is related to your field of study, you can do both legally during your first year of OPT, since your work hours would add up to more than 20 hours per week.

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: Can F1 OPT meet 20hrs through two part-time jobs (10hr/week each)?

Body of the post: I have a potential job offer for a part-time position that would be for 10hr/week. I am looking for another job that is full time in the same city. However in the meantime I'm likely to be offered another part-time job through the first job's network. If both the part-time jobs come through will it qualify the requirement of >20hrs to maintain F1-OPT (post completion) status? I'm unable to find clarity on this online - the 20hrs/week minimum criteria isn't clearly explained on my university's website, whether it should come from each employment (any type of employment has to be at least 20hrs/week each) or if it can be a combination. Please help me figure this out.

Thanks in advance!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes, you can.
- New Comment: It can be a combination of any number of jobs, just the total hours need to be >20.
- New Comment: I don't think you can do that thumb of rule on OPT is employment has to be a minimum of 20 hrs per week on a single job , not through a combo of two jobs. You can do two jobs as long as each is a 20 hr per week making it 40 hrs per week
- New Comment: Short answer, yes.
- New Comment: If this is true then it's extremely encouraging! Do you have any documents or links to a verified source that I can read where this is stated?
- New Comment: I don't think you can do two different jobs and combine them for 20+ hrs together as each of them must be 20+ hrs individually.

Title of the post: Can I take this stipend? (Please Help! Urgent)

Body of the post: Hi! An international here in Undergrad. I'm a full-time student who is currently doing an internship

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during the summer internship.

I have my current company on my I-20 right now and my internship is ongoing right now.

But I also got selected for a Conference with another company. It's a Conference + program. They selected 100 people out of 400 for this program.

They will be flying us to their headquarters for 4 days. And after finishing the conference, they would give us a \$2500 stipend + an internship offer for 2025.

Can I take this \$2500? I know it will be tax applicable and I would pay the tax. But is such a stipend allowed for us as this company is not on my CPT?

I'm really confused and the company wants me to let them know within 2 days. I would appreciate any help!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Nah you are so lucky and unlucky at the same time ?
- New Comment: No, you need CPT for this conference as well. Talk to your DSO. Or else if later caught they will just instantly terminate your sevis
- New Comment: Yes, you can take this. Email your DSO about this so they can update you with CPT.
- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: F1-OPT, where are you guys looking for volunteer opportunities?

Body of the post: Hi guys, I recently graduated with a BA in Computer Science. My original plan was to do a PhD

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immediately after graduating but I was getting advice from a lot of people older and, I thought, wiser than me who were telling me to get a job for a year or two to pay off my loan first, so I messed up trying to do both at the same time, and now I don't have a job and my OPT is going to arrive soon.

I'm currently looking for remote volunteer opportunities to extend the 90 days of unemployment that I get on my OPT. While I would relocate for a paying job or internship, it's just not practical to do that for an unpaid position. To those of you who were in a similar situation, how did you find volunteer opportunities and what work did you do?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Go do research with a professor. Applying to grad school requires you to show abilities to do research anyway.
- New Comment: I was in the same boat last year - there are a bunch of online volunteering platforms like VolunteerMatch where you can find NGOs and projects and work for them. This was a lifesaver for me on OPT last year.
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Go to volunteer match and look for ngo positions asap. Try reaching out to Crowddoing too
- New Comment: Changing the present NGO
- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Anyone successful in finding a part-time job while looking for a full-time job on ST

Body of the post: What are you doing to get income? I'm trying to meet my basic expenses as I look for a full time job but want to know if anyone has been successful here

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Been in the U.S. for 9 years

Body of the post: California specifically. I've been on an F1 the whole time. Did my 1 year post completion OPT last year and I'll be starting graduate school this fall for another 3 years. I'm in this alone so I'm just figuring in out one step at a time. My goal is permanent residency (gc) and eventually citizenship. My understanding is that my only channels are either employment sponsorship or marriage. Am I missing anything? Also are there any perks for living consecutively in the states for that long? For example I recently found out that I qualify for covered California health insurance.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No perks no advantages unfortunately

- New Comment: >My understanding is that my only channels are either employment sponsorship or marriage.

Yep.

>Also are there any perks for living consecutively in the states for that long?

None

- New Comment: Look into eb2-NIW

- New Comment: similar situation and sorry i dont have a answer but could you elaborate about the covered health insurance? how is that possible and did your dso accepted that?

- New Comment: Your additional option is the National Interest Waiver. In order to pull it off you must be diligent in presenting a lot and publishing so that you can establish yourself as an expert in your field. Collaborate with professors

Reddit Posts

so that you can be included on their research papers. I don't know what your area of study is, but see if you can tailor your niche in so contributive a way that you are considered practically indispensable. That's how I did it. You will get another year of OPT after grad school so that will buy you some more time. Others have answered the question of if living in state for so long gives any perks. Best of luck to you.

- New Comment: Hey I'm on the same boat here. The only difference is I'm doing STEM OPT before grad school (tryna save for it). Congrats on getting in and I wish you all the best!

- New Comment: Is your family helping you financially?

Title of the post: I'm stuck, please give me some advice

Body of the post: I'm an F1 Visa student and I just graduated from an elite university. I have a great job lined up in San Francisco, CA and the job pays really well.

The problem is that my F-1 OPT is taking way too long to process and I don't think I'll get it in time for my start date (July 15) unless I get premium processing. The issue is premium processing costs \$1680. My family and extended family are incredibly low-income and simply would never have the funds to help me at all. I have never taken any debt in my life so I don't know how loans would work. I can pay the entire loan back as soon as I get my sign-on bonus in early August anyways but I really don't know who to ask and I just generally feel really uncomfortable asking anyone for money.

Any advice? Should I get an institution to give me the loan? The main issue is I need to switch my OPT processing and expedite it right now and I am guessing the loan may take days or weeks to process.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Credit card ? Also the total cost will be 2100 something

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- New Comment: Try taking up a new credit card with a higher limit. Or maybe borrow from friends? Like using a friend's credit card. They know you'll pay them back since you're starting your job soon.
- New Comment: You have an offer letter and SSN? Time to get better credit cards. Say your salary is 100k, you?ll easily get a credit limit of 7-10k. Once it gets approved, you can start using the virtual card right away in most cases. You can also look towards cards that have 0% APR for the first few months.
- New Comment: Try asking your company for an advance on their relocation bonus or joint bonus (which you might be getting)? There?s a possibility that they might be willing to help you out.
- New Comment: If you can afford a job in California, you sure can afford to pay 2100. You must have friends who can loan you the money for sometime?
- New Comment: How this inefficient government makes money
- New Comment: You can explain your dilemma to the company and they may pay for the PP on your behalf, people do it.
- New Comment: Can you push back your start date? Companies that hire people on OPT tend to be more understanding and they tend to know more about the process too. It might be worth it to explain your situation to your recruiter or whoever is communicating with you. It really depends on the company though so you do need to be careful. My personal experience was positive when I tried to negotiate my start date.
- New Comment: When did you apply for it?
- New Comment: Credit card
- New Comment: Personal loan? Try discover or Citi. I?m baffled on how you?re unaware of ways to get a loan after studying here. Like many said here, you can ask for a CC limit increase straight from the app. Or go to a bank and get a personal loan. It?s not \$100000 you?re asking for, it?s \$2000. Also Google is your friend
- New Comment: Have you tried contacting USCIS ? Is your case already under adjudication? If it is, then Premium

Reddit Posts

Processing might not help. What does your portal show currently? I am also in a similar situation.

- New Comment: Man you gotta get that loan !!!! You playing ! Borrow some from friends use a credit card for some and if you still short loan from those credit places

- New Comment: Try taking a personal loan from your bank, just make sure you pay it back ASAP, cause interest loans on that tend to be high

- New Comment: I was in similar spot during college. Two things that helped me previously:

- I called the bank and they actually increased my credit limit. I didn't know this was a thing! It was really fast, took 30minutes. I didn't need to show up at the bank or anything.

- I was in another crunch prior to learning about the bank thing. I talked to my college international student office, and they guided me to a small loan that the school gave which I paid back quickly afterwards without interest.

Good luck! You'll get through this.

- New Comment: I'd check with your school's international office. Try explaining your situation and see what they can do about it. Also, if you have a credit union in your school, it's worth asking from them about a small loan as well.

Title of the post: US Visa Website Blocked

Body of the post: Yesterday, I signed up for an account on usvisadocs.com and everything was working well; I even paid the visa application fees. However, after some time, when I tried to log in again, I received a message saying "you have been blocked." This issue is also occurring on my phone. Is there any way to resolve this?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Did you mean to use ustraveldocs.com? I have never heard of usvisadocs

Be careful of where you put in your info dude

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Yes, same thing happend the other day. I logged in after 10 hours and was able to navigate. Given that you just made the payment, you got that error. Dont panic this is normal.
- New Comment: Wait and try again later
- New Comment: Try using incognito window. That helps sometimes.
- New Comment: Just refresh it. It will work
- New Comment: Change browser! :)
- New Comment: Make sure you arent using a VPN/anonymous network. That by default would block your request. Also, if you dont have a leased line or a public IP, it can be the case that you are sharing a public IP with multiple other subscribers thanks to your ISP. Turn off your VPN and try again. Contact your ISP if the issue persists
- New Comment: Use another device or network. Or change your browser and make sure you're not connected to VPN
- New Comment: Were you able to login? Having the same problem
- New Comment: Hello! I'm having the same problem. Tried doing private and switching to my mobile data. Hoping someone can help :(
- New Comment: Same heree and have my interview on 13th august?is that going to be a problem for my interview?

Title of the post: Pick a low paying job or wait it out..

Body of the post: I know a lot of people here are just trying to at least get a job but I'm kind of conflicted.. I might be getting an offer soon that needs me to relocate 100miles.. no relocation assistance but the pay is 58k.. and they might sponsor H1b for me in about a year.. and the work is pretty basic but my main problem is that they are a kind of IT staffing firm.. meanwhile I keep seeing my LinkedIn connections getting into big companies with 100k minimums all through networking and referrals.. I am currently working on campus in with the CS department (16/hr) so my OPT clock is good till the next semester.. I just don't know if I should go through the trouble of moving and setting up over there if I

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ultimately want a high paying software job...

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I mean you either have a job or you go home. What do you choose? And if the sponsoring h1b part is true, you clearly don't have to think.

And by the way, never compare yourself to LinkedIn's connections. They don't live your life, why do you need to live theirs?

- New Comment: Consider that the median salary in the United States is \$59k.

Also consider: what is the cost of living where the job is located? How does that salary compare to the median salary for the area? That will dictate a lot about your quality of life - there are places where someone earning \$59k will really struggle and have to have roommates and there are other places where you can rent an entire house comfortably.

- New Comment: 58K is too low for dev job, are you trying to join some sort of Desi consultancy? if so, be careful. + if your wage doesn't match up with prevailing wage in your region, the company might not be able to file a petition for h1b unless they bump up your salary.

- New Comment: Join the firm, grind leetcode & system design and target your preparation for the companies that you're interested in.

- New Comment: No sane person would not take the job considering current market situation and being an international student. If you keep your ego, you'll keep it forever!

- New Comment: T25 MBA here. I recently received a \$65K job offer from a promising real estate tech firm based in Texas. Despite being a seeded company with an exciting future, the salary is admittedly lower than typical MBA graduate expectations, though it is compensated somewhat with stock options. A significant upside is their willingness to sponsor my H1B visa, supported by the CEO's notable background and the company's aspirations for Series A funding

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soon.

What stands out most, for me, is the genuine appreciation and investment in what I bring to the team. Having endured a challenging internship at Dell last year, where despite intense efforts and personal sacrifices, I faced unmet promises and saw firsthand the instability within larger corporations, I value the contrast in environment.

This smaller, more agile company presents a stark difference with its meaningful leadership and clear vision. My concerns about pay are overshadowed by the stability and respect I receive, not to mention the invaluable promise of support with my immigration challenges. This is a huge reassurance, especially given the added pressure of managing my OPT unemployment clock amid job uncertainties.

The peace of mind knowing I am valued, and that my family's and my own security is prioritized over the unpredictability and often cutthroat nature of bigger tech firms, cannot be overstated. Additionally, the company's flexibility and assistance in exploring immigration avenues beyond the H1B visa demonstrate a commitment to my well-being and future within the U.S.

While the salary may not meet typical MBA expectations, the comprehensive support, stable culture, and potential for personal growth and impact make this offer highly appealing.

- New Comment: I am in the same boat 1.5 years ago, still with the same job. You have to realize it's a long haul. You probably will be stuck in the job much longer than you expect. Did I get H1B? Yes I did.

Title of the post: I-765 Submitted April 1st, now USCIS is showing an 8 month processing time. Is th

Body of the post: I am on an F-1 visa and I submitted my I-765 on April 1st. I got a paper notice at my address confirming receipt, and I have not received any request for further info or documents.

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Upon looking at the myprogress section in my USCIS account, I'm shown an estimated processing time of ****8 months****. Even as an estimate, this is so long. My university says that it takes 90-120 days, and many peers have received decisions much earlier than that. A friend who submitted his I-765 a few hours before me is shown a 2 month processing time.

I am confused, panicky, and USCIS is unreachable as all they have in way of contact is a chat and voice bot that reiterated the same standard info about processing time. I am unable to find an appropriate USCIS email to inquire.

Has anyone else been shown such a long processing estimate? Do you think it's accurate and that it could actually take this long? I'm hoping this is the absolute worst case and that the needle will start moving soon.

After approval, how long does it typically take for the EAD card to reach your address?

<https://preview.redd.it/u3x1i9ap5awc1.png?width=2062&format=png&auto=webp&s=9c2b79e39ce0bbb04b967736e93f8fc67b2fbd36>

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you need it soon then apply for premium. If not then just wait, delay only helps you.

In either case no need to panic.

- New Comment: I applied on March 5th. In April 1st week, it showed as 1 week and then suddenly it changed 4 months.

Two days after it changed to 4 months, mine got approved. Those processing times are so random. However, you've applied a month after I did, so it might take a bit more time, but definitely not 8 months. It may take a month or more

- New Comment:

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I know all of us are still struggling to make the decision immediately because of the different conditions that we are facing right now. I just wanted to let you know that I have been waiting for my I-130 for three years. Everybody says that possible the department throw my papers. But I am hoping every day that there will be something good that will come. I would like to share what I am using so I can still hold on to my application.

I am using the Lawfully app. It is very useful; I was able to see the timeline, and most especially the lawyer consultation. Here in my country, lawyer consultation is very expensive. But here in the Lawfully app, I was able to get guidance and information that I needed for a lower price.

Just yesterday, I was approved for my application. I am so happy. I feel like there is still hope despite the long wait. It's worth it to wait. Hopefully, you will get approval too. Stay safe, everyone, and God may bless you all the time.

- New Comment: The timeline is not accurate. But you will wait at least a minimum of 2.5 months before approval because you applied late.

Don't act panicked when you applied very late

- New Comment: No way to know. Those processing times change without notice too, in either direction. If you pay for premium processing, you'll guarantee a decision in 30 days, with shipping soon to follow.

- New Comment: How did you unlock my progress tab?. I submitted my premium processing application 2 days ago and did not get my progress tab enabled.

- New Comment: I think it's because more and more people opted for premium processing nowadays which causes yours to get pushed back.

- New Comment: Yes! I applied on March 23 and got the exact 8-month estimate several weeks later. But at some point, the time estimate disappeared, and now I see that the case decision is taking longer than expected instead.

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- New Comment: Hello,

My i20 issue date is 1st March, 2024 and I applied for my EAD I-765 for OPT on 31st March, 2024 which falls in the 30-day period.

But in the receipt notice, it shows the receipt date as 1st April,2024. What should I do now? I have tried to look up online but I did not get a definite response.

I have to start working by June first week, so please suggest to me regarding this issue.

- New Comment: Hi,

I'm facing the same issue regarding my case taking longer than expected. Have you received a decision on your case yet?

- New Comment: I have a receipt date of April 4 and never got an estimated time it seemed to always say "it is taking longer than expected", any update on your case?

- New Comment: Any updates?

Title of the post: Can I withdraw from university if I got my receipt for my I-485 case?

Body of the post: Hey everyone,

I'm a Masters student in California. Last year I got married with an American citizen and this year I applied for green card(I-485). The thing is that my spouse works in Texas and I had to move in with their cause of her job. I just received my receipt from USCIS. My question is that can I now withdraw from university and get my I-20 terminated and still stay in the country? Most people online say yes, but I still wanted to ask. Thanks for any response in advance!

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Depends on the school. My school doesn't allow students drop F1 until they have green card in hand, and my attorney suggested the same, just in case something goes wrong. Some schools allow it. Contact your DSO.
- New Comment: Yes!! You could have withdrawn the moment you applied too. But if your green card gets rejected (which is very unlikely) you'd be out of status but even then if you apply again within 30 days you're fine
- New Comment: Why drop out of school? Would you not want to get your masters for better job prospects?
- New Comment: If you just applied for I-485 and not accepted yet or approve, I advice you to transfer school to keep your status as f1. You never know what will happen or how long it takes to approve. It is also the advice of my lawyer while waiting. Hope that helps.
- New Comment: I recommend doing long distance until your case is approved. It is too risky to go out of status before. One year doesn't change much.
- New Comment: You can, but its probably better to transfer to a school in Texas. Job market's not so hot right now
- New Comment: Anything can happen with your marriage. Why risk going out of status? Finish your master degree even if it means transferring schools,

Title of the post: Did i accidentally overstay my visa?

Body of the post: Hi i was in the states for 23 fall semester as an exchange student. I had so much fun that i ended up failing almost all of my classes. Matter of fact, i have acquired 3 credits during that semester. I flew back home two weeks before the 60 day grace period mark.

Didnt think much of it at the time till a friend of mine who used to be a fully enrolled student mentioned that he got kicked outa school for his low grades and had to leave right after the semester ended.(or else risk leaving a record of illegal stay)

Reddit Posts

I want to know if my last few weeks after the semester ended was legitimate or illegal ???

I want to go back this summer vacation and i dont want to be sent back by some immigration officer

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you dipped out two weeks before hitting the 60-day grace period after your semester ended, you should be all good. That grace period is exactly for that, to give you some breathing room before you have to leave the US. So if you left within that timeframe, your departure was legit. If you're planning to visit again this summer, just make sure all your documents are in order and explain your situation clearly if asked. I think it should be fine. The best way to make sure is to run it by your school counselor. Hope this helps!

- New Comment: Yes. You can stay at US in 60 day grace period.

- New Comment: You should be ok! It's likely that your friends' SEVIS record was terminated due to suspension, which means he was not granted a grace period and had to leave immediately.

If you were not suspended from school and/or your SEVIS record was not terminated, you are allowed the 60 day grace period.

- New Comment: You were exchange student, it is legit. Staying after grace period is kind of an issue not before that

- New Comment: You did not accrue any illegal time. But you likely will never get another F1 visa until you can explain the situation and prove you will be a good student if you return.

Title of the post: Multiple employments while on F1-OPT. Only main employer mentioned in I-20

Body of the post: Asking for my spouse (We are both from India).

My spouse is currently on H1B (academic, started in July 2023). He was on STEM OPT prior to that.

Reddit Posts

He worked for employer A from Sep 2020 to April 2021 full time (from May 2021 to May 2023, he was paid as a part time consultant - 1 hour/week at the same company and was given 1099-NEC for the tax years 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023, **but did not perform any work at all, and was just on their company payroll/website**).

He worked for employer B from May 2021 to Feb 2023 full time.

He is working for his current employer since May 2023, his H1B was approved since July 2023.

We are planning to go to India in Dec 2024 for visa stamping and we realized a few issues based on the above:

During his OPT, his I-20 mentioned employer A only from Sep 2020 to April 2021 and does not mention it beyond that while he was paid as a consultant . The subsequent I-20s have employer B followed by employer C listed, but not employer A. He informed his DSO, and his DSO said it would not be an issue to work for another employer, but he did not report it on his I-20 since it was 1 hour/week.

He filled out his i-983 in 2020 with employer A, with employer B alone in 2021 and 2022 and with employer C in 2023 (with who is on an H1B with).

Secondly, he was paid till Sep 15 2023 from employer A and he only contacted employer A to stop payment from Sep 15 (he assumed that his H1B started from Oct 1), so there were a few months when employer A payments overlapped with Employer C H1B payments.

Is this considered unauthorized work (both while on F1 as well as H1B), and is there a way for us to fix it (he was thinking of returning the payment from May 2023 till Sep 15 2023, the duration when he started with employer C).

Should we not risk it to go get our visa stamped and/or will we be deported at POE?

Reddit Posts

He has started his GC process with EB1-A, so we might get a green card in 4-5 years.

We've been having sleepless nights due to this oversight and would like any advice on what to do.

TIA!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: So why was he on payroll if he didn't perform any work? 1099nec is for self employment and is not allowed on h1b, I'm not sure if it's allowed on stem opt. It is sometimes given for awards or scholarships on f1. But I think this is a violation unfortunately?even if he was full time employed by employer b on stem opt and received this extra 1 hour/week, he is going beyond full time work and could be a problem

- New Comment: Please correct me if I'm wrong, but if he was being paid for only 1 hour per week by Employer A during STEM OPT, wouldn't that be a violation of STEM OPT? Doesn't one need to work for at least 20 hours for an employer during STEM OPTION?

- New Comment: OPT employment authorization does not come from having an employer's name appear on an I-20, so there is absolutely no F-1 status/OPT requirement to have an I-20 with an employer's name on it. The proof of authorization for OPT is the OPT EAD.

What IS important that all employment/practical training conducted during OPT, even for an hour, is recorded properly in SEVIS. And of course, during the STEM OPT having the I-983 completed by any employer during that extended OPT authorization.

- New Comment: Isn't a violation of OPT as self employment is allowed. It clearly is a violation of the STEM OPT though as you cannot be self employed. It's also a violation of H1B if he kept this arrangement ongoing after transitioning to

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H1B.

Title of the post: F1 Student and Medicaid

Body of the post: I have been qualified for Medicaid as an F1 student but its only useful for emergencies. I got my card and stuff in the mail today, However After doing some research I learned that its not advisable for F1 students to be on Medicaid because my future F1 visa applications may be denied. I'm literally so confused and pissed off because the healthcare lady at my school put me on it and didn't inform me about this. Idk what to do.... does anyone else here have experience with Medicaid? I don't want my

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It's a violation of immigration law for non-immigrant visa holders to go on public assistance. You should definitely not be on Medicaid, and it can definitely cause you issues in the future.

Maybe your school didn't know you were on an F1 when making the suggestion? Medicaid enrollment should require an attestation that you are eligible (LPR or US Citizen). If you marked yes, that is misrepresentation and grounds for future denial of visas and a potential entry bar.

- New Comment: Enrolled, no problem but don?t use it. If possible unenroll. Once you use it, future green card applications may be affected.

This is just my own opinion?pls don?t take it as final

- New Comment: Why don?t you enroll in Obama care? Healthcare.gov. It?s not Medicaid because you?re still paying a small fee for insurance

- New Comment: I don?t think you should be qualifying for Medicaid? Don?t you have a health insurance through your school?

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Title of the post: Sharing EAD Card Timeline

Body of the post: Just sharing the timeline of me receiving my EAD card from application to card delivery for reference:

Visa type: F1 (Graduation date: December 20, 2023)

Date of application: December 10, 2023

Receipt notice delivered a week or so later

Date of approval: February 4, 2024

Approval notice received a week or so later

Date of Card Produced: February 18, 2024

Date of EAD Card Delivery: February 22, 2024

So the whole process from date of application too the delivery took 2 months and 13 days.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Same. I applied on Dec 10th and got it on Feb 22nd.

- New Comment: Congratulations!! When did you receive an email to create a SEVP Portal account?

- New Comment: Applied last day of October. Received on 2nd Jan.

- New Comment: Omg now I am confused. If my start date is may 13, can I actually get the card in my hand by then if I apply by March 1st??

Title of the post: Is there a job board like linked in that shows jobs willing to sponsor?

Body of the post: Hi,

I was just wondering if anyone knows any job boards similar to LinkedIn or indeed that only shows companies that are

Reddit Posts

willing to sponsor.

In addition, if you know any tools that can help filter for such jobs.

Thanks.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You could check out glassdoor or indeed but their filter is so stupid. When you type ?h1b?, ironically employers that do not sponsor ?h1b? pop up?
- New Comment: There's this one: <https://usponsorme.com/en/>
- New Comment: There are several Chrome extension that checks if the company sponsors H1B.
- New Comment: As another comment said. Check for "H1b sponsor" chrome extensions. They're pretty accurate.
- New Comment: Dont know, you can try <https://jooooobs.com/?q=h1b>

Title of the post: working for non-e-verified employer while waiting for STEM-OPT approval

Body of the post: So... I'm gonna give myself as much time as possible to find an E-verified employer before filing for STEM-OPT. And I am curious whether we are allowed to work/intern for non-e-verified employer while waiting for the approval. Or does the 180 days extension while waiting for approval already count as STEM-OPT not just OPT?

Would love your input! Thank you!

​

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: You need to file for STEM before the expiration date on your current card, and with an e-verified employer signing your i-938. So no matter what you must work for an e-verified company by then.

- New Comment: >And I am curious whether we are allowed to work/intern for non-e-verified employer while waiting for the approval.

No. You MUST be meeting STEM OPT Requirements in order to even apply for STEM OPT.

>Or does the 180 days extension while waiting for approval already count as STEM-OPT not just OPT?

That is STEM OPT. OPT dies when your OPT ends. After that it is either STEM OPT (active or pending) or nothing.

- New Comment: If you have enough time you can persuade your current employer to e-verify.

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Employer wrongly deducting FICA

Body of the post: I'm on F1-OPT and my employer refuses to believe I'm exempt from FICA.

I have given them resources, links, and proofs to validate that I am a nonresident alien with less than 5 calendar years in the US but they keep coming up with some stupid shit like how in the IRS website it says "students are exempt from FICA" and how I'm not a student but a full time employee with them.

I've tried explaining to them that F1-OPT is still a student status according to USCIS but they won't budge and refuse to understand. They're deducting almost \$800 a month for me, what do I do??

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Share this link with your HR and Payroll -
https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/foreign-student-liability-for-social-security-and-medicare-taxes

If they do not refund your FICA taxes, unfortunately, you will have to do as u/iqfree suggests.

- New Comment: You have to ask for a refund at the end of the tax year. First ask your company to refund it. If they deny it, ask them for a letter saying that they are denying it and send that along with other relevant forms and documents to the IRS. It's outlined well here
<https://oiss.yale.edu/employment-taxes/us-taxes/social-security-and-medicare-tax-refund>

I did this, but it took like 2-3 years to get the refund. Make sure you include all documents you need to send or it will prolong the process.

- New Comment: Yes that is wrong and your HR should have known it. I am on F1 visa and I am exempt only til this year.

- New Comment: If your HR still decide to withhold FICA even after you send them proofs from IRS, don't worry. You will get the refund when you file your taxes.

Title of the post: Pending F grade for plagiarism. Does this hurt my internship/job search?

Body of the post: Long story short, I've been flagged for plagiarism and might receive an F grade on one subject. I know, this is really bad and I've had long sleepless nights and just endlessly thinking about going back and putting in a little more effort before I had made that submission.

I'm in my second semester, and this F would bring my current GPA below 3, and I will have to work hard to push it back above 3.0 for the next 2 semesters. This F grade along with academic misconduct is going to go on my transcript as

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well.

With regards to my internship and job search and potentially H-1B, how screwed am I with a tainted transcript?

​

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Couple of options I have in mind:

- 1) start a new program.
- 2) work harder in subsequent subjects and join a shit ton of extra curricular activities
- 3) own up to your mistake and show how you learn from it
- 4) network like crazy to find an opportunity

One mistake shouldn't define your life.

- New Comment: Are you sure the academic misconduct will be on the transcript? One common sanction is a regular failing grade and the misconduct only appears on the disciplinary file which employees won't even ask about.

- New Comment: Let me tell you this. I am currently with h1b visa and i got this job through my opt. Until for my h1b application, my employer did not even asked for my transcript. Unless you are going to postgraduate school, I personally dont think company cares transcript or GPA.

- New Comment: >With regards to my internship and job search and potentially H-1B, how screwed am I with a tainted transcript?

Not unless your employer cares.

- New Comment: [removed]

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- New Comment: Undergrad going for h1b? That will be more challenging than correcting that f on course.
- New Comment: A lot of employers don't care about your GPA and won't even ask for transcripts. Only companies that I saw that cared about GPA are EY and Deloitte.

Since you are a grad student, you just need to figure out your school how they handle GPA below 3.0. What are consequences and what GPA is required in order to graduate. Can taking an extra class (easy one) help you to get a better GPA?

- New Comment: Hi, this is Dan from Voice of America's Learning English program. I presume most of you are international students. I'm wondering how well universities are discussing the idea of citation and plagiarism with students who may be unfamiliar with the concept. Is anyone available to speak with me for a story about this? Thanks!
You can contact me here or at dfriedell@voanews.com

Title of the post: STEM OPT job search - Will the tech market get better in 2024?

Body of the post: Hey everyone I am a B.S graduate from the UofA and I am currently on my first year OPT. I majored in information science and tech - data science emphasis and I am eligible for a STEM extension. I work 2 jobs in IT on my OPT but they do not do STEM OPT. My EAD expires August of 2024, so I have about 8-9 months to find a job that is okay with STEM OPT. I have reached final round interviews but companies seem to prefer American citizens (understandable) over STEM OPT candidates. Is anyone on the job hunt going through the same issue of not finding a job for STEM OPT ? This market has been kinda rough for tech and I know people struggling to find jobs that are okay with STEM OPT, but I would appreciate any advice. Are there any strategies that you use to find STEM OPT jobs ?

I really am hoping that 2024 is a better year for tech and that more jobs open up early 2024, my tactic is to be on every job site possible (mainly Indeed but not limited to: Handshake, LinkedIn, CollegeGrad and Glassdoor) as well as apply to career websites. Each day, at least 10-15 applications must go through to maximize your jobs search. A good tactic is to

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download the E-verify database of companies and go through each career site. Anyone find any luck with data science or IT jobs ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Stem OPT is verifying that you are working in your field. You just need your managers signature on i983. The company doesn't need to do shit
- New Comment: Hi, any luck finding a job ? I am on the same boat. Only a month of unemployment days left.
- New Comment: Heyy!! One of my friends is in a similar situation right now, do you have any strategy or tips on what worked for you? Please share! Although i'm working at a good IT company, they have been on a hiring freeze for a long time. So I've been feeling helpless. Really wanna help my friend.
- New Comment: Do you know why your current company doesn't do stem opt?
- New Comment: My STEM OPT starts on Jan 3, I got laid off last month. My inbox has been a ghost town :) hopefully 2024 will be better

Title of the post: Anyone managed to find a job with 6 months of STEM OPT left?

Body of the post: SWE. I'm one of the unlucky people who didn't get selected for H1B multiple times and now I have less than 1 year before I'd be forced to leave the country. It happens that my company doesn't do L1 or day 1 CPT and I don't feel good relying on a 25% chance lottery. I'm planning to start looking for L1/CPT jobs, but I'm a little afraid that most companies wouldn't even consider me, given my situation. Has anyone here managed to find a new job with less than 1 year of STEM OPT left?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Not all companies want to deal with the hassle of day 1 cpt.

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It's probably not worth day 1 cpt for another chance at the lottery. Because if you do a year of CPT you're not gonna qualify for opt which leaves you in a worse spot if you don't get picked.

You might want to consider going back to school and looking for green card sponsorships from day 1. Or looking for a job with a non profit that's cap exempt

- New Comment: Plenty of my students have done this.

Why your OPT status is being brought up during interviews is beyond me. You don't need to share your employment eligibility Timeline until the I-9

- New Comment: Same boat, might go back to school for another degree and try OPT again

Title of the post: Running out of STEM OPT unemployment - transfer SEVIS to buy time?

Body of the post: Please bear with the long post.

I got laid off a month ago while on STEM OPT and so far the job search has been fruitless. I used a lot of my unemployment days during post-completion so I only had 62 to start with. I'm now on 24.

I know I can't pause the clock with volunteering the way I could have on regular OPT. However, I'd like to buy myself some more time for two reasons, in order of importance:

(1) to get my affairs in order, i.e., find a new tenant for my apartment (lease isn't up until next May), get rid of / store all my stuff, etc.

(2) see if I can swing a H-1B cap exempt job

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As a Hail Mary, I'm considering the strategy of applying to a community college in my area (Chicagoland) for the spring 2024 session, transferring my SEVIS record, and taking advantage of the time between now and registration to do the two things above. *I know doing this would end my OPT.* I have no intention of actually attending the college if I don't have a job by then?my plan would be to leave the US.

First: would this work?

Second: how long after being admitted to the college would it take for me to have my SEVIS transferred? This is a community college and I believe they just take anyone who applies.

Third: in the event that I don't get a cap-exempt job before the session starts in mid-January, when, and how, would I withdraw from the college in a way that terminates my SEVIS without negative immigration consequences?

Fourth: is there an alternative strategy that might work better / be less convoluted? Worth noting that I can't afford a Day 1 CPT program

Fifth: if anyone knows of open positions at healthcare nonprofits that hire foreigners, either remote or in Chicago area, DM me :)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Have you considered looking at Canada Express Entry Program?

- New Comment: Where are you from? Maybe you are eligible for a work and travel visa in Canada. What did you study?

- New Comment: >First: would this work?

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Technically, yes.

>Second: how long after being admitted to the college would it take for me to have my SEVIS transferred?

Depends on your current school. Days to weeks.

>Third: in the event that I don't get a cap-exempt job before the session starts in mid-January, when, and how, would I withdraw from the college in a way that terminates my SEVIS without negative immigration consequences?

If you don't enroll then this will come up on your record. You may be asked about it and would need to explain why/how you decided to go to a community College suddenly. If you leave you ask the new school to end your status as you won't be enrolling, but then your record will look odd and like you abused the transfer period (which you are doing exactly)

>Fourth: is there an alternative strategy that might work better / be less convoluted?

This isn't a great strategy to begin with, but the only better option is if you are marrying a USC.

- New Comment: I am also in similar situation

- New Comment: Sorry you are in this position and hope you find another stem employer or H exempt (look at university hospitals). If those don't work and you are running out of time an option to consider to buy you a bit more time to arrange your affairs is if you can file to change status to B-2. If eligible, you can request up to six months but only should request as long as you'll need to wrap things up. This all only works if you meet certain criteria (such as maintaining status on your current visa and still in status and/or grace period) but something to look into.

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- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Myprogress Error for OPT Applicants - Biometrics Request and Multiple Month Processing Times

Body of the post: Heads up for anyone checking out their OPT processing time and seeing a message for Biometrics.

There seems to be a display error in USCIS I-765 tracking page showing a need for Biometrics and giving multimonth review processing times.

OPT does NOT need Biometrics and it seems to be a UI display error in the new USCIS case tracking page. This has been reported and hopefully will be addressed over the next week or soon.

Related to the changed announced today here:

<https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/alerts/uscis-expands-myprogress-to-form-i-765-and-form-i-131>

Update : USCIS has confirmed that this is an error. "Biometric Services appointment (if required)" is not correctly indicating in the systems and the exception for OPT/STEM OPT is not processing. So the tracker is not distinguishing difference in applications.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Thank you for posting this. It happened to me. My receipt date for non-STEM OPT is April 18th. Got an update today (July 12th) on a new "myprogress" tab saying I need biometrics. Not sure what to do. :((((

- New Comment: Mine previously showed a 4-month estimated wait time, but it doesn't show me a wait time anymore, why?

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- New Comment: So does that mean the expected wait time is inaccurate as well?

Title of the post: "Will you now or in the future require sponsorship ?"

Body of the post: I have an Engineering degree, I'm on OPT and applying for full-time jobs. Could I answer "no" because at the moment I have work authorization ? Will the company care later on ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Say yes. Never ever ever lie on your application it's tempting but don't. My employer doesn't do h-1b. They hired me and when I asked them to sign my OPT extension training plan document during week 1, they asked me if I would need h1b in future, I said 'yes' they said they had refused to interview several candidates much more qualified and experienced than me through the placement agency they had hired as those candidates needed sponsorship (I applied directly) as they don't do h1b. They pulled my application and I had answered 'yes' to needing sponsorship. It was them who had effed up, not me. My director went to the top most executive level to enact a policy change so they could sponsor my h1b and GC just because I didn't lie. In the future you will need sponsorship, so tell the truth, honest goes a long way.

- New Comment: Yes they do. If you need H1B later on, just say yes in form now.

- New Comment: Say no, most companies wouldn't even look at your profile if you say yes

- New Comment: For full-time positions, answer yes. For internships that you do not expect a return offer, no.

It would be a waste of both your and the company's time to go through the recruitment process and found that they cannot hire you for sponsorship reasons.

- New Comment: It all depends on what you want. Do you want the company to sponsor you for H1B? Say Yes. Do you want to do one year of OPT and then go back to school or go back to your home country? Say No.

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- New Comment: I am so sorry, but most of the companies will reject you for the fact you need to be sponsored. Nobody is sponsor visas anymore. So I always say no for the fact that I want to (at least) have the chance to do an interview with them. But if you say "yes" they will not even look at your resume or something like that.

It is a very difficult moment to international students. I am on my second degree because I didn't get hired at all on my first degree. I did so many interviews but when they found out I was an international student I was always ghosted. It doesn't matter how good you are. They will prefer to hire an American with a very low GPA than you an international student.

I have been there before.

Title of the post: F1 Visa Renewal on OPT - Need Advice/Answers

Body of the post: I know there are now many posts now regarding this, but I'm hoping to get more advice/consolation regarding my situation.

I am an international student from Indonesia. I have completed 4 years of undergrad and then filed for OPT for a 3 month internship following that.

At the end of that internship, I joined a Master's program that is STEM approved. I am now in my last semester, gearing up to apply for OPT and then STEM OPT. I have a job offer lined up from a return offer I received from my internship employer.

However, my visa is expiring July 8, 2023. I am planning to go back home after graduation (mid-May 2023) as my entire family lives back home, and I have not been back in more than a year. I will likely return to the US late June, 2023.

I was thinking to apply for a new F-1 Visa in my home country consulate before returning to the US to start my OPT

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work, as I would like the flexibility of being able to travel and to go home and visit my family as much as my work allows me.

I understand that I would need:

- * approved OPT and EAD
- * I-20 that shows the OPT remarks
- * Job offer letter
- * To be able to show non-immigrant intent and show strong ties to my home country

My DSO has told me that applying for a new F-1 visa stamp on OPT is generally considered risky, but from their personal experience, they have said that "they have seen very few denials", so long that the applicant shows a robust non-immigrant intent, but ultimately this lies in the hand of the visa officials.

My questions are:

- * How risky is this really? What are the chances that I get denied based on this scenario?
- * What are tips/additional info I need?
- * Will my chances of approval/denial change if I wait to start my OPT work before I return home to renew?
- * Is renewing my F1 stamp even worth it given the risk?

Any help/consolation is greatly appreciated! (Seriously, I'm having major anxiety about this, and should also probably also stop freaking myself out reading reddit threads about F-1 renewal denials. Lol.)

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****UPDATE (since I hate posts without ones):**** I was approved (Jan 2024 in Jakarta), back in the US. It was SUCH a fast process. Interview was 4 questions:

* ****VO:**** Are you applying for your first F1? ****Me:**** "No, I am on OPT"

* ****VO:**** What is your job position? ****Me:**** \[short answer, no unnecessary details\]

* ****VO:**** Where are you currently residing? ****Me:**** \[short answer, no unnecessary details\]

* ****VO:**** *chuckles* Must feel good to be avoiding that winter storm and be in Indonesia huh? ****Me:**** "oh, feels so good to be home"

* ****VO:**** Payment for your visa at the next counter, should be done by Friday

Obviously YMMW, but had a very pleasant experience. Everyone was super friendly.

Also when I arrived back at the border, man straight up only asked for my I-20 and why I had 2 passports (one was expired). No checks on my EAD, nothing.

Why was I so worried? haha

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: from someone that renewed while on STEM OPT I definitely understand your stress. My knees were literally weak when I was at the embassy. The thing is no one is able to tell you for sure whether you're going to get approved or denied and what's the percentage of that risk. I heard from my DSO that you can never be sure however they have seen very few denials. My embassy appointment took literally a minute and I was asked two questions (about school and whether I am on STEM OPT). I was granted renewal but I was flagged at customs on the way back and got pulled into that little room in the back for further questioning. They asked me when I'm going back home etc which I

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responded that I am going home when my STEM OPT is finished. So it's like you said, you strongly need to emphasize that you're going home after you're done with OPT. Good luck!

- New Comment: Fellow Indonesian on OPT here! Hope everything goes well for you! I personally think the folks at the US embassy in Indonesia are way more lenient than India or China. Don't stress too much on it, but also don't get complacent.

If they ask about your intentions, just tell them that you want to use your OPT and STEM ext. to gain international work experience, which is valuable for Indonesian companies. Also iterate how important it is for you to return to Indonesia afterwards (family, SO, start business, etc.)

Title of the post: Can we as an international student open high-yield savings account?

Body of the post: I was looking into opening a high-yield savings account but before I proceeded to fill out the application, it mentioned that you had to be a US citizen to be able to open the account online and I stopped there.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You absolutely can open bank accounts. Some banks do have rules though like the one you described. Just go in person if they need you to or else find another bank.

You may also consider opening an investment account. I was able to save up a nice sum of money this way before graduation. I recommend Charles Schwab for this as they will allow you to keep the account open when you move back abroad.

- New Comment: Yes you can. Some banks may have restrictions

- New Comment: So much misinformation in this thread.

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No you don't need to be a citizen. No the requirement is not to have an ssn.

Different banks will have different policies. Most commonly, they will require you to be a US resident for tax purposes.

For most f1 students, you need to have been in the US for 5 years. This is also the requirement for many brokerages, or to open an account with treasury direct to buy I bonds

At the end of the day you can call each bank and ask

- New Comment: I was able to get a 5.5% HYFSA with Wealthfront.

[Wealthfront](<https://www.wealthfront.com/c/affiliates/invited/AFFC-Z5YJ-0JQ0-HK2C>)

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: I'm f1 student and I have an account with US Citibank. So yes, you can have one too but you can't apply it online. I went to the bank back then during my first week of school, made an appointment, and then come back on the scheduled time. They helped me make an account with them, both checking and saving.

As far as I know, my friends (f1 students too) have an account with Citi, BoA, Chase, and Wells Fargo. So I suggest you go to one of those banks because I'm sure they can help you make an account with them. They'll tell you what documents you need to bring to make an account with them.

- New Comment: Lol. Yes you can. Also, did you know that you can get out of your dorm room and have a walk around the campus? It's allowed to walk for international students.

- New Comment: Marcus with Goldman Sachs does accept f-1 and it's easy to open one online. I myself am an F-1 and opened mine a few months ago. They have a good APY of 3.30% and 4.30% if you use a referral link <https://www.marcus.com/share/KAL-DGS-U3ZH>

- New Comment: u/Reasonable_Box_7459 did you figure this out? All HYSA offering institutions I've come across

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require US citizenship or being a [U.S. Person](<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>) (page 2 of that link). Please comment here if you've found anything worthwhile.

- New Comment: Has anyone tried Bask Bank for a high yield savings account?

Title of the post: Urgent help - Sevis terminated

Body of the post: My SEVIS was terminated last week due to (1 month) unauthorized employment. I'm planning to reinstate by travel as I have a valid visa. I have a really good academic standing.

I'm worried, if this will affect my future in US or Canada or anywhere globally.

I want to know my chances of getting a new F-1 visa or H-1 or H4 or any U.S. visa in future.

Will my parents be able to get a US visa (tourist) in future because I committed this mistake ?

Can I get an I -20 extension if I change from MS non thesis to MS thesis as I have completed almost 28 credits out of 30 coursework credits.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Oof. That's a tough one. Man your SEVIS is terminated. You violated the rules and have fallen out of status. If I'm not mistaken your visa is a D/S and now you are no longer in status you are effectively an unauthorized. Unfortunately because you violated the rules there is no grace period, you have to leave the country or you will essentially be undocumented. You can apply for reinstatement according to the DHS, but that's at their discretion if they will reinstate you. I'm assuming it's your DSO that terminated your SEVIS. Best bet is talk to your school or even better a lawyer. I have been told that you can make a better case if you have dependants but I have never been able to fact check that. Good luck man! And to answer about how it will affect your future, I'm certainly sure that it will because every single application for any form of immigration petition always asked if I had been in violation of anything. And unfortunately for you, USCIS and ICE don't play games. Hope everything works for you. Also I'm not a lawyer btw, so take this with a grain of salt and speak to someone more qualified.

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- New Comment: I had my SEVIS terminated coz my school failed to extend my I20 in time. I applied for reinstatement and even then it has been 18 months and still not response. Can't work, no license. Its a terrible situation to be in.

You could lawyer up and apply for reinstatement so you can stay here legally and get your degree. I am 99.9% sure you will be denied. USCIS is not generous when it comes to people failing to comply with non-immigrant rules, unauthorized employment is the BIGGEST red flag to them. They basically want you to leave like yesterday.

Now it depends if you worked off campus and they caught you or if you somehow violated rules through on campus employment. In a nut shell, get a lawyer ASAP and discuss the possibilities.

- New Comment: Hi guys, a quick update regarding my situation.

I came back in status within 10 days of termination by traveling to Mexico and re-entering the border. Also my I-20 has been extended because I converted my degree from non thesis to thesis.

Thankyou everyone who helped me

- New Comment: The chances are very good that everything will turn out fine. One can try to hide a status violation. However, there is also a lot of merit in admitting the mistake and then making a good faith effort with the U.S. government to correct it. It shows the U.S. government that you know you made an error and that you are willing to make an honest effort with them to correct that.

The other option is to try to hide from the government that you violated your status with them and hope they never find out. And if they do, which looks better?

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1. "Yes, I did it, and then I took action to correct it?"

or

2) "I violated my status (which you only know because you found it), and I tried to hide it from you (government)?"

If I were a USCIS adjudicator, I know upon which one I would look more favorably.

If you take action to regain your F-1 status in a timely manner, it is very unlikely to have negative consequences in the future for you or any family member.

I've seen many students successfully doing what you're planning to do which is to obtain a new SEVIS record, pay the SEVIS fee again, and then re-enter the U.S. using the valid F-1 visa to reset the new F-1 status. That includes by travel to Mexico. Any time you are a non-immigrant to the U.S., there is always some level of risk that you will not be allowed to re-enter any time you choose to travel outside the U.S. However, if you have all of your documents in order, there is a low risk of being denied re-entry.

The biggest implications that come with that plan is that you won't be eligible for CPT or OPT unless and until you complete one full academic year of study after having returned to the U.S. on the new SEVIS record. That means if returning and needing less than one full academic year to complete your current I-20 program of study, you won't be eligible for CPT or OPT for that degree. The other is needing to pay again the (currently) \$350 SEVIS fee.

Nothing about this situation would invalidate eligibility to apply for an I-20 extension, but it also isn't a reason alone to do an I-20 extension. The U.S. government requires by federal regulation that your university be able to cite a compelling academic or medical reason why you are not able to complete your study in your I-20 program by your current I-20 end

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date, and then why you need then the additional time to meet those requirements. Whether or not you meet that requirement is very specific to your own, individual degree progress, your own degree program's academic program/curriculum, and your own DSO's interpretation of what what meets the requirements for citing a compelling medical or academic reason. For all those reasons, whether or not you would be eligible for an I-20 extension is fully a discussion to be had with your academic advisor and DSO.

- New Comment: How did they find about your un authorized employment?

- New Comment: Hi everyone,

I find myself in a similar situation. Though my reason was a medical emergency before course began.

I was due to join a 1 year course in the US on 16th of June 2023. I got my F1 Visa and arrived in the US from India on the 25th of May 2023.

My family has a history of cancer and while doing a self check I thought I felt something concerning around 7th of June 2023. Since I was very new to the US at the time, I freaked out and wanted to get back home to get myself checked out.

I apprised the school of this development and they offered me a deferral to June 2024. And I took a return flight out of the US on the 14th of June without starting the course but I did use my F1 visa to enter the United States.

A few days later, the immigration office of the college informed me that since I had used the F1 visa to enter US, they were left with no option but to terminate my SEVIS record. They did say that the reason for termination will not be negative. And hopefully as I understand, I have not accrued any unlawful presence in the US since I left much before they terminated my SEVIS record.

The school also said that they would be happy to help me with a new I20 for next year.

Having said this, I wanted to understand if I would have difficulty in getting a VISA issued to me next year? What steps could I possibly take to make it easier for me to get secure a VISA next year?

- New Comment: Like people already said USCIS they don't play games so your chance of getting future H-1 is basically

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over as employment visa is already one of the hardest to get and immigration violation is the biggest red flag to them.

I'm not sure about dependent visas though.

- New Comment: I've had students terminated for the same reason, I believe all got reinstated in their home country. I think you'll have some explaining to do at the interview and ultimately it's up to the person adjudicating your case but it's worth a shot. Whether or not you'll face issues at the H1B stage is hard to say but it would be encouraging if they issued a new f1 based on your infraction. It shouldn't bare any issues for your family members to get B1B2 visas, at least not when you're in active status.

Hope this helps

- New Comment: I'd probably get banned for this, not sure why you told your DSO first, you should have spoken to an immigration lawyer first. Sounds like the mistake you committed was less than 6 months, which would still have qualified you for adjustment of status via employment or which wouldn't have mattered if you got married. Your DSOs sometimes don't always have your best interest.

- New Comment: So I'm going to cut right to it- you ****need**** to consult with an immigration attorney at the very least. You face substantial long term consequences due to violating the terms of your visa with unauthorized employment.

These things aren't always a lost cause. But I strongly urge you to invest in at least a consult to get your bearings.

-your friendly lurking immigration lawyer

- New Comment: How did you get notified about your Sevis termination?

- New Comment: When you say reinstating what does that mean? Is Mexico giving you a new visa and what visa are they giving you?

- New Comment: What did you do? Did you accidentally make income or deliberately do a job?

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- New Comment: Bro, if these solutions fail, have peace of mind that as long as ur visa is valid and can travel to US, u can always apply for EB3 and obtain permanent green card in less than 2 years total time.

It will be a different and separated case.

Good luck thou.

- New Comment: I have a similar problem as you, and my DSO advised to get a new I-20 and reenter the United States.

Did you end up doing it? How was it? Were you able to get back in the US?

- New Comment: URGENT HELP!

My old SEVIS and visa were terminated due to a long leave of absence from the US(My old school had approved 1 semester of leave but I have exceeded that in my home country). I have been admitted to a new school, and they have advised me to redo the SEVIS again and Visa again with new school documents, I have not overstayed and I am back in my home country. Will there be a problem with my new visa application with the new Sevis? Leave of absence was 9 months due to personal and medical issues. Thanks

- New Comment: How did your DSO come to know that you were doing unauthorized employment?

Title of the post: Request for Evidence for OPT

Body of the post: I'm really pissed and I'm trying my best to remain calm but it's so hard. I filed for my OPT in April 2022 and I didn't get a response from uscis until July. I opened the RFE and it said that "The Student and Exchange Visitor System (SEVIS) shows that you were terminated due to, student has not registered within 60 days after program start date. And that you were automatically terminated 90 days after next session started?". This was really ridiculous because I literally graduated spring 2022. So I called my DSO and she said she "forgot" to register me and that she has corrected it (after the RFE came in).

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The crazy thing is the amount of documentation I have to provide to show that I was physically present in school. I'll list them below:

This evidence must include but is not limited to:

1. A statement from the Designated School Official (DSO) and the Registrar attesting to your physical presence in the classroom;
2. A full description of your course of study/academic program, including all graduation requirements such as the number of credits or classroom hours and your college's definition of "full course of study" for your degree level;
3. Copies of your course syllabi for all classes and coursework in which you earned credit towards your degree. Provide delivery method (in person/lecture, lab, virtual, online, tele-learning, broadcast, satellite, etc.) of the course if not listed on the syllabus;
4. Proof of tuition payments made by you for the duration of your enrollment;
5. A copy of your most recent transcripts showing number of credits or hours received.

This has been the hardest thing for me to process and I'm so sad. Please make sure you double check with your DSO about your F1 status. Just wanted to share :)

Also, I'll appreciate credible advice on how to go about this issue

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Sorry for that. Your DSO is terrible bad. I hope your progress will be okay.

Actually DSO doesn't care about us. My DSO was horrible too. DSO doesn't know legal knowledge. If you would like to know legal stuff, you should ask to lawyer. I asked to some lawyers to resolve my issue. It was clear.

- New Comment: It happened to me too. But the DSO of my school blamed me, and my opt was denied. At least, they

Reddit Posts

said the truth to you.

- New Comment: That sucks! What university is this?

- New Comment: Your DSO fucked you. I applied in June for Stem opt and received it a couple weeks ago.

- New Comment: Any updates?

Title of the post: Post completion OPT EAD processing times 2022

Body of the post: Hello 2022 graduates!

Any of you who applied for post completion OPT EAD in 2022, could you please post the date when you applied, when it was approved, and when you received the physical copy?

I'll start --

Applied: April 1, 2022

Approved: N/A

Received: N/A

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Online application:

March 4th - Application received, receipt sent

March 29th - Case approved, card is being produced

March 31st - Card produced

April 1st - Post office pick up card

April 2nd - Card received

April 12nd - SSN card received

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Applied: May 5 (online form)

Approved: Jun 14

Card produced: Jun 17

Received: Jun 27

Based on what I've read so far, it should take about 6 weeks or so. Nevertheless, I can't help but feel a little nervous even though my job starts in the first week of August.

EDIT: Updates

- New Comment: Applied for STEM OPT

Applied: 14th June (Online)

Approved: 2nd August

Received: N/A

- New Comment: I applied on March 1 and received it early April. Was surprised by how fast they processed it.

- New Comment: My start date: 8/8

Applied: 3/28 (by mail)

Approved: haven't heard back

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Received: not yet

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: STEM EXTENSION OPT

applied: may 12 (online)

approved and card is being produced: june 24

received: n/a

- New Comment: I wasn't able to find many timelines out there with every little USCIS update. So I felt like sharing mine in case it makes any of you feel better about yours!

Case was received and a receipt notice was sent: April 29th, 2022. (Online)

Card is being produced: June 10th

Card was produced: June 14th

Card was picked up by Postal Service (They gave me a tracking number): June 15th

According to USPS, it arrives tomorrow.

- New Comment: Applied: May 5 (Online) - request start date June 6

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Received: May 6

Approved: June 15 - start date June 15

Received: June 22

I started working July 25

- New Comment: Applied online for initial OPT on May 4th

Receipt was the same day but further updates till now. Any information regarding May applications

- New Comment: I got my receipt notice on May 5th and haven't heard anything :(I applied online

Update: card is being produced as of 06/30!! It was 56 days between receipt notice and approval!

- New Comment: I also applied May 4th Notice May 5th without any further communication

- New Comment: Applied: June 13

Receipt: June 14

Approved: Not yet

Received: N/A

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: People who have applied have applied within the last two months, so most likely no one has received anything. If you check on their websites, wait times are between 2 and 11 months based on which office is processing it

- New Comment: opttimeline . com - you can follow what date they've reached

- New Comment: Any update?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Update! My start date: 8/8/22, applied 3/28 (mailed my application), approved + card being produced 5/3, card produced 5/6. Hopefully I'll get it by next week ? Good luck everyone :) This was much faster than I thought it would be.

- New Comment: Applied -April 26th

. Approved - NA

- New Comment: Applied form via mail -11th april

They received- 12th April

Receipt notice- 24th April

Card Approval - Not yet

Card Recieved - Not yet

- New Comment: Applied: April 28, 2022

Receipt: April 28, 2022

Approved: June 27, 2022

Card Produced: June 30, 2022

Received: July 6, 2022

- New Comment: Applied: May 13, 2022

Approved: June 24, 2022

Received: N/A

- New Comment: [deleted]

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- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Applied May 18th online, got approved July 7th.

- New Comment: Applied May 20th, finally got approved July 8th!

- New Comment: Applied may 29th

Approved/received may 30th

Accepted: Nopeeee

Type: Post OPT EAD

- New Comment: Applied May 27th

Receipt May 28th

Just realized that I asked my parent to sign on I-20 though she didn't have to. It says Parents must sign if a student is not over 18. Hope it is not a big deal. So nervous.

- New Comment: Applied June 8th. Still in process

- New Comment: Applied: June 1, 2022

Approved: July 18, 2022

Received: N/A

- New Comment: Applied: June 25 (online)

Approved: N/A

Received: N/A

- New Comment: Applied online: August 22, 2022

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Approved: September 8, 2022

Received: N/A

- New Comment: Applied online: August 23, 2022

Email Notice "We have taken an action on your case": August 25, 2022

(What does that mean?)

Approved: N/A

Received: N/A

- New Comment: Applied: August 31st

Approved: N/A

Received: N/A

- New Comment: Applied online: 9/1

Approved: 9/14

Received: N/A

- New Comment: Applied: 8/16 Approved: 9/6 Received: 9/15

- New Comment: Post completion OPT EAD processing times 2022

Hello 2022 graduates!

Reddit Posts

Any of you who applied for post completion OPT EAD in fall 2022, could you please post the date when you applied, when it was approved, and when you received the physical copy?

- New Comment: Applied: November 2nd

Approved: November 30th

Waiting for card now! Does anyone know how long it usually takes to mail?

- New Comment: Applied for Initial Post-completion OPT on 08/24/2022 and still haven't received a case update (as of 1/11/2023).

- New Comment: I applied for post-competition OPT on 4/4/2023

got letter and email about approval on 6/13/2023

Now waiting for EAD and SSN card.

Title of the post: Is this discrimination?

Body of the post: I recently interviewed for an internship position as an F-1 student. The internship is only 10 weeks long, part time during the school year so I was planning on applying for CPT after I got the acceptance letter. The recruiter said I was qualified but could not consider me due to my visa status, even though they do not have to sponsor me. While I indicated that my I-20 is valid until May 2022, they said that that is the company's policy. She said the reason being:

1. They are afraid to spend money on sponsoring me after I graduate?. This makes no sense the internship is only 10 months, and although the internship can increase my chance of getting a job with a company, this is not guaranteed and I would still need apply to jobs again separately once I graduate. I had no intention of doing anything more than the

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internship and do not understand their reasoning on disqualifying me based on a future h1b application

2. Because their 3rd party recruiting agents don't work with international applicants.

I would understand why some company do not want to spend money on sponsoring students after work. However, this is a 2.5 months internship that requires no additional work on their part as long as I apply for CPT. I am just feeling very frustrated overall.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: That is frustrating, I went through it when I was applying for internships/entry-level jobs. What I would do is, if possible, get the HR Manager (or whoever is your first point of contact at the company), and send a very nice and kind e-mail explaining that there is no obligations from the company other than providing an offer letter for the internship stating the usual (wage, address, etc.). If they inquire about post-graduation employment, reiterate that they only need to provide an offer letter, and that YOU are responsible for guaranteeing your legal status, not them. Best of luck! This process sucks

- New Comment: Feel for your frustrations man, we always get the stick no matter what. But work authorization is not ground for discrimination. It sucks but there's nothing you can do about it

- New Comment: It is not because it has to do with your visa status rather than your nationality or race. In other words they don't want to spend the time training someone that won't eventually work for them. Internships are usually how companies then hire their full time employees so if they don't see the person working for them after graduation then it is not worth it. This is because they will spend more money training you than they'll profit from your work as an intern.

Usually bigger companies or engineering companies have no problem hiring F1 students and then sponsoring them for full time. Smaller companies usually don't have the resources to do this since it can be expensive.

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Title of the post: Stuck in a bind -- Need to leave US while on OPT without employment

Body of the post: Hey everyone,

I am an international student on an F1 visa who just graduated last May. My OPT start date was just a few days ago (June 15). I don't have a job yet. My problem is that one of my family members who is in my home country, Nepal, is really sick with Covid and I need to be there for him. So, I need to go back home as fast as possible. The only problem is that since I am on my OPT and I don't have a job, it seems like I won't be able to return to the US.

I can only think of one way being able to return to the US. I was thinking of contacting one of those shady IT consultancy companies that target and exploit H1Bs and OPT students (I'm a comp sci student), and asking them for an offer letter, which it seems they might provide quickly. I'm not sure how feasible this is, or if it is a good idea. Also, if anybody has worked for these consultancies, please let me know of your experience.

Another thing I thought of is going to my home country and applying to US jobs from there (hoping interviews are all remote). I think this idea is less feasible though.

If anybody has any other potential ideas, please let me know.

Thank you for your help!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You are not obligated to have a job to return, but you may be questioned regarding re-entry.

I had a student from Nepal who had to travel for family reasons in 2017/2018 during an employment gap. He was able to return. Also, brought a wife with him on the return.

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So, yes you could potentially be denied. If asked just explain the situation.

Taking one of the shady IT jobs could end up with you on a list. If you only use the offer letter that could be fine if needed as a last resort.

Don't forget volunteering counts toward OPT time.

Title of the post: F1-OPT: Unemployment days exceeded due to DSO's Fault

Body of the post:

First time posting on here.

My start date per my EAD is July 1, 2020 but, I wasn't able to find a job till September 22, 2020. This was 84 days after the start date (Still under the 90 day limit). As soon as I start working, I report my employment to my DSO. In the month of December, my employer started talking about laying people off due to COVID and since I was new, I could be one of them. So I start looking for another job. As expected, on January 6th, I got a letter from my 1st employer saying I was fired. During my job search, I was able to get another offer which allowed me to start the next day after I was laid off i.e. January 7th. This was good since it wouldn't have added any more unemployment days to my pre-existing 84 days. I report this 2nd job to my DSO and come to find out that she never reported the 1st job to the SEVIS portal and now it was inactive. Due to this, I couldn't start working till the SEVIS was active, which took several days for them to reactivate it. During this time I exceeded my Unemployment days 90 day clock. Now, when I reached out to my DSO for an I20 to apply for the STEM extension, she says my OPT is not active anymore due to the 90 day limit exceeded. She suggested filing form I290B to appeal this action but this was rejected by USCIS twice. I submitted all the required evidence (emails from DSO, job offers, etc.) with a statement explaining my situation.

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What is the best course of action here? Should I have not filed an Appeal and Filed a motion instead?

Can I still file a motion to reconsider or reopen? Any help is appreciated.

TL, DR

1. Started 1st job on 84th day after EAD start date.
2. DSO didn't report to SEVIS.
3. Got laid off and had a 2nd job lined up for next day.
4. Couldn't start due to inactive SEVIS and had to wait for DSO to fix that and exceeded 90 days.
5. OPT inactive and can't get STEM extension I20

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This situation is why you gain access to the SEVP Portal for updating your own employment. You do not have to report it to your DSO you can report it directly to SEVP.

Your DSO should contact the SEVP help desk to report the error on their side and submit evidence of timely filing of your employment reporting for both jobs.

All that said: With the access to the SEVP Portal it is technically the responsibility of the F1 visa holder to update their employment. Not the DSO. So, they could come back with this as the reason for a denial of any correction.

My other concern is that your DSO didn't take immediate corrective action when you made the second update which could have bypassed this situation. Did your DSO provide you evidence of timely filing or did they say you did not

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update them timely?

With the 290b what denial reason did they give?

A motion to reconsider doesn't apply here as SEVP did not improperly apply the rules on unemployment given the information on the record at the time. The 290b was the correct motion.

This may just be the end of your OPT period unless you can get an agent to work with you or if your DSO steps up and makes calls to correct the error.

- New Comment: Do you have any update?

Title of the post: New STEM OPT CIP Code list published

Body of the post: The new STEM OPT CIP COde List has been published here:

<https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/stem-list.pdf>

What does this mean?

On your I-20 page 1, you can see your major listed along with a 6 digit code in the format XX.XXXX. If that code is on the above list you are eligible to apply for the STEM OPT extension of your OPT.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This assumes your school sent you an updated I-20 after the 2020 CIP conversion.

- New Comment: [deleted]

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Title of the post: F1 Renewal Approved on STEM OPT

Body of the post: Hi all, I got my F1 renewal approved while on STEM OPT. Applied in Calcutta, India on Dec 29, got my passport back on Dec 31.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hey u/DaringDumpling! I am in the same boat as you were. How long did you stay in India for? Edit -

Found the answer to appointment latency in another comment.

- New Comment: Was your visa previously expired?

- New Comment: How difficult were to get the appointment dates at Kolkatta ?

- New Comment: Was this is an emergency appointment?

- New Comment: Have you graduated and working already?

I am in a similar situation here. My visa expired in June 2020 and I am planning to graduate either in May 2021, but I was thinking of pushing the graduation to Aug 2021 just so that I can go to India and get my visa renewed without being on OPT.

- New Comment: I just got my appointment too! Would you mind sharing what documents you submitted? Any bank statements? I am on STEM OPT and will be supporting myself in the US.

Title of the post: Will you require sponsorship now or later in the future?

Body of the post:

I am pretty sure this has been asked somewhere on this subreddit but it's 2020 and things are constantly changing for the worse, so I wanted to ask this again. When asked 'Will you now or in the future require visa sponsorship on job application?', I feel like saying "yes" can negatively impact my application. Would it be wrong to say "no" because

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technically OPT does not *require* sponsorship but eventually company would need to after it runs out I believe. But I am honestly tired of getting rejects based on my status. I have gone to a few interview where the recruiter legitimately forgot that I was an international student and said that they were not hiring. I feel like I can say no and explain that I have OPT for waive the sponsorship requirement at the time of its validity.

Any advice?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: So this question has two sides and let me explain them. I say this as a DSO and someone who has had to decline applicants over visa items.

This question let's us know if you need visa sponsorship. Many if not most positions in the United States will not qualify for visa sponsorship. Meaning that the position is not technical enough or does not pay enough to meet requirements for an H1B visa. That with few exceptions is the visa a company would need to sponsor you for to work in the US.

So asking this question does 2 things. It let's an employer know if you may need to sponsored and it helps them select the appropriate candidate. For example, most jobs in my office do not qualify for H1B. Therefore anyone who indicates they need sponsorship won't be considered because we CANNOT offer sponsorship in any way shape or form. It is impossible for the positions to meet the requirements for visa sponsorship.

Another way to think about the questiob is this: what is your time worth? You go work for a company on OPT/STEM OPT only for the position to not be eligible for H1B or possibly the company is not large enough to pay for all the requirements for H1B or for another reason cannot meet H1B requirements. You essentially wasted your OPT time with that company with no longer term options for you.

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Those are the two sides, it let's a company who otherwise cannot sponsor you know that they can't select you as it benefits no one in the long term and it allows you to get offer with a company who knows that you will need sponsorship in the future and is potentially willing to do that.

To the poster who said it is discriminatory, it is not as employers can ask questions about your legal employment status in the US and it was settled over a decade ago in the courts.

If you lie on your job application a company can fire you for cause. Meaning you can lose access to benefits (like vested shares in a company, Healthcare benefits after being fired, and no access to unemployment). The only time to answer no is if you honestly have no plans to stay in the US.

Will selecting yes prevent you from being selected for jobs? Yes. Will it prevent you from being hired by a company otherwise eligible and willing to sponsor? No.

- New Comment: Curious to see the answers to this since i am also job hunting for my OPT that starts soon.

- New Comment: Just state No. I believe that this question is clearly discrimination against international students (and other types of visa holders) and hidden behind these words.

- New Comment: Same question, I feel like if I say "yes", it'll most likely be an auto-rejection.

- New Comment: Since the question posed is in regards to either "now" OR "in the future", the right answer would be "yes". Even if you decide to say "no" to perhaps get through the initial screening, chances are that a prospective employer is going to find out regardless when you submit your EAD to HR for processing, which may or may not lead to a rescinded offer.

- New Comment: Following

- New Comment: !remindme 2 days

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- New Comment: !remindme

- New Comment: I wonder if companies ask this question on the application, I can assume those companies are not planning to sponsor this position? Does that mean I can focus on companies that don't ask this question? Does anyone have insights about that?

- New Comment: I just put no, because I don't need anything from them, but I'm only searching for internships. Curious as to what others say

- New Comment: It is no. Because for the next year or 3 for Steam, you won't need it.

But beyond that is another story.

- New Comment: Here are my thoughts as a recruiter. If the company I am recruiting for offers VISA sponsorship, I'm going to be upfront and advertise it because that opens the floodgates of qualified IT engineers and architects. If I could count the hours and hours spent sourcing candidates on social media and LinkedIn only to find that halfway through the conversations or worse, interviews, the candidates finally confessed that they were on some type of VISA. I don't want to waste your time, so please don't waste mine. Honestly is always the best policy for everyone.

Title of the post: Updated Guidance 7/24

Body of the post:

<https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/bcmFall2020guidance.pdf>

Summary:

* Continuing students (that were active in SEVIS on March 9th, 2020) are able to return to the US, even if all their classes are online.

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* Initial Students can enter the US if they are taking at least one in-person class

I would recommend printing out this guidance and bringing it with you to the airport (and maybe even your visa interview).

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [There's a new FAQ document too](<https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/fall2020faq.pdf>), which seems to say pretty clearly that the pre-COVID restrictions on the number of online classes don't apply for fall 2020 even for new students, and they can enter as long as their program isn't 100% online.

- New Comment: ????? I wanna cry

Edit: just to be safe, if a initial students gets in the us and for some reason schools go online only due to covid, do we get to stay?

I believe we would but just checking in

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Got Laid off 4 months before OPT expiration. Need advice extending my STEM OP

Body of the post: I recently got laid off by my company because they are doing restructuring (generic lay off). I have roughly 16 weeks to find a new employer before my Stem OPT application deadline.

I have started to apply and have 4 different interviews with 4 different employers in the coming week. (2 recruiter calls and 2 first rounds and all of them sponsor H1B)

Just to be safe, does anybody have any good recommendations for a staffing agency that would apply for my STEM

Reddit Posts

extension. My background is in Analytics/Data Science.

Thank you in advance.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Through my university I found an internship that pays basic wage and they agreed to file my i983. You can also ask companies to pay you in stock

- New Comment: I applied for jobs 3 months before my OPT expiration because my employer wouldn't sign my STEM extension even tho they sponsor h1b? don't even ask, it's a super long story, one which would make ur blood boil. Anyways, I applied everywhere and on so many platforms and I was able to land 2 job offers. The key to is to make sure ur resume is readable and legible. Then, only apply to jobs that are posted within 24 hours. I had more interviews sending applications that way as opposed to getting referrals for weeks-old job postings. Be super up front about ur situation from the very beginning- u don't want to get an offer only for them to rescind it because of OPT. It happens and it would be devastating. Also ask if they have an e-verify number. Some employers are open to hiring F1 students but don't have E-Verify numbers. Staffing agencies are tricky. While some of them have an e-verify number and all, you'll need someone from the staffing agency to supervise ur learning and sign the i983 which isn't usually an easy thing to do, since u work with their client and not the agency itself. I recommend applying to full time jobs and try to go down that route. You have 4 months, just apply everywhere and anywhere. Ask recruiters to expedite the process, say that u are interviewing with other companies and are in late stage. I was able to get one company do the whole interview process in 2 weeks? from recruiter call to an offer! Hope this helps! Best of luck. Stay positive!!!

- New Comment: Hi OP, I'm sort of in the same boat as you are. I have been applying too and did not manage to land even one appropriate interview. Can you please let me know if these interviews were through referral, or how has been your approach to applications?

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Title of the post: How to get a job in STEM OPT?

Body of the post: Hi everyone, I am currently working as a data analyst on my initial OPT. But my company is not ready to file my I-983. How to get a job in STEM OPT. I have seen my friends getting a job but after the company knowing they have to process I-983 they have asked them to return their laptops. I am really stressed have only 4 months to get a job that would agree signing my I-983. If anyone got a job in their STEM it would be helpful in sharing how they have tried to secure a job. Thanks in advance.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I don't get why companies are afraid of filing I-983s. It's just a single form which doesn't cost a penny. If you talk with your manager and explain, also tell them that there is no financial commitments, they might understand.

- New Comment: Is your company is everified?

After seeing your post, Am worried if my current company will refuse filling I-983 form.

I have to start my process for Stem opt by December as my ead expires in May.

How did you check with your employer?

- New Comment: Idk what you mean by getting a job in STEM OPT. Only thing you gotta do it's find a company that is everified and willing to take you on board for the next 2 years. In addition to file the necessary docs to get your new I-20 for stem opt.

- New Comment: Why is your manager not signing your I-983? It's just a training plan and has no impact whatsoever. If they are already employing you on initial OPT, nothing changes for them if you switch to STEM OPT and it doesn't cost any money for them to sign form I-983. I would talk to your manager again and explain more thoroughly.

- New Comment: All the best.

- New Comment: I would say apply jobs now and hope for the best. Jobs that you choose to apply should you know they are international friendly. If they ask about sponsorship, don't lie.

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- New Comment: Keep applying. There is only so much that it's in your hands. But apply with the ?yes? to needing sponsorship as without a GC, that is what the default for almost all companies is.
- New Comment: Show them a sample of what I983 form looks like and also volunteer to have a discussion with a lawyer at your expense. If they agree then that'll be good
- New Comment: my company was effy about signing too, I think when they see government documents they get scared and think is more serious that it is? I would advise to fill the training plan as much as possible, and then just ask your manager to revise to make sure what you wrote is correct.. explain to them is not a binding contract and will not alter anything, you can change employees and even being unemployed for a while, that document only serves to let the government know where you are, what you are doing and if is legit
- New Comment: good luck~
- New Comment: How are almost all posts like this are from accounts that are not even a day old?

Title of the post: Moving Back Home

Body of the post: I'll be returning back home after 7 years here in the US before the end of the year (sad times, lol). Do you have any advice on making this transition as smooth as possible What was on your before-moving-out checklist? Has anyone transitioned from F1 to B1/B2 status to buy some time?

Thanks in advance for your tips and stories! Your insights will be greatly appreciated as I prepare for this big change... :')

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: There are some great comments to my original post [here](<https://www.reddit.com/r/h1b/s/CFCulSAZfr>) for this same topic.

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- New Comment: Why are you moving out? Couldn't find any employer for h1b?

- New Comment: What was your master degree in ? It's become nearly low chance to get h1 looking at the number of applicants double in last 3-4 yrs . This is frustrating people in India are applying for h1 lottery while students here don't get it . Really frustrating

Title of the post: Should I renew my F1 visa or should I not risk it?

Body of the post: Basically, my F1 visa expired on March 2021. I would like to renew my F1 visa. Here it is the situation.

I am on OPT. Applied for OPT STEM on May 2024. Currently waiting for the approval.

Got married to another immigrant on 2022 (inside the US). She transition from a different type of Visa to F2. She never got the visa itself. Just changed status and she's living legally here under my F1 status. (She's not the problem).

I've recently had a child (US citizen).

My direct family are green card holders.

My direct family and I technically does not have ties back to my country (mexico). So, no house, no property, nothing but relatives.

I would like to renew visa to travel to my wife's country so her relatives met our little one (in south america). Her direct family already met the little one since they have tourist visa but her relatives are unable to travel to the US.

My concerns are that I do not need to renew my F1 visa at all since my job does not require me to go outside the US.

And even if I had to, we do business with Canada and Mexico. I can technically get back into the country with automatic

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revalidation (which I have never tried). We are living here comfortably, could lose, job, housing, belongings. Just to try to renew visa. I know I do not look like a non-immigrant anymore. With many "red" flags.

Pros: getting the ability to travel outside the US.

Cons: potentially losing our "lives in the US" for something that isn't really needed.

Tell me your thoughts.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The answer is obvious here... Don't risk it.

- New Comment: You cannot get automatic reval if you go outside of Mexico. Automatic reval is also not a ?right? ? it?s discretionary.

You're going to need a new visa sooner or later.

- New Comment: Not a similar situation but I chose not to go back home to renew my visa

- New Comment: I am in the same situation and from Central America- would say that friends have gone back on STEM OPT and had no problem but as always it?s a risk! Lmk what u end up doing

Title of the post: I-20 Urgent Help!!!

Body of the post: Hi!

I'm an international student who has been accepted to a university in the US. I haven't still requested my I-20 form from the university (I know I'm late out on this). I have been facing issues with the financial proof that is required for both the

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I-20 and the F-1 Visa, I'm very far from the amount that I have to show. I have gotten a \$10k scholarship + \$19k family funds this just gives me \$29000 and I still need to show \$24k to reach the \$64k(I-20 amount). I come from a low income family household with a single parent, I'm considering using sponsors such as aunt or uncle to reach this amount, as I see no other way at the moment, I also have a "great uncle" in the US, however I don't know if this is a good idea or not.

Please help out with any advice of what sponsors to use, and the ones I should avoid, after this really long process of applying to US colleges, I don't want to mess up the last step. Any advice on how to move forward would really be appreciated :)

Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Did you try education loans?
 - New Comment: Have you tried Prodigy Finance? They have a quick turnaround for their loan sanction. Although fair warning their interest rates are really high.
 - New Comment: You can take a student loan from MPower company. They give loans for international students without cosigner. Check out their website <https://www.mpowerfinancing.com>
 - New Comment: Hi there! Your best bet will be your great uncle if he is willing to sponsor. If not then showing from uncles and aunts accounts is also ok. In both cases you need letters from them authorizing the school to use the mentioned funds for your fees. However you have to keep in mind that it's not just about showing the funds. You actually need those funds to pay your fees and survive in the US. Hope you find the solution soon.
 - New Comment: If you are planning to take a loan and come, do not come for a year or so! The job market is very bad!
- Read other posts here!
- New Comment: I see you mentioned you have a "great uncle" in the US. Never ever mention this during your F-1 visa

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interview. They will reject you instantly. Do not mention anything that you have relatives in the US and make sure to say that you have a job in mind in your home country you want to work after graduation.

- New Comment: When will you apply for visa?

- New Comment: I was in a similar situation. Are you Indian? If so I suggest that you look at lenders like Avanse. They have higher interest rates than most public sector banks but the approval goes through relatively quick. Plus they usually don't need collateral either. This can be used to just show that you have the funds and get your I20 and visa. It's up to you if you want them to disburse any amount from the approved loans and use them. If you're not Indian then there are options like Prodigy. I believe they cater internationally but I would check first. There will be similar lenders in most countries too.

- New Comment: That's a very high amount to spend on education as an international student, go write GRE and ace it, seek fully paid scholarship.

- New Comment: I was in this situation in April when I was accepted to my program. I completely understand how stressful it is. Dealing with the banks also takes sooo long and is super annoying.

The only way I could do it was taking out a student line of credit from TD (maximum is 40k/year) and had my parent co-sign. They offered me the most compared to RBC, Scotia, CIBC, etc. They also had the lowest interest rate. My family is low-middle class and we were approved. Try looking into TD! It helps if you/your parents already have accounts with them. Goodluck :)

- New Comment: If that relative can show that amount of money in their bank account, then sure.

- New Comment: My friend used her grandmother's bank account alongside her uncle's and mom's. So I think using your uncle would be fine!

- New Comment: Banks can help in this case, I don't know what country you are from but I would enquire nearby banks and see. So staff in bank open an account on your name/anyone from your family in their bank, deposit funds you

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requested and you need to pay interest amount for the days you need it for. And they will provide you a statement/certificate showing proof of funds which can be used to procure I-20. Reach out to banks, you may need to pay around 100\$ per 1000\$ deposited or something around that. So connect with banks and inform the situation.

And secondly a personal suggestion, you mentioned you coming from low income household so I would also think about the huge fees and might also check universities with lower fees maybe.

- New Comment: Someone else mentioned MPower Financing. They're the company I took a loan from to complete my education in the US. They will provide you with a letter of support if your loan is accepted. They don't need a cosigner but this comes at the price of higher interest rates (14%). If your great uncle is willing to sponsor your education, you can just not use the loan once you come to the US.

I'm not sure how the optics of showing that you need to take a loan out to afford the education will play out in the embassy. Students do it all the time, so I don't think there should be a problem but don't take my word for it and ask around.

- New Comment: Don't rush for loans, you have enough to survive 1 year, at least. You can get part time or any ga or ra and survive. Don't rush for loans if you have enough money.

Loans will make your life problematic.

Unless you don't have any relatives to help, no parents funds, no family property, no savings, then go for a loan.

- New Comment: Lots of variables when you apply for an F1 visa. Were you admitted to an undergraduate program and how old are you? The younger you are the more common it is to show finances from extended family. Depending on your country of citizenship, visa officers will likely take into consideration cultural norms for how money is shared between family, friends, etc.

Someone mentioned not using funding from a family member in the US. That is not always true. I do think you should go

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for other funding sources if your country has a high number of visa applicants for the US (e.g. India at this time) or a high legal and illegal immigration rate to the US, it may be best to stick with individual funds like in-country loans or immediate family members.

If you can try to make an appointment with either the international students office or the admissions office to see if they can talk with you about how to make a strong application.

You can also ask for advice from a US dept of state EducationUSA office.

- New Comment: Not meaning to judge but genuinely curious, if you don't already have access to the full amount for 1 year, how do you plan to survive living here for multiple years? The cost of living here can be very high compared to Europe depending on where you are and if you're a first year undergrad you'll likely be required to live on campus which is even more expensive on top of international tuition, student fees, health insurance, books, school supplies, food, travel, etc.

- New Comment: 1) Make another bank statement from other sponsors to fill up the remaining amount.

2) Take advice from the admission staff from the university.

3) Apply to another university. (It's quite easy to apply to multiple universities/colleges and get accepted. What's hard is to obtain a visa)

You should actually have finances available at the moment for at least for the first year if you're actually going to study. Otherwise, it's just not feasible for you to finish your studies and you'll end up dropping out, have to go back to your country with unfinished studies or become an illegal immigrant.

- New Comment: Try prodigy finance

- New Comment: Why don't you apply for scholarship

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- New Comment: Sponsorship is how you should go. Other methods are not viable. Even then loan doesn't seem like a good idea.
- New Comment: OP you can get an on-campus student job (although they don't pay that well) and your annual earnings will be estimated and entered onto the I-20. Graduate assistantships are usually the best way to get full funding because they do pay you as a student and some also come with part or full tuition waiver. I know everybody here telling you to go for student loans but that should be your last resort because it's money you are going to have to pay back. If you haven't already considered this, ask your department if there are any assistantship positions you can apply for and check the university's careers page and apply for some student jobs.
- New Comment: to be honest i been there too. It does not matter who is going to sponsor you. It might be someone that related to you or not, just make sure the amount is correct.
- New Comment: Don't worry at the end you ll get through just keep trying
- New Comment: Why not just take out a loan for a month show u have the funds and repay next month ?

Title of the post: Desperate in trying to find a job and my OPT time comes to an end / Advice on TPS

Body of the post: Hello all! I am an international student, majoring in international affairs. I graduated in May 2024 and of course applied for my OPT beforehand. I started applying for jobs since February 2023, and I cannot land a job, and today is June 27. My OPT EAD start date was 4th May (it was the next day after graduating, because I assumed to land a job from February) but it appeared I was deeply mistaken with this calculation. That's said my 90 days of unemployment would be on 1st of August. It is almost July and I still do not have an offer. I am losing my hope to find the offer with 1st of August start date. I am almost running out of money to provide for myself as well, since it's been 2 months of unemployment. I am also from a country that is eligible for TPS, so 1 month ago I applied for TPS just in case. I applied for it online and also applied for EAD through TPS and travel authorisation (I desperately need to visit my family overseas). The last two forms I sent by mail including waiver forms, since I do not have resource to pay 800\$ for those forms. I did pay TPS app for 80\$ and already gave my biometrics and fingerprints. I did not hear anything about

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the forms I sent out and not even sure they got to USCIS. I also checking my TPS status daily and it is still pending. Does anybody have any advice on what should I do the last month that I am here in the US? I am losing my hope and I am desperate about everything. I applied for 180+ job postings, got around 10 interviews and still waiting for response from 2 of them, but mostly I was rejected. I do have experience working for government, national level media and 3 higher ed degrees. I do not know if this is just wrong timing, and no-one hiring for summer? Or what? Maybe somebody also is aware about any volunteering opportunities to just stop the unemployment days count? I am in DC area. I will be grateful if you share your experience as well. I have never been that lost in my life.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hey, I am also an international student and I totally get what you are going through. I know this are just words don't lose hope. You are definitely doing something right with you getting interviews. Did any of the company who sent rejection give any feedback?

- New Comment: Maybe check with your college for an unpaid role in your field to stop your unemployment clock.

Times are tough. Don't give up.

- New Comment: You need to apply for travel authorization based on your TPS application. I think you can even apply now, with the pending application. As you're aware by now, everything takes time. You can also stay with your pending TPS until you hear back. You wouldn't be out of status but you won't be able to work. I hope you get a job in the next 30 days. Getting a job is hard, don't lose hope and keep trying. Reach out to your university and offer to volunteer to stop the unemployment clock.

- New Comment: My sister managed to get OPTs pretty easily and she gets multiple offers but a friend of mine (Brazilian guy) couldn't find OPTs for shit.

- New Comment: If you're that desperate, maybe tried to do some part time jobs and ask them to put it as your OPT job? My friend did this last year she worked 2-3 part time jobs. She graduated Graphic Design major and one of her part

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time jobs was at a restaurant doing hosting. luckily her bosses agreed to help her putting her as a designer something for the restaurant so it can match with her OPT

Title of the post: Do USCIS know that I work at least 20 hours a week during OPT?

Body of the post: Hi, I recently started my OPT job. I am a flight instructor and most flight instructors are getting paid hourly in the industry. So we get paid for what we actually worked. I know I need to work at least 20 hours a week during the OPT. It will be no problem usually but there might be some weeks that I may not be able to work 20 hours a week, especially in winter when the weather is damn bad. I can do ground and simulator lessons but might be short of 20 hours. If I can't work 20 hours a week, is it counted as an unemployment day? I'm so confused about how they track how many hours I work in this case.

What if I can't work 20 hours with students but I just go the school and do some things related to work to fulfill 20 hours even if I do not get paid for it? I'm confused such as situations like this.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: They don't track what you do, and won't know immediately but it can come up in future applications if they doubt it. In your case they'll probably not doubt it. Also on initial OPT you can be unpaid, so even if you're not paid for it, its alright.

They mainly verify and ask for RFE if they suspect you worked for a fraudulent shell consultancy like Sinocontech, Findream, Integra, AZTech, etc: [Shell Companies Sell Job Letters to Foreign Students, ICE Keeping New Data Private ? NBC Bay Area](<https://www.nbcbayarea.com/investigations/shell-companies-sell-job-letters-to-foreign-students-ice-keeping-new-data-private/2737070/>) but otherwise as long as your work is legit they don't track what you're doing or your hours.

- New Comment: [deleted]

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Title of the post: F1 Visa Slots opening in India for Fall 2024

Body of the post: I have got my i-20 last week, and now when I'm looking for the slots, not a single slot is available. Are the bulk slots already opened and got filled completely? Are any new slots going to open for June, July and August as I my college will be starting from August.

Does any one have any idea about when the slots will be available?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'm in the same boat, got my I20 two weeks ago and missed the May bulk opening. Can you DM me, we could help each other out.

- New Comment: The next slots for interviews in July will open between June 4th to June 11th

- New Comment: Try looking for slots late in the night (like literally between 2 - 4 am) & you might just get lucky.

Also, there is a very low chance of finding slots at Mumbai, Hyderabad & Delhi due to high demand but you can try Chennai & Kolkata.

I myself was able to book slots at Delhi (OFC) & Kolkata (Consular) using this method.

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Professor might give me an offer letter.

Body of the post: Hello people,

I am graduating next month, and my EAD start date is 1st July. I have explained my situation to the professor i work with and he might give me an offer letter through his LLC in summer to stop my opt clock. I have few doubts though:

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1. is offer letter enough to stop the clock ? it will be unpaid position. Are there any other clauses, one needs to take care of to be eligible ?
2. Anything my professor needs to aware of before helping me with an offer letter. (eg : any paper work required)
3. If i am able to secure a volunteering opportunity, can i start that before my EAD start date ?

Thanks in advance.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 1. Yes, as soon as you enter the info into SEVP or your DSO does into SEVIS, it will stop your clock.

Offer letter should include that it is unpaid, the number of hours each week, and that it is for your own learning.

2. You should sign an I-9 with him. At least that will be a proof of the internship. Also recommended would be having a time sheet and a paper trail of the tasks, as well as an employment verification letter by your professor at the end of your internship.

3. No you cannot work (either paid or unpaid) until you get your EAD and the EAD start date has passed.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: 1. Are you working >20 hours per week? If yes, cool, else not cool. Remember to register the employment with your international student office. Also, is your professor's LLC even eligible for having unpaid workers?

Non-profit orgs / other orgs like universities are eligible for having volunteer workers, but not really a private company that has revenue/profit.

2. He needs to understand that you're on an OPT, and if it can be unpaid, might be helpful to talk this through with your DSO.

3. No, you can't work before EAD starts.

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Title of the post: Oncampus job; did not file taxes

Body of the post: Hello!

I've been working an oncampus job for about 2 years now but I didn't go get an SSN or file my taxes yet. How screwed am I?

I'm currently working on getting my SSN since I just got an internship but I'm really scared about what this could mean for me.

I'd appreciate any advice.

Thanks

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: you will be fined thats all. You can file for the previous years in the upcoming tax season dw.
- New Comment: How the fuck did they pay you without SSN? Isn't that how they verify your employment eligibility anyway though I9?
- New Comment: How did you work without a SSN? It is illegal for a company to employ you without one.
- New Comment: 1. Go talk to the international students office. There's something off here ? yes, you're allowed to work on campus as an F-1, but iirc you should have also applied for a SSN asap.

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2. ****fact check this**** I believe the first four years on an f1 are tax exempt? Or you pay at a non resident alien rate.

Definitely follow up with a professional here, but it's possible you don't owe as much in taxes as you think

- New Comment: First of all, you do need ssn once you start the job. Like with a couple of weeks since your job start, one is required to update it. your university might have deducted taxes at source? check w2 form if you get one. What you are looking for is filing tax returns. If your university deducted a safer amount as tax at source, you needn't worry. But if they didn't deduct anything, contact a tax lawyer or company and explain your scenario. This should be sorted out with some penalty.

- New Comment: As long as you file taxes and pay income tax + penalty, it's not a big deal.

Just you know, use 1040NR unless you have passed 5 years since your entry to the US as an f1 holder.

Title of the post: STEM OPT Premium Processing - Delayed

Body of the post: Hi all. I applied for STEM OPT extension on 9 Apr 2024 and added Premium Processing. It has been more than 8 days, no updates. I saw here people are getting approved in 4-6 days. Just wanted to check with you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: My STEM OPT has been in processing since December. Added premium last week. No response at all.

- New Comment: There is no delay. You are guaranteed a response in 30 days not 4-6.

- New Comment: Switched to Premium Processing on Apr 5 and it showed me two weeks till case decision. Still haven't heard anything tho.

- New Comment: It's just over 7 days LOL It matters if you submitted on a Friday or Monday. 4-6 is unusual. I got mine approved after a week or so

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- New Comment: Relax. I applied with premium on April 5th, got approved today, April 17th.
- New Comment: I did premium processing for my initial OPT March 22 and didn't get approval until April 4th
- New Comment: switched to premium on 11th no updates yet
- New Comment: OPT premium is 30 days so be patient, you will get it. I used premium for my initial OPT filed late last year. Unbelievably, my case was approved in less than 24 hours. I submitted the case online around 1 pm on a thursday and the status changed to approved the next day morning and received the card within 2 weeks.
- New Comment: ...edited on 2 May

My friends, today I received an email saying my case is approved. But I don't see any update on the USCIS website. Will keep posted when I receive my actual EAD card. So, the timeline is:

9 April - Premium Process started

22 April - Approval by email

24 April - Approval appeared on the USCIS website

26 April- EAD card was produced

2 May - EAD card is received

- New Comment: Please any premium processing updates from this week?
- New Comment: Hey, I applied stem opt pp on june -16 2024 still waiting for approval. Anyone applied on same date and got approved?

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- New Comment: I applied premium on the 4th of April. It's showing me a processing time of 2 months. Isn't it supposed to be 1 month max?
- New Comment: Atleast you have a my progress tab! Mine is missing.
- New Comment: Given that they are still processing STEM OPT NP cases from Nov 2023, I would expect lots of people are also taking premium processing and would take about 3-4 weeks for updates. Wish that I am wrong :(
- New Comment: What you mean by delayed it?s only 6 days lol ?
- New Comment: unrelated question: Are you guys getting fulltime?(i'm asking wrt cs/it folks)
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: It?s 30 days not 4 lol
- New Comment: How much did you pay for it?
- New Comment: How do i apply for premium? my app is on step 2 of 3
- New Comment: Any one applied for premium processing on 5/13 and heard something? My receipt date is 12/20 and pp date is may 13 and as of today 5/30 its still pending.
- New Comment: Hi! I applied in December, didn?t receive anything till June 12th, when I finally gave in and applied for premium processing. Still haven?t heard anything at all. I will have to go on unemployment in a month. ./ any suggestions?
- New Comment: Same boat - applied on 19th June PP for STEM - nothing yet!
- New Comment: Applied for OPT on 05/02. Applied for PP on 07/01, got email of approval today (07/17).

Waiting for EAD card now.

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Title of the post: Folks graduating in MAY and have no offer letter in hand, what did you put your O

Body of the post: Hey,

I neither have any Full Time job offer in hand, nor any interview is scheduled. I am planning to put July dates (1st or 8th July - last date available according to my college) as OPT start date. I was wondering if other folks are doing the same? Couple of International students from my college put June end date, weirdly they also have no offers yet (as per what they told me).

Also, what are your B plans? Joining some NGO/volunteering? after OPT clock clicks in

I am very skeptical of going ahead with contract/staffing agency. I don't know which agency is even trustable at this point. Also, I can't stay working for NGO's forever, this is a cycle :(

I did have summer internship, but those folks aren't hiring..

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you don't have a job then put the last available date.

- New Comment: agencies is the best case scenerio if you can't land a job from indeed. I worked for an agency and it's legit! Wish you the best!

- New Comment: Meet with your DSO. They know what to do. There?s a statutory period that you must follow. That should guide you on when to put your proposed date. I already received my card but no offer at hand yet.

- New Comment: I was in the same boat when I graduated last May. But put in exactly one month after graduation (June) since if it comes in then I can start right away. But it came in late and I started working July 31st. It doesn?t really matter which date you put in. Personally, I think what matters is IF you get an offer and they want you to start right away but your EAD comes in early and your start date is the date you put in (which could be later than what the employer wants) then that makes it hard.

- New Comment: Following

- New Comment: Dm me about the agency

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- New Comment: I was exactly like you, I graduated in December had a job offer by Dec 30 and my start date was Feb 1st. I applied for premium and I didn't enquire any NGO/consultancy/ any since I already had an offer.

And right when my EAD arrived my job offer was revoked due budget issues with org. So my only advice is never ever be without a plan B. Keep applying for EVERY company, consultancy, agency, NGO out there until you get your first pay check!

- New Comment: I am also graduating in may. My opt start date is june 10 i already got the offer. I got it in march, I was in process since feb. For me, career fair helped a lot. I used to reach out a lot and I applied as well. But all my internships and offers i got are from career fair or atleast from a connection I made in career fair. Other than that, start the shotgun approach. Attend exhibits, conferences, careerfairs to make connections. Apply every job page on linkedin, indeed, ziprecruiter. You definitely land few interview and atleast one offer if you follow this everyday for a month. All the best!

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: I'm considering starting a business or volunteering till I secure an offer though. The job market is crazy. There are lots of downsizing and people are hustling for any kind of job to make ends meet.

Alternatively, I go home since I have a GM position been offered back in my country.

But I'd really to have some international work experience.

- New Comment: well.... I had job offer last year around this time with offer letter so i made start date right away 2 days after graduation however in your class latest would be safe bet and after that if it doesnt work well than non paid volunteer job just to keep opt or leave are options u have

Title of the post: Will my F1 visa be rejected if my Dad simultaneously apply for his F1?

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Body of the post:

I'm applying for an F1 visa for my graduate studies and will be scheduling an interview soon. I have been in the States for more than 10 years for educational purposes and will be returning to my home country for the interview.

The twist is that my dad also wants to pursue postgraduate studies and a second career now that he is retired from government service. He had his F1 visa interview last year but was rejected due to not demonstrating significant ties to our home country (both his company and my mom are back there, and he indeed plans to return after graduating. However, he doesn't speak fluent English and is not the best at interviewing).

Now that my dad is reapplying, he is concerned about whether we should schedule our interviews on the same day. Given that his previous denial was due to insufficient ties, he's worried that I might also get denied if he interviews before me, regardless of whether he passes or not.

I couldn't find any resources online about this issue, so I was wondering if any of you have suggestion on if my dad and I should schedule our interview on the same day or am I overthinking?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I don't think it will cause any effects, just make sure that you and your dad can show strong tie to your home country (and since your dad has a company in your home country, it should be sufficient) good luck on the interview!

- New Comment: This is anecdotal, but I know a girl and her mum that are both on F-1 in the US. AFAIK they didn't have trouble with the visa, although they did get detained at the airport for a bit.

- New Comment: I would say it's a "not zero" chance your visa could be denied because, the more family members you have coming to the U.S., the more it starts to appear you may not return home - especially after ten years of studying in the U.S.

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- New Comment: Not by default. He could say something that flags you, but by default, no
- New Comment: Not by default. He could say something that flags you, but by default, no
- New Comment: If u and ur dad applying for F1, u prolly have enough cash for an investors visa anyw

Title of the post: Have i20 doubt

Body of the post: Hi all,

<https://preview.redd.it/lt13v4pmvorc1.jpg?width=1072&format=pjpg&auto=webp&s=a6890b21eef5e4325366c9f7f2754ca7ec658ead>

I got admit at SJSU for MS SE and got I20.

This is my i20 financials initially I had only submitted loan letter to justify i20 amount but I also have personal funds I want to show in F1 visa.

So can I just show my personal funds additionally or should I ask my university to update that in my i20.

Please help any insight is appreciated.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >should I ask my university to update that in my i20.

I don't add anything beyond the minimum required on the left side of the equation. I wouldn't bother asking. You can just show additional funds if asked at the embassy/consulate

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- New Comment: Honestly that part is an estimate and never was accurate in n my case. Not sure u should stress about it

- New Comment: I don?t think you have to worry about the i20 showing you have personal funds too. The idea is that you have sufficient amount for living expenses and of course the tuition.

You will be asked to show proof of funds and you should provide a copy of the loan approval. Preferably the page where it has a breakdown of the amount funded, interest and your signature page. (I understand those loan documents can be long (over 10 pages in some cases)).

- New Comment: How did they calculate your living expenses though

- New Comment: Yeah it's better to show 1.25- 1.5 x amount of i20

- New Comment: So I didn't even realize this info is on i20. My university just mentions Personal Fund and Scholarships. So everything is put under personal funds. I showed loan amount, personal funds and other sources in visa interview that was more than that amount. I don't think it needs to match exactly what it says here until you show 1.5x+ than the i20 amount at the interview. Still, check with DSO once.

- New Comment: Wait, how did you get a loan as an international student in first place?

I thought internationals are not allowed.

Title of the post: No internship until graduation.. what would you do?

Body of the post: Hello,

I am an F-1 CS major with one year of undergrad left. I am currently taking a gap semester due to family reasons and it seems that this messed everything up.

I was going to go back to the US this summer for an internship but my school said I am ineligible for CPT because of the

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gap. And they said I won't be able to work off campus until I graduate since I only have one year left.

I added CS a bit later in my program so I don't have any internship experience, and I can't even attempt to get an internship until I graduate because I cannot even get authorization. This means I would have to find a full-time job after graduation without any internship experience.

What could my options be and what would you do in my situation?

1. Stay in home country this fall and try to find an internship here to at least have on my resume.
2. Go back to school this fall but add one more semester so that I can work in summer 2025 and fall 2025 and possibly get a return offer.
- 3-1. Go back to school and graduate as planned and attempt to find a full-time job without any internship experience.
- 3-2. Extend my graduation over the summer by taking a class in summer 2025 so that I at least have a few more months for job search. Anyone has experience with this route?

My school also said unpaid work is not allowed so even that is not an option. Is that true for all schools or is this school-specific policy?

Any advice or thoughts would be appreciated. Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The tech job market is notoriously awful right now, and I think your odds of finding a job with no internship, or an internship that doesn't have a small amount of name recognition, is very very low - even if you search

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for months.

My advice to students is to do whatever it takes to complete an internship in the US prior to graduating. For most international students, a return offer from their internship employer is their best chance of getting a job after graduation. An internship in your home country would not suffice, unless you're satisfied to take a return offer in your home country.

The unpaid work being forbidden is per US immigration and labor law. It's not specific to your school.

- New Comment: I'd do both 1 and 2 if that's something that can be done for you. I don't think 1 internship will even help much for new grads in the tech field (unless you get an internship at a MAANG company or something similar). You'd want at least 2 internships to get on the radar.

Tbh it really depends on what type of companies you're aiming for & what your profile (aside from the internships) looks like. If you have great academics & projects to set you apart from other new grads then you'd probably be fine with 1 internship.

- New Comment: Could you explain why you cannot work due to your gap semester? I was planning to get one too?

- New Comment: Some schools let you delay your graduation by adding semesters with electives. Given your situation, that might be a good option. The tech market is trash now and you'd have the one year qualification for CPT. The con is that it'd be more money spent in school, so balance out the pros and cons to make a decision.

Title of the post: Should I consider premium processing for STEM OPT? Applied early too

Body of the post: Hi guys. I applied for STEM OPT. I applied 83 days early. Should I consider premium processing?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: IMO no need if you don't need it urgently for some reason. You get 180 day auto extension. Though

Reddit Posts

you might face some trouble while renewing driver license, if your opt EAD expires before you receive your stem opt EAD.

- New Comment: If you have \$1685 you would rather light on fire rather than spending it on something useful/giving it to a charity, sure.

- New Comment: My STEM OPT last year took 4 months to be processed and approved.

- New Comment: When you say "83 days early" you mean you applied 83 days before your initial OPT expires right? And not 83 days before the 90day window where you're allowed to apply for the STEM OPT?

- New Comment: when does your current ead end?

- New Comment: What date did you apply? I applied on Dec 3 and still haven't received yet.

- New Comment: I'm in the same boat. My initial opt ends on May 28th, and I sent in my stem I-765 two days ago. (So about 82 days before expiration date). I'm planning on to do PP I don't receive anything by and of April.

Title of the post: Got software internship offer while studying CS. Community College won't offer C

Body of the post: My school apparently just stopped issuing CPT to F-1 visa students because "it was too stressful". Did I just lose or can I go around it somehow? Is it worth trying the economic hardship thingy if I kinda have no excuse for it? Could I go directly to the immigration services? Or is it either through my DSO or not at all?

Thank you for any advice my beautiful people<3

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Was it associates degree?

CPT is a benefit. Universities may or may not offer it.

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- New Comment: Dont do the hardship if u cant prove it, tell them u need i20 opt 3 months before graduate and apply for opt, when u receive ead then u can work

- New Comment: >My school apparently just stopped issuing CPT to F-1 visa students because "it was too stressful".

Bad reason, but this is fine. CPT is a benefit not an obligation. Many programs at my school are not CPT eligible.

>Did I just lose or can I go around it somehow?

CPT has to be academic and your school says they don't have an academic reason to issue CPT.

>Is it worth trying the economic hardship thingy if I kinda have no excuse for it?

Are you even eligible for this? And if CPT is too hard, good luck with economic hardship.

>Could I go directly to the immigration services?

And.... What? They have no obligation to offer CPT.

>Or is it either through my DSO or not at all?

Correct

- New Comment: Not sure if your school has much say with OPT but you can try pre-completion OPT. That?s what I did when my school did not allow CPT (for a second time).

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- New Comment: Let the offer go and inform employer as soon as possible.
- New Comment: You should be able to do pre completion OPT, if you're not completing the associates degree before transferring you technically aren't eligible for post completion OPT.

What reason did they give for not allowing you to do pre completion OPT?

Title of the post: F1 visa interview experience at New Delhi.

Body of the post: Today, I had my F1 Visa interview for my MS. I felt it would be beneficial to relate my story because I had previously visited this post in the hopes of finding the same thing. I had an appointment at the US Embassy in New Delhi. I dressed in a casual shirt and trousers. If you are advised that formals are the preferred attire, I strongly advise you to reconsider. After the standard biometric checks, I stood in line for my interview. I smiled and assumed a harsh demeanor before moving forward. When asked, I showed my passport and I-20.

I was asked the normal visa interview questions concerning my university, college, education, subject, and sponsor, among other topics.

Here comes the golden words: Congratulations! Your visa was approved. You will have your passport at your door within five working days.

Tips: Remain calm and composed. Keep in mind this isn't a job interview.

Step 1: Getting an appointment.

I got my appointment from an agent, because I have been looking for an appointment since a long time. So I took help from an agent.

Step 2: preparing for my interview, collected all necessary documents.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hi..Congrats on your visa..can i message you..??

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Thanks for sharing! I'll be giving my interview in Delhi too in a couple months time.
- New Comment: Can u share the Agent's contact details? Also, once i receive my admit, what are the next steps that i need to take?
- New Comment: Hi OP, can you please tell what they asked regarding your financials?
And how did you answer it? Did they ask you for any documents?
- New Comment: Do they give some slip or ticket on confirmation? I have to collect my passport myself.
- New Comment: Hey what did you wear in your biometric appointment?

Title of the post: Turkish citizen with F1 status but no F1 visa, trying to travel internationally.

Body of the post: While in the US on a a tourist visa, I applied for F1 status/ school and was accepted. I?m planning to study for the next 2 years in the US, but I would like to take a week long trip to Spain this coming May. The problem is, although I have F1 status, I do not have an F1 visa. All of the websites say you cannot obtain an F1 visa in the US, preferably you should obtain a F1 visa in your own country. However, I am from Turkey, not Spain, and it seems the F1 visa processing time can take months.

Furthermore, I?ve heard anecdotally, 90-95% of Turkish citizen?s visa applications are currently being rejected. I?m scared to leave the US if I?m risking my ability to reenter.

Any suggestions or tips would be greatly appreciated.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You either get a visa from Turkey or don't leave the country at all. Applying for visa as third country national in Spain is almost a guaranteed rejection.

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- New Comment: You technically can apply for a US visa outside of your home country (although each consulate has specific rules about this), but even if you manage in Spain, I doubt you'll get interviewed and get your passport in hand within a week.

Suggestion, take a trip inside the country.

- New Comment: Pick between the two year course of study and a week long vacation in Spain. Priorities.

- New Comment: Home country is best... but you can take your own risks and decide what's best for you.

I personally did not travel until I got my gc via work sponsorship ... end of the day it's your decision.

- New Comment: Just don't...

- New Comment: just go to puerto rico, it's like spain and you don't need to mess with your visa

- New Comment: Hiii. Could you mind sharing your processing timeliness and tips for the change of status from b1b2 to f1. Thankss

- New Comment: NAL. Did you arrive on a B1/B2?

You may have violated the terms of your tourism visa by enrolling in a course of study.

USCIS clearly states:

Enrolling in a course of study while in a status that does not permit such activity will result in a status violation. Individuals who have violated their nonimmigrant status by enrolling in a course of study are not eligible to extend their status or change to F-1 or M-1 status.

Reddit Posts

[USCIS

Citation](<https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment/changing-to-a-nonimmigrant-f-or-m-student-status>)

- New Comment: as long as you have a valid tourist visa I hope it will not effect on your journey to sapin when coming back to USA

- New Comment: Following, im on the same boat!

Title of the post: Lost F1 visa in USA

Body of the post: I came to the US in Jan 2021. Had a 5 year F-1 visa stamp on my passport. In mid 2023 I lost my passport and alongside my F-1 visa. I was on OPT back then. I've already applied for STEM extension and waiting for the EAD(myUSCIS says decision will be made in a week). I want to travel to India as one of my grand parents are ill. I have created an account in usvisascheduling website and answered all the questions, when I booked a slot it gave me an option to select interview waiver and I did. I'm still in the US contemplating whether I should go to India with that interview waiver slot(normal interview slots are not available any time soon).

According to the US travel docs website if someone loses a passport they are basically not eligible for interview waiver. Not sure what to do next. Do I take the risk and go to India with the ?interview waiver? slot or should I cancel the waiver slot and book a normal one?

Any response is appreciated!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 1. Did you apply for a new passport at the Indian embassy in US?
- 2. Did you report your lost visa to the US embassy in India which issued it to you?

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3. Did you answer truthfully when it asked if your passport/visa was stolen on the usvisascheduling website?

- New Comment: Yeah went through something similar. You're not eligible for visa interview waiver. Just book the normal interview and go in person, control the conversation with the consular and let them know you've already studied here and currently working on opt. Show them the police report and your transcripts and your visa will be issued

- New Comment: OP get an interview waiver slot they will surely issue a 221g and give you a walk in interview. When I applied for my case I was missing biometrics so they issued a 221g and gave me a walk in interview slip along with it

Title of the post: Should i put money into 401k?

Body of the post: I'm in my second year of STEM OPT and I'm not sponsored for h1b nor have a green card rn but I'm planning to go to grad school, do I need to opt in 401k to maximize income?

Will I be able to opt out of 401k when I go back home without penalty? Would appreciate anyone willing to share their experiences/opinions.

Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If there's a match then contribute up to the matching limit. It's free money that's yours for life!!

- New Comment: You'll be able to withdraw from your 401k if going back home. I think there's a 10% penalty

I personally would put money into the 401k and get your employers match

- New Comment: If your employer matches, definitely do it. Even with the early withdrawal penalty, assuming you have 0 income when you withdraw then it can still be net income.

If no matching, then I would look to park money somewhere else like a Roth IRA/HSA or even simply just HYSA.

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- New Comment: If your employer matches, do it.

- New Comment: Not an advice but just a thought: Instead save the money for school, If you are planning to go to school on first day CPT an other thing you need to worry about is the health insurance and benefits.

- New Comment: I would put at least the minimum amount to get your employer?s maximum matching contribution, because this is free money. Max out your 401K if you want to settle in the U.S. and you think you have the means to reasonably attain an immigrant work visa and/or residency eventually.

If you end up leaving your job, roll-over the 401K into an IRA with a well known provider or bank. The most important thing you should check is whether the bank / IRA provider will service non-residents residing abroad who have funds in the U.S. Some providers will not and you will run into issues with accessing your money if you leave the country permanently. Otherwise, you should have no problem keeping it in the U.S. as a retirement or emergency fund. Note that if you choose to withdraw early (before 59.5 years of age), you will pay a 10% penalty on top of income taxes.

- New Comment: Does it make sense to max out 401k in this situation?

- New Comment: I wouldn't being on a visa

- New Comment: Uhm there is a 10% penalty but also the money you pull off is considered as taxable incoming. Depending on the state you are working on you will get taxed a certain amount. For me it was not worth it.

- New Comment: I thought just like you did. I didn't contribute anything at my first job and there was company match. Life took interesting turns and I ended up staying and marrying my husband. Now I regret not contributing at my first job.

Title of the post: Automatic Visa Revalidation (AVR) Experience: Traveling to Canada by Bus and R

Body of the post: This isn't my personal experience, but I asked a friend to share his story, as this community could benefit from more AVR data points.

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"Hi Friends,

I'm currently in the US under F1 status and have an up-to-date I-20 document. Back in 2022, I changed my status from a J1 to an F1 visa. I traveled from the US to Canada via Detroit by bus, aiming to be a tourist and to obtain a work permit. At the Canadian border, the customs officer asked me questions like, "Why are you going to Canada? Which country do you live in? What's your status in the US? Where are you heading in Canada?" I gave short and clear answers. The officer wished me a good time, wrapping up the conversation in about 2-3 minutes, and then I entered Canada.

I stayed in Canada for a total of 18 days and didn't travel to any other country during this period. After that, I returned to the US using Automatic Visa Revalidation (AVR) from Toronto YYZ Airport. My flight was with United Airlines. When I went to check in and get my boarding pass, an agent noticed I didn't have a current visa in my passport. I explained that I'm a student under F1 status and showed my I-20 and original F1 status change approval documents. The agent called someone for verification and then issued my boarding pass. This whole process took about 4 minutes.

Next, I proceeded to the main section, where the US customs officers were for passport and visa control. I repeated the same information to the US customs officers. They asked, "How many days did you stay in Canada? Did you travel to any other country from Canada? Where do you live in the US? Are you a student?" I answered these questions and provided my fingerprints. After taking my fingerprints, the officer took my photo with a camera beside him, returned my documents, and allowed me to pass through. This conversation lasted about 6-7 minutes.

After landing in the US, nobody asked me anything further, and I just walked straight out of the airport through the exit.

In conclusion, I can say that you can travel with peace of mind using AVR, provided you stay for a maximum of 30 days. Being always prepared and keeping your necessary documents in order is very important.

Reddit Posts

Interestingly, they didn't stamp any entry or exit seals on my passport. However, when I checked online, I saw that my I-94 document had been updated, and my status was updated as F1 on I-94.

Take care."

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes, I have entered twice using AVR at Florida airports from the Dominican Republic, even though I had a hard time with the airline, as you said, the process with CBP once you arrive to the US is very smooth, in my case the second time took about 15-20min at secondary inspection, no questions asked. I am about to travel and re enter the US with AVR for third time, my F1 is expired while on STEM OPT, valid i20 untill 2025.

- New Comment: Hey. Did you apply for canada visa? Can i ask if the hotel booking is required? Thank you

- New Comment: Can you do this a few months before the visa expires?

- New Comment: This is very interesting. I'm looking into changing my status from L2 to F1. My dad's visa expires in August of this year, and he's moving to work in Canada instead of the U.S. I will be studying in the U.S. while my family is in Canada. So will this allow me to travel to Canada (assuming I have a valid visitor's visa) to visit my family during breaks and come back to the U.S. without having to apply for a whole new one?

My current passport actually doesn't have the initial L2 visa at all, it was on my old passport which I later renewed. So how will this work?

Title of the post: Requesting F1 visa denial from Officer

Body of the post: If you are renewing your visa as F1 student and you don't want to study anymore in your US, but your family is pressuring you, so you still going to embassy to renew your visa and ask the visa officer to deny your visa and explain if you go to US this time you Cannot come back because your family is pressuring you to stay there and also you

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cannot afford your tuition anymore. Will they deny your visa or they will still renew your visa since you already studied two years in US? But if you pay for them to deny your visa because it will run your mental health and you don't want to go to US what will they do?

Thanks for answers!?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Do not even bring up such a suggestion with US embassy. Don't! You do not want to jeopardize future visas. I will advice you to sit down with your parents and discuss with them. Do not get the embassy involved. You should tell your family what you think is best for you! Why are you having a difficult time as an F1 student? What problems are you facing that is forcing you not to come back?

- New Comment: Instead of jeopardizing your future US visas, why not just pretend you've gone to the embassy, enjoy a cup of coffee and then go back home and tell your parents your visa is denied. Dang, you can even print a denial notice yourself. It's just a piece of paper.

- New Comment: I know talking to parents is a difficult thing.

But think about it this way - tomorrow if you want to go to the US for whatever reason and if your visa is denied because of this interview,youre going to want to come back in time and not do this.

So jts a matter of either facing difficulty in the short term i.e telling your parents vs facing issues in the long term i.e future denials.

Either ways the path is tough, face your parents now than risking your future.

Title of the post: Urgent: STEM OPT Denied because degree is not considered STEM?!

Body of the post: My gf got her denial notice today. She got her MBA degree with STEM (Management Science) concentration from an ivy-league school. Her program receives STEM designation and seems like this is a new issue

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these business schools start to face since her DSO said there are more cases like this happening in peer schools. She seems to be the first case to receive a denial as the school said they need some time to discuss the best course of action. Below is her denial details.

At the time the DSO recommends a 24-month OPT extension under this paragraph (f)(10)(ii)(C) in SEVIS, the degree that is the basis for the application for the OPT extension must be contained within a category on the STEM \[Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics] Designated Degree Program List.

A review of your application and supporting documents submitted, as well as the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), indicates that the degree program you completed in Business Administration is not listed on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List. According to the evidence you submitted, your degree of Business Administration was issued in conjunction with your concentration in Management Science.

Per 8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(ii)(C)(2)(iii), ?the degree that is the basis for the application for the OPT extension must be contained within a category on the STEM Designated Degree Program List.? Any ancillary minors, concentrations or certificates earned with the degree cannot be considered as completing a STEM degree program when the degree itself is not a STEM designated degree. DHS provides further clarification in the Federal Register Notice. According to The Update to the Department of Homeland Security STEM Designated Degree Program List, 87 FR 3317 (January 21, 2022), only qualifying majors may meet the requirements for STEM extensions: ?In 2016, DHS published a Final Rule providing a 24-month extension of OPT for F-1 nonimmigrant students who majored in a designated STEM field of study. See 81 FR 13039 (Mar. 11, 2016).?

*To qualify for the optional practical training (OPT) STEM extension, the degree that is the basis for the extension must be a bachelor?s, master?s or doctoral degree that is assigned a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code that appears on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List. A concentration in Management Science, though it may

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have a STEM CIP code assigned, cannot be used to qualify for a STEM extension. The acceptable STEM CIP code must be assigned to the student's primary or secondary major.*

Your diploma/transcript shows you were granted a Master of Business Administration. Your SEVIS record shows a CIP code of 52.1301 - Management Science which does not match the conferred degree. The CIP code of 52.1301 - Management Science is actually the CIP code that corresponds with the concentration portion of the academic program.

As your record does not reflect an approved STEM degree on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List, you are ineligible for employment authorization under 8 CFR § 274a.12(c)(3)(i)(C).

Your Form I-765 is denied.

This decision is without prejudice to consideration of subsequent applications for employment authorization filed with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

This decision may not be appealed. However, if you disagree with this decision, or if you have additional evidence that shows this decision is incorrect, you may submit a motion to reopen or a motion to reconsider by completing a Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion. A motion to reopen must state the new facts to be considered and must be supported by affidavits or other new documentary evidence. A motion to reconsider must show that the decision was legally incorrect according to statute, regulation, and/or precedent decision.

The motion must be filed within 33 days from the date of this notice.

Both the school and her company said this is absurd, but no one seems to know what to do because this is a rare case.

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I don't understand how other students receive approval with the same degree from same program and faced no issue. Can anyone please help on this? Any recommendation for Immigration lawyer?? What are the chances that she submit a motion to reopen and she will get an approval? What are the additional evidence the school can provide?? Can her company sponsor her a visa or GC? The school said she has to stop working and may need to leave the country. Is that true? Any advice or suggestions on the next steps are highly appreciated!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >Both the school and her company said this is absurd, but no one seems to know what to do because this is a rare case.

??? I hate when schools give these stupid answers. What do they mean they don't know what to do? The letter tells them EXACTLY what to do.

>However, if you disagree with this decision, or if you have ****additional evidence that shows this decision is incorrect****, you may submit a motion to reopen or a motion to reconsider by completing a Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion. A motion to reopen ****must state the new facts to be considered and must be supported by affidavits or other new documentary evidence****. A motion to reconsider ****must show that the decision was legally incorrect according to statute, regulation, and/or precedent decision****.

The school just has to show how her degree is considered STEM CIP degree. DHS doesn't decide the CIP Codes. The school and their accreditation agebcy. So the school/department needs to submit evidence of the degree being 52.1301 - Management Science. There is an office/department on campus that oversees this process and documentation they can also get help from their accreditation agency.

Another option is to reapply for STEM OPT and submit the above document if your girlfriend is still in the application

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window for STEM OPT.

But seriously this is not a rare occurrence. I have had two of these previously and we just submitted what we had on file with our accreditation agency, a letter from the department, and a letter from our Academic Dean.

Once received it was reviewed and processed in about 30-45 days. Approved and processed.

DHS doesn't oversee the CIP Codes. The Department of Education does. DHS just uses the codes. Just submit documents via that process or reapply if still able and submit the documents.

- New Comment: Thanks for the data point. Mine is 52 Management Science as well, currently I am on OPT trying to apply for STEM OPT next year, but my diploma is in Bachelor of Science, I was pretty sure I will qualify but looking at this post is starting to make me paranoid ??

- New Comment: How did you get approved? Also, what universities are these?

- New Comment: Hey @Affectionate-Newt889 you confirm which center was handling the case and gave this Denial? Trying to understand if it is center specific.

- New Comment: Do you have any updates?

- New Comment: What was the argument made if you can say anything about it?

I got an RFE, but my diploma says Master of Science in Accounting and the CIP code is 52.1399 which is STEM.

Title of the post: So, employers can sponsor F-1 students for a green card through EB-3 without go

Body of the post: How common is this? Is it only common at big tech companies? Is it guaranteed to get a green card if sponsored through EB-3?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: While it used to be possible, it's no longer practical.

During the EB-3 application process, it's a long wait before one is eligible for an interim EAD (work permit). During this long wait, you cannot remain or work in the US unless you've other work authorization (such as OPT).

For China-born, the wait time is ~5-10 years; for India-born, the wait time is 30+ years. H-1B is definitely required and has always been the case.

However, because PWD/PERM wait times have grown to 2+ years and EB-2 and EB-3 backlogs for RoW has grown to 1-2 years, the total wait to get to the EAD stage has now grown to 3+ years (EB-2) and 4+ years (EB-3).

Since the wait for an EAD now exceeds the 3 year STEM OPT even for EB-2/EB-3 RoW, this technique of sponsoring an F-1 directly for a green card is no longer feasible.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Very rare. Even if the company agrees, it's also risky to get EB3 before H1B given you only have 3 years on OPT.

- New Comment: That's how I got my green card at big tech in 2021. Not from India or china tho, so my queue was not bad. OPT -> STEM OPT -> applied for EB3 (took 1.5 years till I got GC).

- New Comment: Following

- New Comment: But keep in mind F1 doesn't allow dual intent. That might complicate things

- New Comment: Yes they can

- New Comment: Yes. I've seen many cases for students with nationality of Korea, Europe, etc.

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Title of the post: Got selected for random security while traveling to US at New Delhi Airport. Board

Body of the post: I travelled to India after 3 years due to Covid and I was returning to the US after 10 days. I'm currently on STEM Opt and have a valid F1 and I20 and a job verification letter. While checking in at Air India, they said I've been randomly selected by TSA for additional screening. They checked my bag, took my passport and a police officer asked me when was the last time I entered the US. They cleared my boarding pass and asked me to proceed after a few questioning. I don't understand why this happened and I'm ver scared when I enter the US. Has this happened to anyone? What was your experience?

Update: They immediately put me in secondary at immigration and grilled me for an hour about my job. Thankfully I had a job verification letter and they verified through e recruit too. They were very racist, the officer after asking me what my plans were after Stem Opt ends, I replied that I'll go back home and he was like no, you Indians never go back home, you always stay in our country. I was about to cry :(

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hey I've been pre screened in my home country and re screened again totally randomly while in the US again. Just dont worry about it. You have your documents and you have nothing illegal. Stay polite and in good spirits and carry as you were.
- New Comment: Chances are your connecting flight in the US will have the SSSS as well. It's usually for security security and not as much as immigration from what I have experienced and been told
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: It says "random" you know that right? You'll be fine
- New Comment: Do you have a connecting flight in the U.S. when you arrive?
- New Comment: My brother got this once while he was visiting me as a tourist. He was questioned only from India, not once he reached the US. Even if you're questioned here, it wouldn't be a problem. Just answer truthfully, it'll be fine.

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Title of the post: ?Will you require sponsorship now in the future??

Body of the post: Hi everyone! Currently applying to summer internships as a sophomore. I sent out already 20-40 applications for summer internships and only receiving rejections. For all of these applications I have been answering ?yes? for the typical sponsorship question. I consider myself to be a qualified candidate since I had prior internships and relevant skills. Could it be that I am getting rejected just because I am an international student? Would there be consequences if I start selecting ?no??

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The primary consequences are:

1. You may be wasting your time, as companies reject you during/after the interviews for needing sponsorship.
2. You may end up securing an internship at places which will not give you a return offer, regardless of your performance.

It's certainly something you can do if you're desperate, but generally it's a short sighted solution that will lead to posts like: "my company says my position is ineligible for sponsorship even with good performance reviews and I'm stuck with little/no OPT left, what do I do?"

- New Comment: Personally I responded no for all of my internships but I was also very ok with knowing that most places I work for will not have the capacity/legal ability to sponsor me. I did have a conversation with my managers towards the end of my time at the internship to double check that I was not assuming incorrectly. This was rambling so I hope I made sense lol

- New Comment: Look at my last post! People had insightful comments there

- New Comment: I just experienced this in April for a summer internship in a global consulting firm, so I put "no" for all

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my application because to me I have three years of STEM OPT, and I may or may not have the intention to live in US forever. I asked immigration lawyers and they said this is the correct answer because STEM is not an visa, and the employer don't have to do anything about it.

So what happened is, my internship company gave me an offer but weeks before I start the internship they said they will not honor the full time offer after the internship program because they do not wish to sponsor graduates. I accepted the internship and worked hard to impress all the leaders in my department and gotten an full time offer from the internship and they offered me as a senior consultant rather than graduate position. The company sponsor green card and H1B, just that this is not offered to fresh graduates with limited experience.

A little background, I have 8 years of working experience with a global firm before coming to US to do my Master degree. And it was hard for me to get an interview too. I know it is extremely hard to get a job here using OPT, but don't give up and don't be picky. Even if the company said they will never sponsor H1B even if you join them, the most important thing is getting local working experience first. Think about H1B later.

I have friends who never give up and keep finding ways and found a job that is willing to sponsor, and also friends who are really picky with job and end up going home after 90 days. Having internship experiences doesn't mean much because interns were not meant to do much in a job. The best way is to convince the company to give you an return offer while interning with them, otherwise, just keep looking.

Hope it helps! I wish you all the best!

- New Comment: I would just stick with "yes" as an answer since it's the truth; I don't know if there'd be consequences if you'd say "no" but I wouldn't take the chance if I were you because it would be considered unethical. Most interviews I had, they generally don't mind sponsoring you since **you would DEFINITELY make much more money for them than the money they'd spend on you**. According to my experience, you might want to try to apply to those foreign

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company/corporation. You can always explain to them you would not need their sponsorship to work in the USA legally with your OPT in the interview (Regular OPT -1 years, STEM OPT \[if your major falls into STEM program\] - 2 years)

I am working for a Japanese Corporation under OPT; they are familiar with sponsoring foreigners to work in the USA, Japanese employees in this case. Bottom line is nobody knows for sure of the reasons of job rejections, if you are confident that you are a qualified candidate, keep improving your resume, presenting yourself and applying for jobs as much as possible; more importantly, don't let those rejections let you down. I got only 7 interviews and 3 job offers out of 220 applications.

Best of luck to you!

- New Comment: Always answer "no" .

You will most likely be auto-rejected if you say "yes" .

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: OPT processing time

Body of the post: Hey Guys! I got a job offer from a company to start from July 10. My OPT receipt date is May 19. I applied online on the USCIS webpage. Just super nervous about when it will be approved. Wanted to ask you guys if you applied around the same time or in general this summer and when you received!! This way I can have a general understanding of processing time. Thank youuu ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I applied online with receipt date of May 4th but with no updates till now

- New Comment: About 5-7 weeks currently.

- New Comment: They should get to your application soon. My receipt date was May 17th and I got mine approved

Reddit Posts

yesterday June 27th. Good luck!

- New Comment: Applied in March and got mine in two weeks. Crazy quick. I remember waiting and having that weird feeling in my stomach about it.
- New Comment: Took me two months for my initial application in 2021, I submitted the hard copy. My colleague who submitted online said it took her 40 days.
- New Comment: I noticed this last year as well from April till the whole summer USCIS processing becomes very slow.
- New Comment: My receipt date was May 27th, I'm veryyy nervousssss
- New Comment: From OPT tracker it looks like May 17 was half completed today so you should be up soon for approval. For people early may you should probably inquire about that
- New Comment: My receipt date is May 2nd, still pending. So nervous.
- New Comment: Did you get approved? My receipt is from May 18th and I am waiting. Getting very anxious lol
- New Comment: Just got approved everyone!!
- New Comment: Applied June 1st. Just got the approval 18 July. ETA: card received July 23rd
- New Comment: Following on this please. I applied on May 23rd and I am sick to my stomach just by waiting. I hope we will get approved soon.
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Hey Guys! I'm starting to hear that those with last names that start with P and after (essentially towards the end of the alphabet) are taking long. My last name starts with S, what about you guys?
- New Comment: I really want to give up. I want to have 0 expectations. Who cares if I am not able to get this job because of my OPT? I am so depressed :(ugh life sucks. I just want to have a decent life and gain work experience and have no one to blame. The more I obsess over this, the more depressed I feel lol. How do you guys deal with this

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anxiety?

- New Comment: I am mind blown that USCIS processed only 5 opt IOE cases today. Why???? Does anyone know? I thought they have only 4th of July off. They have processed such few cases since Monday :/

- New Comment: My receipt date is May 3rd. Still waiting.

- New Comment: Following. My receipt date was May 12, applied online and my job start date was June 20th. No updates yet. My manager is so pissed at me already, the wait is killing me ???

- New Comment: Hi! My timeline is this:

-Applied/Received date April 16th

- Approved on May 17th

- Received on May 21st

USCIS timeline now on their website is 1 month (4 weeks) but since it's the summer, when everyone is applying, it might get delayed a few days. Based on your case, I'd expect you to get your permit by the time your work starts. Hopefully you'll get it soon, and hope your work goes great!

- New Comment: My receipt date was May 9 and applied also online. Haven't heard anything yet. My start date is tomorrow

- New Comment: Following up on this.

- New Comment: Following

- New Comment: Receipt date of May 10, online application. Still waiting for approval.

- New Comment: Did you get approved

- New Comment: Hey Guys, do you know if the requested start date can affect the processing time ?

- New Comment: Hi! I got my opt approved.

Reddit Posts

May 27th applied , july 14th approved. Wanted to ask how long it takes for the card to be delivered?

- New Comment: I applied in July 11, and I was approved on August 18th :)

But my start day is next month, I thought it was going to take like 2 months, so I put my start day on September 22nd ?

- New Comment: My receipt date is April 7th, 2023. Around this time, when should I expect my EAD card to be approved and delivered?

Title of the post: F1 visa Dropbox timeline/experience

Body of the post: Hey everyone, here's my timeline (hope this helps someone):

I opted to drop my passport at the Hyderabad VAC & chose the Hyderabad consulate to issue my visa

May 6: Dropbox appointment

May 11: case created. Status: application received

May 18: case updated. Status: application received

May 19: administrative processing

May 20: visa issued

Parsing through telegram, it looks like the folks who chose Delhi as their final issuing consulate are seeing the fastest turnaround times (~5ish business days from application received to visa issued) while Hyderabad and Chennai are taking a little longer.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hi ! thanks for sharing your experience. I had a B1/B2 Visa that expired on 2016, i was 11 years old at the time of issue. I was eligible for dropbox, do you think because i was 11 years old , ill be likely be called for interview ?? and what documents do we need to submit ?

- New Comment: Are F1 dropbox appointments easily available? I have heard that the appointments are hard to get!

- New Comment: Thanks for this!

- New Comment: Hi,

My case says ? case updated ? on Friday (June 24th) . But, it dint turn to administrative processing or anything till now. Just praying it?s not a refusal. Btw, I submitted my case on June 8th. Case got created on June 14th. This is Hyd consulate. Anyone experiencing similar situation ?

- New Comment: What could be the reasons for VISA rejection for dropbox? I am currently on a J1 VISA and I am eligible for dropbox. I am trying to get a dropbox appointment to change my VISA status to F1.

Title of the post: F-1 Interview

Body of the post: I had prepared answers for some officer questions and hope you can tell if I need to change something

- Why US

Because America education system is more effective and A degree from US University is highly honoured and respected in Saudi Arabia and the gulf when I finish my degree it will open many opportunities for me when I come back to Saudi Arabia And beside that America is the home of technology

- Where you are going?

La roche university, pennsylvania

Reddit Posts

- where you know the university from?

I had done research through internet and exchanged email with professors

- why la roche university

This university offers me unique course structure which a combination of computing and administration subjects and as I was in contact with the Information technology proff she said that they focus in practical as much as theory, which inclined my academic and career goals

- who is sponsoring you?

My father he is a HR in al ... trading establishment and he is a landlords in my home country

- why you choose Information technology?

Because day by day the Saudi Arabia and the gulf area are becoming the hub of technology and therefore for me who speaks three language's I will have many chances in a big companies

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Just sound like US education is amazing but you'd rather die than stay in the US after graduation lmao

- New Comment: I fuck with this! All the best.

- New Comment: Did they ask for an address where u are gonna stay at/live?

Title of the post: Finally heard back from CBP about travel from banned countries:

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: they've been stating this in their official announcements why'd you email them?

- New Comment: Sorry, I'm still a little bit confused. I am traveling from India. My start date is 26th September. So I can go to the US anytime after 26th August.

So do I need to seek National Interest Exception or not? Confused when to book my flight tickets

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: The US embassys in India are saying that continuing students will have Aug 1st as their effective start date. Which would mean that continuing students can enter anytime after July 1st. I'm not sure who to believe at this point...

Title of the post: Do I need to let my DSO know that I applied for Green Card?

Body of the post: So my F-1/I-20 end date is just a few days away, and I have just filed for the Green Card (aka Adjustment of Status I-485), which gives me the pending applicant status that allows me to stay in the US without other VISA (i.e. including the current F-1).

Do I need to let the DSOs know that I've filed this for any reason? Or do I just let it expire?

Btw, I'm aware there's very little cost to letting them know, but I have a personal history with these particular people that sickens me to the stomach to even exchange another word with them, so I'm just trying to avoid talking to them at all. Another concern is, I'm afraid they may twist this in a weird way that harms my Green Card application.

For any DSOs out there, your answers would be very much appreciated. In particular, I'd like to know what could possibly go wrong if I didn't let them know about the Green Card and my pending applicant status. Thank you.

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: ****They do not need to know that!**** Especially if your green card application is not related to your F1 status. For instance, an F1 student married a US citizen and filed a family-based green card while being an F1 student. You don't have to tell them that unless they voluntarily and organically ask you about that. While you are waiting for your green card application, you can apply for OPT/CPT since those are legit F1 benefits. If you lose your F1 status (e.g., student visa expires or do not have a valid I20) while still waiting for your green card, you simply lose your F1 benefits and need to lay low in the U.S. until your green card approved or not. If you are still in school when the green card is approved, then I recommend you to talk to your DSO so they can update your status at your school.
- New Comment: Requirement? No. If your DSO is good they may advise or speak with your lawyer about a Timeline if you are nearing graduation (within 18 months) to discuss OPT applications and your green card request.
- New Comment: You don't really have to tell them. They might suggest applying for OPT as a backup plan just in case your green card application is denied, but an OPT application would most likely be denied due to you having a pending green card application. They also might ask for your I-485 receipt and terminate your F-1 for immigration intent, but that wouldn't really impact your green card application.
- New Comment: Did you finally get your GC? Lol
- New Comment: Wait if you apply for a green card you can stay in the us for how many days?
- New Comment: I go to a huge school (think 50k students) and I wouldn't even think to inform them until they send an email saying my i20 is expiring and what I need to do. Then I would reply saying it's not necessary because...
- New Comment: No, you are not required to do so. And even if they know it, it's not a basis of termination of SEVIS. Only when you got a green card then you tell them. Some students don't even bother to tell DSOs because they don't know that they have to, and even then it's not really a problem.

Title of the post: Returning home after being unable to secure employment in the US under OPT

Body of the post: I've been feeling really down. 30 days have passed for my unemployment period and I only have 60

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days to find and start work in the US on OPT. It looks more and more likely that I have to return home. I feel dejected as I'm trying to find jobs in tech and I always heard that it's so easy for you to get an OPT job if you're a CS major and trying to be a software engineer, but I'm unable to secure anything. Plus it's taking months for recruiters to even look at my application. I've tried networking but it's leading to dead ends and delayed responses.

Is anyone else in the same boat? Or am I the only dummy who did a STEM degree (Bachelor's level), tried to get into SWE, is eligible for OPT extension, and STILL unable to find a job?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Remember that during your first 12 months of OPT you can do unpaid work in your field of study. You could gain more experience by doing an internship. You could volunteer in your field of study. Is there a non-profit or charity that could use your skills? Those positions may not be your goal of a paid position, but they are practical training opportunities that could stop your unemployment days from accumulating. That would give you more time to search for a paid position.

- New Comment: I'm going to provide generic job advice here.

Are you getting interviews or not? If not, the problem is with your CV. If yes, the problem is with your interviewing skills.

Do you have actual work experience, such as in the form of internships? Did you manage to convert those into a job offer? If not, why not?

- New Comment: Really consider the suggestion below to volunteer. You'll be doing good and improving your skills even if its just ability to teach concepts which can actually come in super handy on interviews. Google STEM volunteering + your state or city name, or code school + volunteer. For example, where I'm based, a quick google search showed me these sites : [Volunteer Opportunities | Code Savvy](<https://codesavvy.org/volunteer-opportunities/>)[MN STEM Volunteering ? Minnesota Academy of Science (mnmas.org)](<https://www.mnmas.org/mn-stem-volunteering>) . Look for

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something similar in your area and maybe you can even do it for somewhere that's not in your immediate area since everything is remote these days. The point of this is to buy you time for more of the job search.

I don't know if you're already doing this, but I've heard many f1 students restrict their job search to the state they're in. Don't do this, apply everywhere. Apply to boring companies, insurance, ERP software, companies that make software for govt, anywhere, you get the drift. My friends and I were tracking how many companies we applied to, and if I tell you the actual number, you'd probably say that I'm lying but I'm not. We'd spend early mornings on LinkedIn just applying. We had it down to an art, because we'd apply everyday, we could filter the results to only show us the postings in the past 24 hours. A key part of getting noticed is being one of the first people to apply so applying everyday gave us that leg up, I think.

Apply for all types of roles, software engineer, software developer, devops, automation engineer (basically qa and if you're lucky more on the writing automated tests than on the manual test side). Remember, you just want to get your foot in the door somewhere. It's a tough grind, made tougher by COVID. But people have and are getting interviews and offers so as hard it can be, try to stay positive. And don't forget to leetcode lol so that if you do get that interview that decides to ask you algo questions, you can at least attempt them.

- New Comment: Apply for un-paid/non-profit asap, and while working there, apply for paid-job.

Title of the post: DHS proposed changes to visas for students, exchange visitors and journalists (T

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Well just give visas for the duration of the course then. It's silly -- I see a number of PhD students who

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have a 5-year program been given 1 year visa. Ridiculous.

- New Comment: These changes are open for public comment and are only proposed and can be modified or retracted depending on feedback and political pressure.

- New Comment: Hoping someone can explain this to me: If the goal is to prevent student visa overstays, wouldn't it be better to limit/stop people coming for 2 year programs, rather than make it harder for people in 4 year programs? I would think that most overstays come from people entering to attend community college and ESL programs.

- New Comment: how likely is this to actually happen

- New Comment: Will these changes actually come into effect?

- New Comment: What does this even do? How is it different from the current law

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Will this impact opt and stem extension as people on opt are still on F-1 visa ? So they will have to ask for extension which can only be granted on medical reasons as per new laws ?

- New Comment: fuck man this has me scared as fuck

- New Comment: In simple words, as F1 student, you will have 2 or 4 years expiry date on your I94 And you will have to Extend Status with USCIS if you are not able to complete your program before expiry date.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: u/codetornado Does the proposed rule prevent DSOs from issuing initial I-20s valid for more than 4 years for PhD students? If not, such students just have to travel at some point of time in order to be able to get the time required for their normal program length (5-7 years). Most PhD students do travel for international conferences and to go home to see family anyway.

Also does the rule prevent DOS from issuing the usual 5 year F-1 visas, limiting them to the shorter of 2/4 years and the

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I-20 validity? If not, most PhD students won't even need to obtain a new visa when they travel to reset the clock...

Does the rule do anything to the provision that OPT must end before 14 months have elapsed since the graduation date? Reduces it to 13 months because of the shortened grace period?

It would be interesting to see if USCIS can process the combined OPT and EOS applications within 4-5 months. Delays in this process would be a great way for them to reduce the length of OPT, which seems to be on their agenda anyway but hidden because it would cause too much backlash...

Title of the post: Some embassies opening up for student visa processing

Body of the post: It seems like some us embassies (Bermuda, Brunei, New Zealand & possibly few other countries) are resuming student visa processing starting next week or so.

Anyone got an idea or thought whether this opening up is related to the fact that these countries have been Covid free for a while now or is it going to happen in all embassies worldwide as it's a generic instruction or permit by the DoS?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Seems like it's consulate dependent, and judging by the COVID case count for each of these countries, they virtually had zero cases for the past two months, hence low risk.
- New Comment: On top of that can I get a F-1 visa from one of these countries even if I am not from there?
- New Comment: Where did you get news about this? Link please

Title of the post: What's you guys' opinion on when the embassies will open / borders will open?

Body of the post: I know there's been a lot of talk in this group about this issue already, but I would just like to know your opinions. The fall semester is starting in under 2 months, so my hope that the US would think about us students is

Reddit Posts

lessening every day.. Europe is open for international students, regardless of where you are from - I was really hoping for something similar in the US.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Here is what I can tell you professionally :

Our Federal Liaison has no updates or hints of updates.

NAFSA's Federal Liaison has no updates or hints of updates.

AILA's Federal Liaison has no updates or hints of updates.

So, currently if there is talk of making adjustments there is nothing leaking out of SEVP. Department of State needs the Secretary of State and/or the Presto push for reopening on any basis. We are not hearing about that. Currently CDC does not recommend any international travel and we do not expect that to change soon. That CDC guidance does impact the decision if visa are issued.

Edit: SEVP says Student need some in person enrollment. So no online only option for Fall 2020.

Harsh reality is that the lack of travel options has less to do with other countries and more to do with the US situation with both covid and politically.

Donald Trump ran for President on a strong economy and tough on immigration. Well, the economy is bad and he is hitting the anti-immigration side hard.

On the COVID travel Ban.

So, if you are in a COVID-19 travel ban country. Assume no visa issuance for Fall. Full stop. That is what is being

Reddit Posts

communicated to the embassy/consulates there. That is coming from reports from student and their communications with their respective embassies. You can see others reporting the same here.

***New Initial I-20 & visa*.**

If you are not from one of those countries then know that family visas will be prioritized when visa processing begins. So, if no family visas are being processed then assume your visa will not be processed. Check you local embassy for updates as any reopening will be country by country.

Continuing Students

You can travel back as long as your I-20 is valid, passport is valid, visa is valid, and your country is not on the covid ban.

If your visa expired and you need to renew your visa then you may be eligible for an interview waiver meaning your documents can be processed by mail. That options is more/less by invite only during your application. There is not a simple way to request an interview waiver. Some embassies are doing this when they are able. (not all applicants and not all of the embassies have the ability/authorization to do this) This option is only available to those with a current or recently expired visa (less than one year to expiration or one year since expiration) and only for individuals with a clean background check and often only from close allied countries. Your mileage will vary on this issue.

Hope this helps everyone.

NAFSA-Professional Group for International Offices at Universities.

AILA- American Immigration Lawayers Association

- New Comment: SEVP just dropped guidelines. It looks very bleak. They won't issue visas if the university if full online.

[<https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/sevp-modifies-temporary-exemptions-nonimmigrant-students-taking-online-courses->

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during](<https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/sevp-modifies-temporary-exemptions-nonimmigrant-students-taking-online-courses-during>)

​

The universities have to communicate their mode (online, f2f, hybrid) by August 1st, so very unlikely that consulates will be opening before that.

- New Comment: I believe we should hear an update by the end of July. That leaves 15 days for August 15, around when some programs start.

If not, it means that they don't care about students separately and we just have to wait for the travel restrictions to be lifted. For China, the restrictions are in place, even a lot of time after the virus situation stabilized there.

Title of the post: Company kept me on their payroll (without paying me) after my CPT expired

Body of the post: I worked at a small startup company using part time CPT that expired last year.

I am bound to graduate this summer and join the company.

Today, I found out that the company kept me on their payroll the whole time after my CPT expired.

I don't know why they did this, and I wasn't aware of them doing so. The company is really small - no dedicated HR.

I did not receive any payment whatsoever after the CPT expired.

I applied for OPT a couple months ago, and am waiting for results. I am bracing for rejection.. From the government's

Reddit Posts

perspective, I was illegally employed additional months after my CPT due date.

What other consequences should I expect, and what actions can I take to fix this? It feels like my career is about to get derailed

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >I did not receive any payment whatsoever after the CPT expired.

Then this doesn't matter at all.

>I am bracing for rejection.. From the government's perspective, I was illegally employed additional months after my CPT due date.

No... Being eligible for payment is not the same as working.

>What other consequences should I expect, and what actions can I take to fix this?

Nothing and nothing.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: What do you mean by kept on payroll without paying you? They shower accounts as if they paid you, but actually didn't.

Regardless, as long as you didn't do anything wrong, be positive!

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- New Comment: Don?t be afraid, you didn?t do anything wrong. You have no evidence of money going into your account from the company.

I?m sure the company?s declaration and explanation, plus the evidence of your transactions are enough to keep you safe. Be positive and trust God.

- New Comment: This happens all the time even at multi-billion dollar companies. It doesn't matter.

Title of the post: F1 student applied for post-graduation OPT (delayed processing times?)

Body of the post: Hi all!! I applied for my OPT on April 29th and my DSO told me approvals are taking around 120 days this year. But I am wondering this refers to business days, if so, I?m only in the 63 day mark ?. I have a job lined up and they want me to start the last week of August. So I am debating whether I should pay a kidney for premium processing (\$1,685) or just wait?

Pls lmk what were y?all processing times (if you got your OPT approved already).

And also if you could share about your experience paying for premium processing (if you have used it), i would rllly appreciate it. ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Apply for PP. even after an approval, they take around 2 weeks to produce your card and ship it

- New Comment: You need to pay. You may need another month to get your case be approved, and you still have two weeks to wait for the card.

It?s not easy to find an employer that wants to hire foreigners currently, so 1685 is not much when comparing with the potential loss (I know that price is?yikes).

- New Comment: I applied on March 31st and got it approved only by last Friday. Some of my friends got it approved

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yesterday. They applied two hours after mine. I guess yours will take like a month minimum for normal approval.

- New Comment: Hi, I've been waiting for EAD to be issued for 116 days now. I applied for it on April 4.
- New Comment: I would suggest pay up, cause once it gets approved it would take any number of days. I was in the same boat as you but for me my OPT was approved and all I can do was wait. So, after approval I got it within 3 weeks.
- New Comment: I applied for PP. it was taking too long, applied PP on July 16 and got email approval today. Best of luck to you ?
- New Comment: I applied on April 8th and switched to PP the first week of July. My EAD will be delivered on August 1st. Pay for PP or ask your employer to cover it!

Even with PP, it took about 24 days so I suggest you switch to PP asap

- New Comment: Just go for Premium processing!!!
- New Comment: UPDATE: I paid for PP today and the clock is running with a start date of 7/30. I will post when I get it approved!!
- New Comment: Apply for PP. I did apply in March and it literally took 1 month back then .
- New Comment: I'm in the exact same situation but applied for opt a whole month later than you. I paid for PP last Thursday
- New Comment: I applied on march 27th....still the wait time shows 3 months...

Title of the post: OPT Case Decision Time changed to 3 months

Body of the post: I applied for OPT on April 5th, expect the average 3.5 month timeline. Just checked my USCIS portal this morning and my new estimated time until case decision is now 3 months! Did anyone else experience this?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: There's a post like this on this sub every week... and every week someone responds that the estimated timeline isn't and has never been accurate. You're probably going to get approved this month, as most people get their decisions within 3-4 months.
- New Comment: The estimated time isn't accurate. Mine was changed to 4 months and the next day I got approved. So just be patient.
- New Comment: Applied April 1 and still don't have an update.
- New Comment: Added PP, so hopefully I get approved soon
- New Comment: Applied Mar 30, still awaiting for case decision
- New Comment: My EAD was approved while still showing a case decision time for 4 months. Don't rely on that, please. Hope you get it soon. Mine was delivered within eight days after approval.

Title of the post: Will my tourist visa effect my f-1 Interview in a bad way?

Body of the post: Hey guys, I got accepted to fiu and I will be going this August but I have some doubts about my tourist visa that lasts for 10 years (2019-2029). My f-1 interview is in 20 days should I prepare for different questions because of my tourist visa BTW since I got my tourist visa I visited USA 5 times and never overstayed.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I got a 10 year tourist visa, visited the US 3 times, never stayed for over 2 weeks, and had a smooth F-1 interview. I still keep my tourist visa too just that I don't use it because I'm on F-1. It won't affect your interview in a bad way.
- New Comment: Nothing to worry about for the interview. Just be careful while traveling though to make sure you use your F1 visa only for your travels. Your F1 visa can be cancelled if during your period of study and OPT, you enter the

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US using a tourist visa (based on what I've heard).

- New Comment: It sounds like you have shown a good pattern of to travel to the USA and returning home. You are already 80% way through your F1 interview before it even starts. Just be prepared to explain why you chose your school, talk about your course of study, and how your studies are being paid for?

I wouldn't sweat it.

- New Comment: No. Quite the opposite in fact it will affect it in a good way. I had a 10 year tourist visa and visited the US twice (once for over a month and came back a few weeks before F1 interview) and got approved in less than 2 minutes with only 2 questions (none related to studies).

- New Comment: That's GOOD because you showed them that you travelled and returned. One of the major reasons when they do the interview is to make sure you won't overstay after you finish your study and your tourist visa has proved it. It makes your application more legit.

Wish you luck on your interview

- New Comment: Just justify your studies with technical knowledge and back to your home

- New Comment: I have a tourist visa and also got accepted to fiu starting this fall, it won't affect your f1 interview in a bad way, you are good to go ,just be confident and answer their questions

- New Comment: Hi guys even I have a tourist visa issued in 2019 and my F-1 interview is in 7 days

Should I prepare for different questions...!? Btw even tho I have tourist visa I have never visited USA (never used)

Will it affect my F-1 interview??

Title of the post: Last H1B Lottery in March 2025 (STEM OPT) - what are my options?

Body of the post: Hi,

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I'm currently under STEM OPT, which ends in June 2025. Therefore, March 2025 is my last chance at the H1B lottery. I know there is a big chance I don't get it, so I'm trying to see options to be able to keep working in the US.

I have a friend that is in my situation and is working with a lawyer to get the NIW. However, it sounds like this NIW is for people that have exceptional abilities, which I don't think I qualify for, I'm working in technology/finance, and my friend who is doing that is working in the same area. The cost of hiring a lawyer to get this is also very expensive, and with that money I could get a 5-year visa to work in Canada, and I'd be almost certain to get it.

I've also looked at other visa options and it doesn't seem like there is a fit for this. One way would be to go back to school, but I also have 2 masters degrees, so I don't really see what else I could do, and I'm not going to do a PhD.

The company I'm working for also doesn't do green cards straight away, they require to go through H1B first, the process goes through HR. I don't really want to my team/manager to know about this situation because there is a high turnover, and if they have to let me go, they would probably prefer to let me go in February/March, rather than keep me until June, due to the work periods in my work. My manager/team is also not involved in that H1B process, it all goes through HR, but if I speak up with HR, HR might let my team know.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: well NIW there are free lawyers who tells you how good fit u are or not to apply for niw so u should try that to see possibility secondly most companies wont like to new hire with less than a year cuz most likely even if they sponsor u lottery is lottery

- New Comment: If you have a master's already and you don't want to do a phd, school is not a path for continued employment in the US. You won't get OPT/STEM-OPT refreshed unless you complete a higher degree than what you hold.

- New Comment: Your salary in Canada will be a lot lower so might as well try for NIW

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Last option would be to go back to home country. Don't worry and strive your best. Otherwise go back and look for a peaceful life and career in own country. I'm assuming you are from India.

- New Comment: Which option is this where we can pay to get Canadian work visa? Do we apply for pr?

Title of the post: Disclosing OPT status after an offer

Body of the post: I am on my first year of OPT and just applied for STEM extension, currently waiting for my new EAD card but advisor said I could work with my current EAD card for 180days even though it's expired. I am getting married next year and will be getting my GC through petition, so I do not need any sponsorship. I recently went through interview with an insurance company for a tech role, but they did not ask me about my 'status' in phone screen and final interview. If I get an offer, should I disclose that I am on OPT even though I do not need sponsorship? I read a lot of reddit posts that their offers get rescinded once HR knew they had an EAD and not a permanent resident. My situation is a little different as I really do not need any sponsorship, hence I am not sure what's the best way to approach this?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I mean, I wouldn't lie. A year from now, a lot can happen until the wedding. You're putting all your eggs in one basket. Just explain the whole situation. Just how you explained it here in this post

- New Comment: I was in your exact position. I got 2 offers from the same company. One department rescinded the offer after I told them about OPT. The other went through

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: If the job description explicitly states they only consider those with 'unrestricted' work authorization then high chances that you're toast.

But if not, then it's a 50:50. I've been in the same situations before.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: You need to disclose your status because he will need it for i9 verification. Also for stem opt the company has to fill out some forms. Better to get married ASAP and file that first

Title of the post: Missed STEM OPT extension after a year in OPT

Body of the post: Hi everyone, I am freaking out so please give me some advice if you have any. I have missed my STEM extension (just finished my first year in OPT). My EAD card expired July 2nd, 2024. Today is July 7th. I should have kept a closer eye on timeframes, I had no idea that my first year OPT was finishing so soon, foolish mistake. Now I am freaking out.

My priority right now is to contact my DSO as soon as possible to ask them how to proceed, but can't get in touch with them since it's Sunday and summer.

I have read multiple post in here with mixed feedback, so I don't know what to expect. I am hoping I am able to submit the extension. I currently work for a company and will tell them about the issue tomorrow. Is there any similar cases? Could I continue to work while I fix this stupid issue I brought to myself? Please if you know anything about it, let me know.

I have worked my ass off for the past 6 years to be where I am at. I can't even imagine losing my opt. Please please all the advice is much appreciated

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >I am hoping I am able to submit the extension.

Unfortunately, your OPT time is over. STEM OPT is gone. Your DSO cannot enter a STEM OPT request into the system. You are in your 60 day grace period. You can prepare to go home or prepare to study another program.

Reddit Posts

>Is there any similar cases?

Yes, and they all end the same. You have finished your OPT time. There is absolutely no exception to missing the deadline.

>Could I continue to work while I fix this stupid issue I brought to myself?

You cannot work in the US legally anymore. The end. Full stop. Additionally there is nothing to fix. It is done. Your OPT is over and you have just under 60 days to get yourself sorted to return home or to transfer to a new academic program.

That deadline is firm, absolutely no exceptions.

>I have worked my ass off for the past 6 years to be where I am at. I can't even phantom losing my opt.

Unfortunately, you are now here without OPT. There is no fix for your situation. You missed your application window, you cannot undo this. You are in your 60 days grace period for OPT completion. You can no longer legally work.

- New Comment: Sorry to hear about your situation. Unfortunately there are no loopholes here.

For regular first year OPT, there is a grace period after graduation where you can still apply for OPT.

For STEM OPT extension, there is no grace period to apply; you have to submit your application before your first year OPT expires. If you don't apply, or if your application is rejected, you then get a grace period to clean up your belongings and leave the country. You cannot apply for the STEM extension during this grace period. As Codetornado said, you now have under 60 days to leave the country and you cannot legally work during this time; any work after July

Reddit Posts

2 would be illegal.

Your other options are to go back home, or enroll in a new degree program in the US. You could also ask your company to sponsor you for a different visa (H1B, L1, employment based green card like EB2 or EB3 etc) but any of those options will take a very long time and it won't be easy / straightforward. EB2 or EB3 would take 2+ years minimum, L1 is for manager level and above, and H1B involves a lottery where you need to beat pretty tough odds to get picked (and the next lottery won't happen until spring 2025).

- New Comment: Too late. You can only apply for STEM OPT while on OPT. You're now in 60 day grace period to leave the country or change status.

- New Comment: I have been there man, if I could give you any advice please look up 1 Day CPT university in google, that may help you

- New Comment: Unfortunately there is no exception but you can consider day-1 cot if your budget allows and keep working for the same company. I heard Harrisburg is good

- New Comment: You have 2 options now:

1)Returning to your home country

2) taking up masters / phd in a cpt based university and continue working. In a best case scenario, the company will sponsor a percentage of the tuition fee as well.

- New Comment: Day 1 CPT may be the only option

- New Comment: Day 1 CPT is the only option.

- New Comment: Maybe try to apply for an employment-based visa? Like EB3 (requires employer sponsorship) or EB2-NIW (self-petition). If your employer is willing to sponsor you for EB3 then that's great. You would just need to get the I-140 approved and then you will get an EAD issued (when it will arrive depends on your country of citizenship). However, if it doesn't arrive before your grace period ends, you would either need to leave the US or start a

Reddit Posts

new/another program.

(Mods if anything I wrote is wrong please correct me or let me know if I should delete this, as I have only recently been doing research about this)

Title of the post: Renewing F1 Odds - PLEASE HELP

Body of the post: Hi all! Unlucky H1B for 3 years already in a Fortune500 company. I've been in CPT (lost my OPT STEM for Masters level) since 2023. Recently transferred to Harrisburg just because it was more convenient to travel to school and felt more legit. F1 Stamp expired in August 2023 from Bachelors - going stamping in ROW country what are my odds? Scared of not being able to come back!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Harrisburg is the day one cpt school right? I wouldn't try renewing my visa after going to Harrisburg
- New Comment: It is not more legit, they are one of the worst schools under the highest levels of scrutiny. Would not recommend traveling
- New Comment: If you're at a Day 1 CPT, then don't go for visa stamp renewal. Unlike USCIS decisions, consular decisions cannot be challenged so they can just deny you under 214b or send you to AP and you'll be stuck. VO will just need a "reason to suspect" you and can deny you.

Day 1 CPTs are already borderline immigration fraud so I wouldn't suggest renewing your visa.

Title of the post: I am currently on a F1 visa (MS: Information Science in Machine Learning), my wife

Body of the post: My wife is a professor of Computer Science at a University in India. She recently got an offer from a company to be a trainer and the said company provides L1 visas for onsite. However, the company hasn't made any

Reddit Posts

commitments. I am currently pursuing MS: IS (Machine Learning) at the University of Arizona and will graduate in May 2025. I might opt for OPT (eligible for 3 years STEM OPT) and my wife would like to join me as soon as possible. What would be the best way to go about this. Being on F2 visa for a long time is not an option for her. Should she follow the same route as me (F1) or should she try to get a L1 visa and accept the new offer?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I don't understand why a professor would get an F1 to study again. Is she changing her field of study? What is her earned PhD and what is the field she's planning to get an F1 for? It would probably be hard to get a visa as the visa officer will question her motives.

She should look for an opening at your university (or any college/university close by, even a community college) for a teaching position. Her visa would be H1B with exemption from the lottery.

A post-doctoral fellow type position may also work. A friend of mine did this. She was a PhD student and she got her husband to join her as a post doc after he completed his PhD in Japan.

The L1 is an okay option as well, but she's tied and depended on the company and like you mentioned, it takes time.

The only way an F1 could be a viable option is if she's not actually a professor and just a lecturer without a graduate degree. But F1 costs a lot of money and there's no guarantee that she'll be approved, especially if her motive is already suspect to begin with.

- New Comment: How is this a question bro? She can work on L-1, so why wouldn't she?

- New Comment: I think the answer to this question depends on your financial as well. You mentioned that your wife is thinking about getting another degree in STEM to qualify for OPT (and eventually STEM-OPT). Are you able to commit financially to fund both of you and your wife's studies? If money not an issue, sure, F1 visa could be beneficial. F2 visa

Reddit Posts

is completely out of picture here because she would be unable to obtain any employment. Although, ideally she should go for L-1 visa, it just makes more sense financially speaking.

- New Comment: Since she is already a professor, find a job at a US university. Could be an adjunct or teaching professor at a lower tier college or even community college.

They can file cap-exempt H1B for her to work in the US.

- New Comment: Here's something I'd comment: these "assistant professor" positions in Indian universities that let people teach without a PhD, doesn't count for anything in the US. It's not a real research professor job as far as US is concerned.

So it's best for her to start afresh as an F1

- New Comment: Hi,

I will be joining the program in MSIS in machine learning in spring 2025, just wanted to know how good in the program? How are internships/job opportunities after completion. Is there any scholarship opportunities in university of Arizona for this particular program. Please let me know it would very helpful for me. I am still confused on joining the course whether it will be worth it or not or should I look for better universities like Arizona state university or umcp

Title of the post: International student

Body of the post: Hello, I'm from Tunisia. I just graduated with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. I'm planning to travel to the USA to pursue a master's degree in civil engineering. It will take me two years to complete my master's, and I already have the money to cover the tuition fees. However, I'm concerned about the money I'll need to cover my food and rent. I don't think my family can send me money every month, so I'll have to support myself. I'm planning on working on campus. Is it easy to find a job there? If I work 20 hours a week, will I be able to cover my expenses? As an international student, how much money do I need to survive each month? How much will food and rent cost me? Can I

Reddit Posts

manage without the help of my family since they have already done enough for me? Please don't suggest off-campus work because I'm not willing to violate any rules unless it's legal. By the way, can I use my bachelor's degree to apply for something while I'm still studying for my master's?

Another question, please: My visa is a 5-year visa, and my master's program is just 2 years. Am I forced to leave the country after graduation, or can I apply for jobs after that period?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I would say you would need something around 1500 a month just to make the ends meet, obviously depending on the place you plan to live at.

- New Comment: The cost of living really depends on location/state.

Not sure what you mean by "using your bachelor's", you are not allowed to work under f1 unless you have CPT or OPT.

The validity of your status is dictated by your I-20 and not visa stamp. For after graduation, you need to Google OPT

- New Comment: I think you should look for Research assistantship or Teaching Assistant roles from your department. You wouldn't have to pay tuition after securing one and you get monthly stipend around \$1500. One secret is to start your first semester and do well in your courses and from that point meet professors in person and tell them you want assistantship, you will get it .

- New Comment: for visas: after graduation, you would get something called "OPT" (that you apply for ~3 months before graduating) and this will give you work authorisation for a year. Because of engineering, you can apply for an extension to this called "STEM OPT" which will give you two more years of work authorisation. That is not a guarantee that you'll find work, and the opt/stem opt alone is not a visa, it allows you to STAY in the country. there's a limited number of days you can be unemployed on the opt/stem opt, and if you use all of those days then you would have to leave.

Reddit Posts

While you are on Opt/stem opt, your employer can apply for the ?full? work visa for you (H1B) but it is lottery based and not guaranteed.

- New Comment: Most on Campus jobs pay around minimum wage which is not enough to make ends meet, especially when working only 20 hours a week. Also states like CA, NY, Hawaii, MA, have a high cost of living too

- New Comment: Other comments explained the cost of living part.

Once your degree is done, you have 60 days to find a job otherwise you?ll have to leave the country. I assume your degree will be STEM designated so you will be authorized to work in the US for three years: one year of OPT and 2 years on OPT STEM extension.

- New Comment: Hi OP. Not a direct answer to your inquiry but info that I hope you find helpful. When you apply for an I-20 document (this is issued by your school and required for your student visa application), you need to show proof of funds not just for the tuition but for living expenses as well. You can?t rely on future work (which is also uncertain, if you?ll get one). You may want to consider looking for scholarships and student loans to cover your expenses.

Title of the post: Visa status stuck at ?approved?

Body of the post: Hi all, I had my F-1 visa interview on the 6th June (New Delhi) and was approved with just one question asked about the uni i?m going to. I have been checking the CEAC website and the last update on my application was made on the same day as my interview, it has been over 7 business days and my program also starts in July. I was wondering how long it would take for my visa to get issued and delivered to me????

UPDATE: Status changed to issued on 18th June

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It's definitely frustrating+anxiety inducing but you have to wait.

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First your visa status will change from "Approved" to "Issued" on the CEAC website.

Once the passport is available for pickup, you will receive an SMS + email on the day and the "Passport Status" on the CGI portal will change to "Ready for Pick Up".

Regarding how long you have to wait - anyone's guess is as good as mine. Though, I would say don't sweat it - you'll get it back soon ! I had to wait 10 days and I'm hearing this is normal.

- New Comment: Did you get any email as well?

- New Comment: Congratulations. What time did it get changed ? And did you contact the embassy ?

Title of the post: A note of thanks

Body of the post: Hi all,

My F1 visa just got approved! I wanted to thank this community and the people who actively engaged with all the posts here. All of it gave me really good insights and helped me prepare for my interview.

I wish all aspirants the best of luck.

Thanks, once again!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Congrats! It feels amazing right.

- New Comment: Hey congrats

Can you please tell us the question and answer u give please

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: 10 Days of Unemployment left on STEM OPT! Any Advise!

Body of the post: So I know nothing can be done right now but if anyone knows any magical solution, please let me know.

I will call all of my friends today and ask if they know anyone who is urgently hiring. I have so much guilt, I didn't do any application in December/January because I was back home and enjoying time with family.

Also is there any way to extend the stay in the United States(like change of visa/..). I wanted to see my family in Texas and was wondering if i can change my Visa to tourist and stay with them for 2 weeks.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Apply for COS to B1/B2 right away. This will give you 6 months of legal stay but you won't be able to work. During this time try to get into a new degree program and transfer your SEVIS.
- New Comment: Join a consultancy and get an offer letter to just stop your clock for now? it's risky but it's your best bet
- New Comment: Maybe look for an unpaid position in a startup/ ngo? Only requirement is that it should be 20+ hrs a week. Please confirm with DSO.
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Day 1 CPT might work for you. Fill out this form and one of the consultant will contact you for free consultation :[\[https://forms.gle/h9mvYVenzjnFscMCA\]](https://forms.gle/h9mvYVenzjnFscMCA)(<https://forms.gle/h9mvYVenzjnFscMCA>)

Title of the post: Failed a class but didn't extend I-20 program end date

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Body of the post: I'm in a messy situation right now? I thought I was all done with uni, attended the graduation ceremony and everything. Got my final grades and turns out I didn't get the required grade for a class (messed up big on the final paper). At this point it was already way past the program end date written on my I-20. I don't think things will be any different if I explain my situation to the professor.

I will be contacting my DSO on Monday since the school is closed this week. I just wanted to know how screwed up I was so I can prepare myself before talking with my DSO. Has anyone else been in a similar situation? What's going to happen to me now?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Dso can update, i guess, talk to them

- New Comment: >I will be contacting my DSO on Monday since the school is closed this week.

Monday is a holiday

- New Comment: U applied for opt ead?

- New Comment: If you applied for OPT , you can work part time(<20 hours) while finishing the course you need.

Definitely speak to DSO.

- New Comment: talk with director of academic affairs in your major, prof, and dso.

- New Comment: Even i was in the similar situation. My dso straight away told me to go home and continue with the subject online. The only thing that saved me was my ead. As it was approved and I got my card I was able to stay in USA untill I got the subject cleared in the next sem. So I guess if you have your ead applied you can complete the subject in next semester while working less than 20hours untill then

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: "Your case is taking longer than expected to process. You will be notified if you need to pay more."

Body of the post: The Start date is June 1st.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Dec grad, I applied premium right when I had 15 days to onboard. I got approval in 1 week and card in 1 week. Total it took 12-15 days. So plan accordingly! All the best!
- New Comment: Similar situation, Applied March 12th, Full time job starts June 3rd. My case today showed the same message. Unsure on what to do. Not enough funds for Premium processing :/
- New Comment: Same boat! Applied around the same time and have the same message atm. I'm so confused bc on opttimeline.com , so many of the recent approvals are receipt dates in April so why have they skipped so many March ones???
- New Comment: Following!
- New Comment: I applied on March 11, paid for premium processing May 1, and got it approved in 3 days! highly recommend going premium processing! Haven't recieved my card yet though!
- New Comment: Hi I am on the same boat too. How can I even upgrade to premium processing? I already sent my application without one.
- New Comment: Yeah, just to be on a safer side and have peace of mind
- New Comment: I applied for post completion OPT on February 26 and got approved on April 18 for a June 3 start date but have yet to receive my employment authorization card. It sounds like the entire process is very very slow without premium processing
- New Comment: Same here. Submitted on March 16 and whenever I check it always says "your case is taking longer?? Really frusturated because I wanted to go back home late June and renew my visa then start my postdoc in August. They are literally forcing us to pay more which is not fair.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: So did you get any updates?
- New Comment: Submitted March 6th, still waiting on EAD. It is currently saying taking longer than expected. For those that used premium, how much extra did you pay?

Title of the post: STEM OPT Approval timeline

Body of the post: Hi!

I was told to apply for the STEM OPT strictly only 90 days prior to my ead expiration which would be April end. I did apply exactly 90 days prior to July end.

But I see that the approvals take 120 days? People who have applied in November are receiving their card in March. Why is the deadline ONLY 90 days prior and the approval takes 120 days?

In this case how will anyone get their EAD without premium processing?

Any advice/help is appreciated!

TIA

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: At this point I'm convinced that USCIS is deliberately slowing it down to make us pay for PP. The wait times are ridiculous!
- New Comment: You can work 180 days after initial opt EAD expire with pending STEM OPT application.
- New Comment: There needs to be confirmation on this [USCIS increases automatic extension from 180 to 540 days](<https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/news-releases/uscis-increases-automatic-extension-of-certain-employment-auth>)

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orization-documents-to-improve-access)

Mods or anyone can you confirm this and link it if possible? If I understand correctly, anyone with a legitimate application should be eligible for this.

- New Comment: Hey, I know this is off topic. However I had a question about the STEM OPT application. Where on earth do I find my USCIS online account number? I don't see it in my account! Please help thanks.

Title of the post: Past B-1/2 Rejection

Body of the post: Hi everyone! I have a prior tourist visa rejection from Oct'23, and have an upcoming F-1 interview in the coming months. I have an admit from Harvard for a masters program, and wondering if my past B1/B2 denial will come in the way of the F1 interview. I am an Indian, over 30, M, unmarried and with no travel history. Any guidance will help.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Had a B1/2 rejection in 2019 and got approved for F1 within a minute by the VO in 2022. You'll be fine.

Especially because Harvard. Congrats and all the best!

- New Comment: You're going to Harvard, don't say anything stupid at the interview and you'd be fine.

- New Comment: Idk if these are real questions or some weird flex anymore. Any consular officer who has half a brain will see Harvard and know that this person is a genuine student who will not overstay and work illegally in the US.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: for F1 they look for strong ties to your home country, your money situation in India and how you plan on funding your education.
- New Comment: Can you demonstrate strong ties to India?
- New Comment: for F1 they look for strong ties to your home country, your money situation in India and how you plan on funding your education.
- New Comment: Congratulations! :) Just prepare well and you'll be approved of visa. So happy for you!
- New Comment: I also have an b1/b2 rejection 4years ago but got my f1 in december 2023.
Congrats on Harvard.
- New Comment: Congrats on your new life and you should be fine for the interview
- New Comment: I have a similar question. Prior tourist visa rejection from Sep'23 and upcoming F-1 interview. Would this be a problem? Admit is for MS CS from UT Dallas, if that helps
- New Comment: I echo the first comment. Did you also get a scholarship from Harvard? Rotting for you, you will ease it!??

Title of the post: F1 reinstatement approved

Body of the post: I had gone through f1 reinstatement and it took roughly 2 months.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Congrats!!!! Mine took almost 6 months. What was your service center?
- New Comment: I applied begin of march!! So I hope I will get my decision soon !!
- New Comment: Congratulations
- New Comment: How many months did it take for you to get the reply ?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I applied on nov 10th till now no update
- New Comment: Mine is Vermont and it's been 77 days but no response.
- New Comment: Do I have to ask the DSO to do something?
- New Comment: F1 extension? Is this to get another 5 year F1 visa after it expires? (While being in USA)

Title of the post: Laid off, go for PhD or go back home?

Body of the post: I got laid off and after a lot of interviews and job applications I am still searching. I have a month left. I did my BS and MS from US in majors which have no demand in my home country. I was in the hopes that I could at least gain experience in US and recover the money I invested in my education.

I am not sure if I should go for a PhD just so that I can maybe get 3 more years of STEM OPT, or just go back home and switch careers. I feel very alone because not a lot of people have done this, and I really feel defeated after honestly trying to stay in this country.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >I am not sure if I should go for a PhD just so that I can maybe get 3 more years of STEM OPT,

Sounds like you're considering PhD purely as an option to stay back.

I would recommend you to not go for the PhD just because you want to stay. PhD should be something you want to do because you're passionate about the subject and can see yourself doing deep research & academic work on it, because doing PhD is a huge time commitment. If you don't have that passion and are viewing this as a means to stay, you would end up feeling dissatisfied later and might drop out or worse.

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>I did my BS and MS from US in majors which have no demand in my home country

What's your major? Possible to use connections, family members, relatives in your home country to land something?

What's your home country?

Here's another option for you: look at working in another country that would have demand for your profession.

- New Comment: I have a couple of comments.

I don't think that to get a PhD you have to necessarily be very passionate about research. I have seen a non negligible amount of people getting it just for the title and the prestige associated with it. Other people end up doing it because it is just what your family wants you to do, or because it's what society expects you to do. They are lazy, they are mediocre, they are spoiled. Nevertheless, they make it exactly as anybody else. If they do it, why can't you do it? I think that getting a PhD to have the chance to live in a country that you love is a more than valid reason. In my very personal experience, when speaking about research, there is very little to romanticize. It is a 100% a business, and PhD students are just turds sitting on the lower step of the chicken coop ladder. If you decide to go for a PhD, it will be hard, you will probably hate it (or part of it), but you will probably make it, and that will make things much easier immigration wise. Still not easy, but much easier.

I don't know your exact situation, but I am wondering if you are over-constraining yourself in your job hunt. With a bs and ms in robotics you should have so many skills that you could recycle when looking for jobs. I guess my suggestion is to try to forget about the label, and focus more on what you have actually done.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: OP mind my ignorance, but how the hell are you not getting jobs with robotics, which I feel is one of

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the indemand job profiles.

- New Comment: I was in a similar situation as you back in 2008 during the financial crisis. I ended up going back to school to get a PhD (in Networking). It took me 5 years to complete, and was definitely not easy. It requires lot of patience, self-confidence, and most importantly persistence. I was lucky to have a good support system with my friends and family who understood why I am taking 5 more years than other to settle in life. You also need to plan each year to make sure that you graduate with a job. In my case I did multiple internships during my PhD, to gain industry experience. If not you might end up in same situation again.

There were a couple of friends who also joined PhD but ended up jumping to H1B once the market got better and they found that research was not something they are into.

- New Comment: Cant you volunteer to stop the clock?

- New Comment: Not a professional of migration laws or anything like that, just a fellow f1 student.

When discovering different visa options, I found out that getting a PhD(and doing research) is very complimentary for EB1A or O1A depending if your intentions are to stay for some time or forever.

Might be wrong however, but you should still read about those some more if you are actually thinking about getting a PhD.

- New Comment: Just go back man. I am going to do the same. Home is home.

- New Comment: Why phd? Can you not get another masters?

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Company is enrolled in E-Verify but did not create a case when I was hired

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Body of the post: I've been working at this position for almost a year and I'm now filing for STEM OPT Extension which requires my employer's E-Verify Name and ID.

My employer is enrolled in E-Verify, but I just learned that HR did not create a case for me when I was hired (and has not been creating a case for any new hires for about a year).

Will my I-765 for STEM OPT Extension get denied and is it too late to ask HR to create a case for me in E-Verify now?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I have never heard of this. But after reading the User Manual which you shared looks like it's the responsibility of the employer to do it. I don't think USCIS will deny extension since it's not your mistake.

- New Comment: Was in the same boat. I have joined my company in cpt back in 2022, moved to opt and then now in stem opt. Company registered in everify in 2023, it's just a registration, they haven't created any cases.

By the time I applied I765 for stem opt, my company wasn't even coming up in the everify search.

Spoke with the everify customer care, they said it shouldn't be a problem.

I took a premium processing, and it got approved and I received ead.

- New Comment: I don't think it will create problem

I worked with my company's everify portal.

Just for future protection try to educate your hr to add employees to everify portal. Some states have mandatory rule to use everify.

Our state does not. But I educated my hr and manager because of my safety

- New Comment: Same situation.

Do they need to create case? My employer got e-verified after 4 months I joined. I don't think they created a case for

Reddit Posts

me

- New Comment: Hello people, I am applying for stem opt through a consultancy, and they said they are E-verified. But I was not able to find their name on the e-verify portal.

They gave me the e-verify case number, company id, EIN, etc., I just wanted to make sure if the company is a legit one.

Is it common for some company's name not popping up in the e-verify portal, or am I being scammed?

Title of the post: Leaving the US on F1 grace period, coming back on ESTA five days later

Body of the post: EDIT: I just successfully passed through the immigration! I was asked more questions than I ever were in the past, concerning funds, my relationship with my girlfriend (whom i'm going to stay for the month), and my intention of going back to France!! :))

Hi, I have a long-planned trip to the Bahamas with my mom who's coming to my graduation ceremony.

I am currently on F1 visa, which will end on May 2. Then, a 60 days grace period will start, during which I can remain in the US. I just realised that if I leave the country, the grace period will end and I won't be able to come back to continue with some vacation before going back to my home country.

Do you know if it's possible to leave the US for the Bahamas (which will terminate my F1) and then come back from the Bahamas on an ESTA just five days later?

I have seen people saying that it's very unlikely that the border control will actually allow this. I'm looking for insights, please, it is my mom's dream to go to the Bahamas and don't want to deceive her on that.

Thank you

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Your F1 visa expires May 2nd? Lol I wouldn't leave the US if thats the case.
- New Comment: Have you applied for post graduation OPT? If not, then you need to also understand that the 60 day grace period begins after the program end date on your form I-20, not after the day your F1 visa expires.

Not sure about whether you could enter on ESTA or not unfortunately.

- New Comment: It's the safest to leave with a job offer and EAD but since this is literally next month I'd seriously reconsider going on vacation in this situation if I were you.
- New Comment: If you do not want to pursue OPT or continue on to post grad studies, you can in theory travel as a tourist to the US. But no longer as a student,
- New Comment: I left the country after graduation (f1 ended) and flew back into the US 3 weeks later for a week to see my friends. Entered on esta/ visa waiver (2007, don't remember)
- New Comment: No they won't allow it lol. If you can't delay your vacation then don't go. If you really want to go, then treat whatever you exit the US as your last day as an F1 visa holder.

You can come back as a tourist I guess.

- New Comment: u need a ead card to get in or else u can't. So, I would suggest u to get a job and then leave.

Title of the post: Can i still stay in the US if my F1 visa expires but my OPT is still valid longer?

Body of the post: my f1 ends in july but my OPT ends on 31st aug and including grace period I can stay till end of october, is this possible or do I have to go back when my visa ends

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Visas are for entering the country , it has nothing to do with your status. If you leave the country, you would need to renew your visa to re-enter. You can stay in the US regardless of the visa stamp being expired or not as long as you still have valid status.

- New Comment: You can stay

- New Comment: yes

- New Comment: Yes, you can stay but you will not be able to re-enter once your visa runs out in case you had to leave before then

- New Comment: When you are in the US, the I-20 is the controlling document. The Visa is only a concern when you are out of the US and need to re-enter. If you stay put, you are fine.

Title of the post: Has anyone done an internship or used CPT?

Body of the post: Hello, I am a junior studying nursing at one of the colleges in the United States. As a lot of people know, it is a summer internship season and as an international student, we need a class to take during the summer. So I applied to a lot of jobs and whenever I tell them I am an international student, they tell me they do not know how taking classes works. In the end, they just rejected me. With so many rejections, I was curious about who chose the internship class.

Does the recruiter of the hospital choose that class or does my school can choose the class for me?

I want to know this because if the school chooses the class, I can just tell the recruiter that I do not need anything except a job letter and then just show that letter to my school advisor and get the class from my school. In that way, I don't have to stress the recruiter and I will get a job. Do you guys have any tips? Thank you so much for reading it :)

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Not sure about a class but generally it is a single credit (could be more depending on your curriculum) course you enroll in with the help of your international center. This course is required when the internship is not an Integral part of your degree requirement. The course itself is attached to the outcome of the internship (no classes in the course itself) and you just add a proposal before your internship about what you expect to learn and then a final (sometimes also a mid term) assessment of what you learned in your own words.

- New Comment: >As a lot of people know, it is a summer internship season and as an international student, we need a class to take during the summer.

This is not an immigration requirement by default and may be a university requirement. My university does this.

>So I applied to a lot of jobs and whenever I tell them I am an international student, they tell me they do not how taking classes works.

Correct. They are not your school.

>In the end, they just rejected me. With so many rejections, I was curious about who chose the internship class.

Internship classes are a school obligation (and for good reason). They are not explicitly required.

>Does the recruiter of the hospital choose that class or does my school can choose the class for me?

Ask your school, but almost certainly (99.999999%) it is the school.

>I want to know this because if the school chooses the class, I can just tell the recruiter that I do not need anything except a job letter and then just show that letter to my school advisor and get the class from my school.

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This is the standard practice, yes.

- New Comment: Usually the entire process should be available on your uni website or the advisor will tell you the process.

1. First you get the offer from the recruiter. Then talk with international office advisor at school. Advisor may require a different letter with a specific format from your employer for cpt application.

2. Then you fill some forms at uni and apply for cpt

3. Your advisor will provide a new i20 with cpt. And they will enroll you in cpt course of 1 credit.

4. If you do not have SSN, use this new i20 to get SSN. You cannot start an internship before receiving SSN.

Title of the post: F1 Reinstatement

Body of the post: Hi. I am a PhD student so it took me more time than expected to complete my degree. I have to file for visa reinstatement as my deadline passed for program extension it was approximately 1 year and 8 months. In the mean the university allowed me to take classes and also provided me with assistantship so I have taught classes in the university and also work as a researcher for companies within my university (I was always paid by the university). Next, I also want to pursue my post doctorate as well. My university has also issued a new I-20 for reinstatement. I am really in a bad situation right now. Any advice on this situation would be appreciated. Thanks!

1. Are there any chance I would be reinstated if I file I-539, what supporting documents can I provide for saying I did this unknowingly. What are the chances of approval?

2. Can I go back to my home country and apply for a new visa?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You failed to extend your I-20 period for 20 months (1 year and 8 months)? Additionally you were working during this time?

You now want to file for reinstatement... which is 100% not possible unless your school is admitting 100% fault in this.

When you request reinstatement, you must establish that you:

>**Have not been out of status more than 5 months at the time of filing the request for reinstatement (or demonstrate that the failure to file within the 5-month period was the result of exceptional circumstances and that you filed for reinstatement as soon as possible under these circumstances).**

You do not even remotely meet this requirement unless your school is absolutely 100% admitting this is entirely and solely their fault in writing in a letter to you with a DSO signature.

>Do not have a record of repeated or willful violations of immigration regulations.

>Are currently pursuing, or intending to pursue, a full course of study in the immediate future at the school which issued the Form I-20.

>*Have not engaged in unauthorized employment.*

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You must also establish that:

>The violation of status resulted from circumstances beyond your control. Such circumstances might include serious injury or illness, a natural disaster, or inadvertence, oversight, or neglect on the part of your ISS adviser, but do not include instances where a pattern of repeated violations or a willful failure on your part resulted in the need for reinstatement

>Can I go back to my home country and apply for a new visa?

Yes, but a denial is very likely

- New Comment: What a clusterfuck of a situation. How did the school let it reach that far?

- New Comment: So, just to summarize: your I-20 expired before you completed the requirements for your degree and before you were able to request an extension of your I-20, and then after your program end date, you worked on campus at your institution? And your I-20 expired ~1.67 years ago?

If that's the case, the on-campus employment after the expiration of your I-20 was unlawful employment. Unlawful employment creates a fundamental ineligibility for reinstatement per the F-1 regulations. Furthermore, students are required to file for reinstatement within 5 months of their status violation; applying for reinstatement more than 5 months after the violation of typically only successful in the case of extreme circumstances beyond the student's control that prevented timely filing (e.g., incarceration, incapacitation, etc.).

You should really consult with a qualified immigration attorney about your next steps. If the school is willing to admit how much they screwed things up?employing a student after the expiration of the student's I-20 would be a major failure on the part of whichever office on campus is responsible for verifying employment authorization?that might help with travel and re-entry, but even that might be a longshot.

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- New Comment: PS: u/dgeustdgaugsch, u/CodeTornado provide me any guidance or advice on this situation. Thank you for all the advice you can give me in advance.

- New Comment: I can relate so much to your situation. I was out of status during my PhD as well but fortunately I and my DSO managed to file for reinstatement within 5 months.

My advice is to seek external help as this situation is serious. Consult an immigration lawyer, you need someone standing by your side that is not in the university. I can't believe your university let you work without you having a legal status (Although I do know they will let you graduate regardless of your immigration status). Even if a lawyer can't help you, they can inform you the consequences and if there is anything you can do to minimize the harm.

Hope you all the best.

- New Comment: How long do you have until you finish your PhD?

- New Comment: Hello may I know what option did you choose finally

Title of the post: People who moved back to their home country how was the transition?

Body of the post: I 25M come from a west African country (country is not the greatest just be respectful). I have been in US since high school (11 years now) and my family is back in my country. It been 8 years since I last went back home and having lived most of my adult lives here in the US, I have kinda lost touch with my home country. I still talk to my family every week or so and stay in touch with some childhood friends here and there.

Currently, I am on a STEM OPT which ends in June 2025, but I have also just applied for H1B. To say that life hasn't been stressful and full of anxiety over the years in the US will be an understatement (and I am sure many of you here can relate too). At the same I am very grateful for all the support I've had over the years because God knows where I'll be without those.

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Everyone in my country says that life is very difficult and wants to leave which in case is true because for one there are barely in electricity (power outages 80% of the times, unemployment is through the roof etc). Yet, given the anxiety I go through daily thinking about my future and the fact that I have no control over it while in the US, I have to the acceptance that I am okay to go back home and see things through. I don't have a plan of what I'll do, but I definitely want to take few months to myself and not to anything. So not really knowing what I'll be stepping into, I want to save as much money as I can that way I can support myself and my family for a time before I figure out things.

With that being said, I wanted to hear more from others who went back home after studying in the US and working OPT.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I feel you tbh and I'm also west African from Nigeria and right now going back home is going to be a big risk for me because I do not know where to start from and I resigned my job and sold everything to get to the US , so going back to Nigeria is a big no for me especially due to the situation of the country it is really bad
- New Comment: Nigerian here, treat this as a fight for your future and your life.

The h1b is a lottery which you know. If your employer isn't willing to petition you for a green card and you're not getting picked in the lottery, look into non profit companies that are cap exempt.

If that's not an option build a good profile and go the NIW route.

Date strategically, I don't need to type this in plain terms.

If all fails, enter the express entry pool, Canada is rough right now, but with the right skills, you'd pull through.

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Godspeed!

- New Comment: Got back from Nigeria two days ago and I was shocked with the amount of change. Although I left for my master's degree program less than two years ago.

I understand the perspective of living with anxiety over the years in America. Your better choice may be dealing with whatever makes you anxious and living your days with peace in your heart. Guess what, relocating to your country may not eliminate anxiety, it may even increase your worries.

If you are going to join the workforce, what is your salary expectations? If you are going to start a business, what are the plans? It's a really rough terrain but it is not impossible to survive. Will it be sustainable in the long term? Any consideration for marriage?, etc. These are some questions you need to ask yourself.

Last and the most important is to seek counsel from God. Believe in Him to help you make the best decision.

Wishing you all the best!!!

- New Comment: OP I'm a west African(Nigerian) around your age and I'd advise not going back unless you have a strong support system back home. You've been away for 11 years and things are not as they were when you left. For example, in Nigeria, things have gotten really bad economically and I can bet you'll struggle with the drastic change in quality of life if your family is not rich.

u/Evening-Mousse-1812 has already said it all. Be prepared to pursue your education to the highest possible level to qualify for eb2 NIW and other visas like o1 visa. Even better if you can fall in love with a US citizen.

Wish you the best cause we all need it on this journey

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- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Could somebody tell me me what does it mean or to tell me if anyone has same ex

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If your case is in administrative processing, it is a blackhole. The timelines are not transparent.

- New Comment: Administrative Processing takes about 3-5weeks on average.

On occasion someone has enough flags on their record that it takes 5-12 months or even longer.

- New Comment: I gave the interview in February 8 2024. After interview the officer kept my passport and gave me a white paper when it was with 221(g) crossed for Administrative Processing.

- New Comment: Rip. Dawg got put in administrative processing. As someone who was in administrative processing, I dont wish this shit system to fall on anyone. Literally nothing you can do besides wait at this point.

- New Comment: It means they think you could be a spy. Your case have been forwarded to a team of sloths in a relevant department so they can do full background check on you and the program you are applying to.

- New Comment: I applied for my visa from Taiwan and didn?t even require a interview, this ?administrative process? took 3 and a half months and I had to defer my offer for a semester lol

Title of the post: What companies can employ F1/CPT students?

Body of the post: Basically, Im in a bit of a blessed position and have some hefty contracts with some large companies. I can manage them myself, but I would like to share some of the pie with my international student friends.

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If I set up an LLC to process these contracts through, would I be able to employ my friends in the summer as interns on CPT? Are there requirements for such companies that I have to fulfill first?

I did some research online but got confused very quickly, here hoping someone's had a similar experience.

Cheers

Edit: guys im sorry but i do not have the capacity to employ all of you. Im an F1 turned perm resident who's still in school, I only have capacity to employ like 2-3 of my friends if even that. I hope you find employment but please stop dming me

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Any employer can employ F-1 students with work authorization.

They may not because their work is sensitive and requires only citizens and/or permanent residents (general government work). However the employer can hire you, you just couldn't work on those projects.

- New Comment: To clarify, my question is can all companies employ F1 students on CPT, or are there requirements, if anyone knows

- New Comment: haii folks, Those who are on f1-cpt/opt and looking for projects,full time work permit &more. im a employer so,i could help you and can sort it. hit me with dms or mail me on uday dot charlie 2597 at the rate gmail dot com

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Any that doesn't require Citizenship or secret clearance

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Title of the post: All documents expiring soon

Body of the post: Hi all, currently on F1 OPT (not eligible for STEM extension). Most of personal ID and documents are expiring soon. Wanted to ask some advice and heads up that I should know before something bad happens.

Expiring soon

F1 Visa: APR 9 2024

EAD: MAY 14 2024

Drivers license: MAY 14 2024

Passport: SEP 27 2024

My employer will be sponsoring me for H1B FY2025. My plan for the year is to travel to my home country (if that helps).

Thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: passport is critical f1 doesnt matter if u dont leave usa and whatelse well if u dont get selected for h1b thats another issue but def i would get new passport first
- New Comment: Is there a way to renew passport while staying in the USA? Or is it mandatory to visit India for the renewal?
- New Comment: If you get selected in the lottery, you won't be able to travel to your home country when they apply for the change of status. But if you're not selected, then you have to leave by mid-July, and then your documents expiring will not be a concern.
- New Comment: I am not sure about your country's policy, but when I renewed my passport in the US, through our Embassy, they took my expired passport, where I had my visa stamped (even though it was expired). That was my

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mistake, as now, I cannot get a real ID without an original visa stamp (I tried to provide a notarized copy, but they didn't accept it).

Title of the post: Returned to US (F1 OPT) without a stamp on my passport

Body of the post: Hi all, I just got back to the US from a short vacation in Europe. Like many others, I got sent to secondary inspection for OPT verification. I noticed that this time the officer didn't leave a F1 stamp in my passport, even though my I-94 shows that I am admitted as F1 status. Is it normal not to get a stamp if you went through secondary inspection? FYI I am a Canadian citizen.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: US hasn't stamped my passport upon reentry during my last 3-4 visits. I asked the Atlanta CBP the first time and they said they're phasing it out, and all records will be digital only. I don't think it has anything to do with your secondary inspection.
- New Comment: Depending on the airport, you may or may not get a passport stamp. I did not get one last month when I landed in DFW.
- New Comment: It's normal. They are phasing out physical stamps.
- New Comment: Can you see in your travel history online?
- New Comment: They don't stamp passports anymore.
- New Comment: how did you go to Europe without stamped F1 visa on your passport? What kind of visa, stamped, you have in your passport?

Title of the post: No luck with interviews so far.

Body of the post: I am in my final semester and will graduate in May 2024 with a mechanical engineering major and a

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computer programming minor with a pretty good GPA. I have 3 internship experiences, of which 2 were at Tesla and 2 undergrad research roles currently at my university. I have applied to a good amount of entry-level positions close to my experience but have not received any interviews so far. I was expecting interviews in January but have not received anything so far. Any suggestions?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Try mentioning only the experiences that is in-line with the job description instead of listing everything you did that you think would make your resumé look overqualified. If the interning at Tesla is not relevant to the role then don't mention it. Sometimes employers want someone under qualified with the thoughts that the person would value the job more once they got hired.

- New Comment: Did u receive a return offer with Tesla for full time??

- New Comment: If it makes you feel better, I pursued an architecture degree, starting applying late January/early February. I applied to almost 200 jobs. Had about 15 failed interviews. And got my first job offer a week after graduation. In total I only received 3 offers.

Unfortunately given our situation, it may be difficult to find a job that's willing to take you on. It is very dejecting considering all the hard work we put into the education. But keep applying, keep trying. Try to accept the fact that your timeline will probably be different from your peers, but have hope that something will come along eventually. And make sure you apply for OPT AS SOON AS it opens up for you!

Title of the post: 5month rule for employees working remotely out of USA on STEM-OPT

Body of the post: Hello,

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Does the 5 month rule work for Stem Opt students who are currently working remotely from their home country. I left USA on 1st September 2023 as my mother wasn't feeling well and since been working remotely. I am just worried that my sevis number will be terminated if I say above 5 months. My dso says that it will be terminated and I have to be back before 5 months. Is that true? Please help me, I am having sleepless nights now...

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Five month rule is about enrollment OR otherwise maintaining status.

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2015/01/what-five-month-rule>

Does not apply to OPT.

- New Comment: in my situation i was unemployed for 6 months after graduation and was in India all that time. I came back after the getting a job and didn't have any issues with it!

- New Comment: I guess you can come back to the US for a short while and go back - but not so sure on this

- New Comment: <https://isss.oie.gatech.edu/content/opt-and-traveling-abroad>

It says you can stay outside US not more than 5 months in my college website. I think ur DSO is right.

Title of the post: URGENT HELP ??

Body of the post: I'm currently on my 1st year of OPT, working as a software trainee at a company, but it's unpaid.

Planning on traveling overseas for vacation.

My university DSO, said it's perfectly alright since 1st year of OPT can be unpaid or volunteer.

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Is it okay to travel? While returning could the CBP officer reject me at Port of entry, as it's unpaid? My dad currently pays for my living expenses here in the U.S, same as while enrolled in college, would that explanation be sufficient as proof of funds to stay in the U.S.

Has anyone been in the same situation and travelled before?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It is okay don't worry. As long as you got your I-20 and EAD card it's good man!
- New Comment: I have travelled ~5 times in OPT and STEM OPT. As long as you have the docs, you are good to travel.
- New Comment: I've travelled when I wasn't even employed/volunteering at all, so no offer letter to show, as my past position had finished and I was searching for a new one. Didn't have a problem. I20 with 6 month travel signature and EAD card they'll need to see as mentioned.
- New Comment: no comments gives exact answer, your i20 needs to have travel signature. besides EAD, your passport and desi attitude
- New Comment: Hey! I recently just travelled on OPT with an unpaid internship (November 2023). I had no issues coming back per se, I had my I-20 and EAD with me which they checked at immigration, they just took me aside for 25-30 minutes, idk to verify stuff, and then let me go, no questions asked. It was a little worrying during, but not too bad. Just keep your offer letter with you too!
- New Comment: I have been in this situation. If you have a valid f1+ EAD, you should be good. Make sure your SEVP is updated. Keep your offer letter handy just in case they ask for it at immigration when returning.

If you're volunteering? with a shady desi/Indian consultancy lol, don't go back.

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- New Comment: I am also on F1 OPT and Although, I am working nd getting paid, but while coming back from India last month I was asked to show my bank statement where it showed that salary is getting credited into my account.
- New Comment: Your DSO is correct.
- New Comment: Im glad you asked this because I had the same question. How did you guys start your business while on OPT?
- New Comment: Make sure you also have a valid visa for reentry.

Title of the post: Business Analytics degree: 2000+ job applications (sponsorship)

Body of the post: I am starting to think that there aren't that many opportunities in Data. I have a loan that I will have to start paying off soon. I have already spent about 1 year working with my professor.

I have applied to all the roles - Data Engineering, Data Science, Machine Learning, BI Engineer, Data Analyst, Business Analyst.

I customized my resume in about 300 job applications and even wrote a cover letter.

Have gotten 18 calls, but in 12 of them they asked if I need sponsorship and just rejected me.

Gave a few really good interviews (imho) but the manager didn't hire (I will hate that company for life now, because no one helps you when you really need help)

I think in 90% cases they just filter me out when I say 'need sponsorship'.

​

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: same boat brother, hang on tight! how many days elapsed since your graduation?
- New Comment: I think u are making a slight mistake here ; i am also an international student i still don?t have a reliable job but , for us we do not need sponsorship for now. When you get ur EAD - thats ur authorization and u wont need a sponsorship for the next 1-3 years.

U will need sponsorship later , ie h1b -

But when if asked if u need sponsorship say u don?t but maybe in the future

- New Comment: Why are you answering yes to the sponsorship? You have 3 years of OPT, check NO! Don?t tell them you?re an international student and don?t tell them about sponsorship! That comes later
- New Comment: You want them to know you?ll need sponsorship later on. It comes down to what you want - do you want to only work in the US for 3 years and pay your debt? Or, do you want to stay long term? If you want to stay long term, you would want to prioritize finding a company that is willing to sponsor for a H1B while you are on your OPT.
- New Comment: You spent 1 year working with your professor after graduating?

Title of the post: OPT Unpaid Job Travel

Body of the post: I?m currently on my 1st year of OPT, working as a software developer at a Startup, but it?s unpaid.

Planning on traveling overseas for vacation.

My university DSO, said it?s perfectly alright since 1st year of OPT can be unpaid or volunteer.

Is it okay to travel? While returning could the CBP officer reject me at Port of entry, as it?s unpaid? My dad currently pays for my living expenses here in the U.S, same as while enrolled in college, would that explanation be sufficient as

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proof of funds to stay in the U.S.

Has anyone been in the same situation and travelled before?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You're fine, been there, done that.

- New Comment: Unpaid as in unpaid internship?

- New Comment: ****URGENT!!!!****

Hi u/nuair1971, did you re-enter safely? How was your experience?

I'm planning to travel with a 1099 freelance job but they don't provide offer letter. I have every document except an offer letter, would that be an issue? I'll graduate in June. Planning to travel in April for 1 month.

Any one here who was in the same situation please share your experience. Thanks!

- New Comment: Hi,

I have the same question. Please let me know about your experience?

- New Comment: How about traveling overseas for 2 weeks vacation on a job with hourly pays (with usual work hours close to 25hrs/week). This job requires clocking-in the exact hrs I put in every week, and gives a paystub once every 2 weeks -- would 2 weeks of vacation (which'll result in a gap in paystub) result in violation?

- New Comment: How do u survive if it's unpaid? Like how bro. I would not even do an unpaid internship

Title of the post: SSN is taking forever

Body of the post: I am a F1 visa student. I applied for the SSN about 6 weeks ago. While I was applying they said that it

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might take 4 weeks because immigration needed to verify me. After 4 weeks when I visited their office, they said that it was still pending at the immigration's end. The lady at the desk told me to call immigration if it doesn't arrive in a week. I called the SSN office after a week to check if it was still pending, this time around they couldn't find my application from the reference number but told me to wait another week because immigration was taking time. I have no idea who to call in immigration, where to pursue this and am getting very tense because I need to be employed part-time for my survival here.

I am going to speak to my International students' office on Monday. Has anyone else experienced this sort of delay ?

Any tips on how to go about this?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I applied 8 weeks ago, still nothing.
- New Comment: Same thing happened with me in NY. Had to get SAVE case checked on level 3 or something. Took 40+ days for them to get back to me then another 2 weeks for the ssn to come in the mail. Immigration is slow af.
- New Comment: Ask them if they have sent to SAVE for secondary verification.

Check status here:

<https://save.uscis.gov/save/app/client/ui/case-check>

- New Comment: I advise you to act really fast as there could be a gov shutdown happening soon
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: Which state are you in ?
- New Comment: No way im also waiting for mine and its been 8 weeks. Went to ssn office and told me that homeland

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security needs to approve something?

- New Comment: Ask your ISO if they can accept a copy of your SSN application. My uni accepted it, used it for my GRA employment and then I just updated my records when I finally got my SSN which took almost 8 weeks!
- New Comment: I applied at my local SSA office and got my number 5 days later. I did this like 3 weeks ago
- New Comment: My friend's friend waited for three months to get ssn, and I heard it is taking longer than three months. This was at the beginning of this year. When she called the ssn office, they told her it was pending for clearance at homeland security, and the homeland security was overloaded with refugees files.
- New Comment: Hey, did you receive your ssn now?? mine is also taking like forever

Title of the post: Re-entering USA after 10 months of sevis termination

Body of the post: I had my Sevis terminated and over-stayed by 25 days. I had to get through lease, sell my cars so it took a while. That was a bad mistake by my part.

Sevis was terminated under - unable to enroll. I was seeking authorized early withdrawal but i missed the deadline for it and as i had not enrolled they had no choice but to terminate my Sevis. I should have returned the following semester after Sevis termination but decided not to because of some personal issues.

The main reason i left was because my grandma had passed away and mom was really sick. I could not risk losing another family member without my presence. My dad passed away a couple of years back.

My F1 Visa is still valid till 2025. I studied in the USA for about 2 years before i left the country.

I do not have high hope that they will let me enter the country. Has anyone had similar case or as DSOs have you had any student deal with this kind of situation?

Reddit Posts

My visa is valid. Dso has told me no new visa is required, just new sevis and new i20 is required? About admission he told me it's upto CBP officer, and that they will probably take me to secondary inspection and decide to admit me or not.

Any input will be appreciated.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You stayed 25 days beyond the termination not great, but not horrendous. You stayed home took care of family stuff and are now returning.

If asked explain your situation the way you did here. Shouldn't be awful.

Unless you are from a country with a poor reputation with the US or you have lots of other red flags I would not be concerned.

Make sure to enter the US close to your school and during buissness hours. You can also ask the school for a letter explaining your situation with missing the deadline.

- New Comment: what happened bro?

Title of the post: My 221g F1 visa experience in july/august 2023

Body of the post: I had my interview on July 17th and the visa officer gave me a 221g told me to send him my flight itinerary.

I sent it the same day and exactly 16 days later on the 2nd of august my Status on CEAC went from REFUSED to APPROVED. Then on 3rd of august it went from APPROVED to APPLICATION RECEIVED to ISSUED.

Reddit Posts

Those 16 days that my application was on refused were so stressful as you don't know if you're going to be accepted in time for your university date. I emailed the embassy a couple times but they were giving me generic responses.

My advice js stay calm and be patient you'll get your visa hopefully in a couple weeks.

GOODLUCK

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: bro I didnt understand what you said. could you please explain.
- New Comment: Mine has gone from approved to application received, what can that mean? It's been there for a week now
- New Comment: Psss 16 days, try waiting 8 goddamn months lol. I had to defer my semester, change so many plans and finally got visa. Flight is next wednesday ? when i was supposed to begin my uni life back on spring 2022
- New Comment: Hey, If you don't mind sharing - What colour slip did you get when you got your passport? How did you send the flight itinerary? did you not have any interview?

Title of the post: how to have the visa sponsorship conversation with potential employer?

Body of the post: I need advice. I graduated with my masters a few months back and got approved for 1 year OPT (not stem) and have been looking for a job since. Initially, I clicked yes for the "Will you require sponsorship now or in the future" question in job applications and got ZERO responses for any jobs, even those I was highly qualified for.

Reddit Posts

Since I am past my work start date and have less than 90 days to find a job, I was advised to click NO on that question to not get automatically rejected and then prove my value to them through interviews. I finally got responses and interviews after doing so and am now in the final round of interviews for a great position at a nonprofit. The thing now is idk how to bring up my sponsorship conversation with them. They will find out if they hire me and I have to fill out the forms that I only have 1 year of work authorization. Should I wait until they bring it up or should I bring it up now? I obviously do not want to appear dishonest and I get the sense they really like me as a candidate based on my convos and said they would want someone in this role to stay at least for 2 years (its a junior role) and I said yes I am interested in doing that. Any advice on what I should do? It is really tough navigating this system especially not being in the stem field. I have no clue if they have sponsored people in the past, I didnt find anything online. :(

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You're just delaying when they will reject you.... companies are either fine with sponsoring or not, and if an employer doesn't sponsor but you tell them after receiving an offer, they will rescind it. You should tell them during the interview, not after you're hired.

- New Comment: Hi! Congrats for getting the offer first. I understand your situation totally. My suggestion is to talk to your HR about the situation as frankly and as soon as possible. Apologize and ask for their understanding. You may loose the offer right away but it will also save you time to find the next potential employer that could offer sponsorship. You would never want to work for a while but find out your employer can not sponsor or would not do it when it is too late. It is better to have a clear picture of what is going to happen in the year to come. Another suggestion is to try to find out what offers your friends who have similar situations are getting, try to find similar employers at the time as your backup plan.

Hopefully your communication with your employer would be helpful with the situation. To me, the brighter side of the situation is that you are hired by a nonprofit organization. Maybe there is an easier way like CAP free H1B for them so you do not need to go through the H1B lottery. Who knows. Just be sincere and ask what they can do to help and ask

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for help.

<https://www.myvisajobs.com/> the website offers information on visa application histories for employers in various field. Hope your employer's name is on the list and then it will be so much easier.

Good luck!!!

- New Comment: I feel you as I'm also non-STEM and had a tough time getting a job. Lying certainly doesn't help and if I were you right now, I'd focus on looking for volunteer opportunities (to pause your unemployment days) as you apply for temporary positions at universities. These are great pathways to H1B Cap-exempt positions. Best of luck.

- New Comment: They will verify your work authorization during the onboarding process anyway with I-9 even if you don't bring it up. The offer letter is likely to be "at will" and once they know that you are on OPT they are likely to fire you or revoke your offer any time. I am an international also on OPT (but STEM) I have written on my resume that I will not need sponsorship until 2026 and marked no work authorization on the job application since most of them are knock out questions. Once the recruiter sees your resume, they will know about your work authorization status so it is better that way. I have seen some of my friends getting their offer letter revoked because of the work authorization dishonesty. Please do not hurt your application like that. If you don't want to get knocked out from resume screening try adding your work authorization status on the resume. It is also worth to note that most recruiters don't have knowledge about different visa statuses and how they differ so the simple the better just write the expiration of work authorization.

- New Comment: They will reject you for being dishonest. Most times organizations don't want the added expense of the legal fees which is why they don't contact candidates who need sponsorship.

- New Comment: My advice would be to work for 6 months and prove your worth to your direct manager before the next lottery. But tbh with only 1 year OPT you should be as honest as possible as you only have one very small opportunity.

- New Comment: >Will you require sponsorship now or in the future" question in job applications and got ZERO responses for any jobs, even those I was highly qualified for.

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Because the company was unwilling or unable to sponsor for that role. It's a benefit for you as to not waste your time with an employer unwilling or unable to sponsor.

>I was advised to click NO on that question to not get automatically rejected and then prove my value to them through interviews. I finally got responses and interviews after doing so and am now in the final round of interviews for a great position at a nonprofit. The thing now is idk how to bring up my sponsorship conversation with them.

You now assume that the job and/or employer is eligible or able to sponsor you. Please understand that the MAJORITY of jobs are NOT eligible for sponsorship. Most companies cannot pay or meet the requirements for sponsorship for the majority of their positions. This is VERY true with non-STEM majors. You also told the company that you don't need sponsorship. So if you bring it up and make the ask it can be grounds for termination for lying on your application.

>I obviously do not want to appear dishonest and I get the sense they really like me as a candidate based on my convos and said they would want someone in this role to stay at least for 2 years (its a junior role) and I said yes I am interested in doing that.

Wow... Please read this sentence and understand how bad this looks to the outside reader, "I lied on my application, but I don't want to look dishonest, so when the company stated they wanted me for two years I lied saying I am willing to do that despite not having the ability to do that." Those are some really big mental gymnastics.

>I have to fill out the forms that I only have 1 year of work authorization. Should I wait until they bring it up or should I bring it up now?

Why do you assume that your job is eligible and/or the company is willing to sponsor for that role? This is like telling a

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first date that you are interesting in a long term relationship... But not telling them that this is true only if they marry you in the next 90 days and sponsor you to stay as their spouse before your tourist visa expires.

>Any advice on what I should do? It is really tough navigating this system especially not being in the stem field. I have no clue if they have sponsored people in the past

You need to speak to them soon and understand that the conversation could and rightfully so end up with you losing the job and the offer...or... Not tell them and see if you can coherence or pressure them into sponsoring you at a later date.

- New Comment: I know this is very late but can you update your situation?

Title of the post: STEM OPT DENIED HELP!!!!

Body of the post: Hello everyone,

I had applied for stem opt on May 2022 and I received an rfe on that stating the E-verify number cannot be validated, but my company had used its parent Company's E-verify number which is allowed and my colleagues also got their EAD approved using the same number. So it was a mistake by the USCIS officer. Then my company?s attorney responded stating the same that we used the parent company?s E-verify number. But recently I got a denial notice stating that USCIS didn?t receive my rfe response which is not true because we have the tracking receipt as well as the signature of the person who received it at the USCIS office. So we are going to file for a motion to appeal (I-290B form). So I wanted to know if I can still work after getting the denial notice till my grace period? or do I need to stop working immediately? Also what else can be done in this situation because it?s clearly a mistake from USCIS?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You'll have to stop working immediately, unfortunately, because you've received a denial. Your STEM OPT application is no longer pending, even if you file the I-290B, and you cannot work until it's approved.

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You have your company's lawyer so it's best to talk to them about it, but there's really not much to be done except appeal.

- New Comment: I would suggest filing for motion to reopen the case. Submit your statement with all the proofs, letter from your employer as well as from your DSO. I had a similar case where they denied my case based on false reason, which was failing to submit the RFE on time. I did as I mentioned above and my case was approved. I wish you all the best!

Title of the post: DSO warned that I cannot work without their approval on OPT (Visa violation).

Body of the post: My OPT is approved and I received the EAD card. I emailed my DSO about the access to SEVP because I have yet to received account setup. My DSO told me I cannot work without their permission on OPT which I believe it is not true.

I started working in healthcare setting as a healthcare professional a week ago and my degree is in public health and DSO told me to look for another job because it is not directly related to public health. DSO then told me I should have my department chair (from school i guess) to clarify that my position is directly related to my degree.

DSO warned me I am not authorized to work anywhere right now, but I already started. Throughout my study there, I have numerous experiences that my DSO providing inaccurate information. How can I process with this? We only have one DSO and I do not know who I should escalate this to.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Some DSOs get more involved in this process than others. Did you submit a description to the DSO of how you believed the job duties were providing you with practical training in your major/degree field of study, and the DSO said that he/she couldn't support providing that information to the government as being training that was in your field of study? What is the full conversation between you and the DSO here?

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A DSO can't stop you from reporting OPT employment in the SEVP Portal. A DSO can advise that a certain job may not be a good idea if your description of the job duties doesn't sound like it's actually practical training in what you studied at that school. A DSO could say they weren't going to report something on your behalf if he/she determines it's way off from sounding like practical training in your field. But you could still report it in the SEVP Portal. Keeping in mind that if the government ever determines it wasn't practical training in your field of study, the government could determine working in the job was an F-1 violation by you.

Ultimately, it's not you or the DSO who determines if the job meets the F-1 status requirements by being in your field of study; Homeland Security has that final call. So be sure if you report it directly in the SEVP Portal that you really can make a very strong case that the job is providing you with further study in your major/field by gaining practical training experience in that same field.

- New Comment: Thats awkward, coz when i got my opt, the DSO had to endorse it before sending in my opt application and that was the end of her role

- New Comment: Did you start working after your start date and after your EAD card arrived?

- New Comment: Your DSO is wrong and it is not their problem. The ENTIRE reason for the SEVP Portal is so DSOs didn't have to act as a gatekeeper.

- New Comment: Why escalated? Just get the approval from your department program chairman like you DSO suggest.... at the end you are a guest in the US anyways... I don't understand that your DSO might have overstep his power but you could have fix that by doing what he asked you...

- New Comment: Not related but I had a DSO tell me that I couldn't intern while my other international friends from different schools were interning at different companies every summer. Some of these people do not take their jobs seriously. At the end of the day to them, it isn't their life.

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Title of the post: Not getting a first time visa interview appointment?

Body of the post: I'll be starting college in the US in fall 2022. I have everything else in place, but I'm not getting a visa interview appointment. Everytime I login, I get the OFC appointment but not the actual interview. This is kind of making me nervous since a lot of people are getting their appointments. Any suggestions on how to deal with this? I don't want to delay my interview. (Also is it possible to not get an interview in the first place for the first time?)

Edit: Got one today.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You're not getting any because the embassy hasn't released any yet, they released a lot of slots few weeks back so they're over now, head over to the Us embassy page on facebook or twitter and check for their conference at the chennai embassy, they said there will be another bulk opening soon when you can book slots. Best hope is to monitor telegram channels/discord for messages notifying there's slots available and book one as soon as its released

Edit - For some reason i assumed you're from India(because i was having the same rant few months back). If thats not the case then the Facebook and twitter thing wont be applicable to you, sorry for the assumption.

- New Comment: Where are you from? You should be able to make an emergency appointment if you can't get any visa appointment but remember emergency appointment only given if your classes start is within 60 days upon requesting for emergency appointment.

- New Comment: How did you booked? Any tips?

PS: I am from India as well

- New Comment: Vro how did you get it?

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am from India too

- New Comment: When will they release again ?

Title of the post: Something be done about USCIS

Body of the post: <rant>

I applied for my initial OPT on 07/21/2021. It took them 90 days to tell me they need more documents (address history, employment history, transcripts, grades, tuition payments receipts, other unnecessary stuff).

I responded to the RFE on 11/02/2021. They were suppose to respond within 60 days. By 60 days no response!

I called their custom care on 01/03/2022. They created a service request and told me to expect to hear from them in 30 days. It?s been 20 days since then and nothing.

I have placed a request with Ombudsman, and it will take them 2-3 months to respond.

I am a foreign student. Live in a rented apartment. I have a job that pays 100K plus. Based on that I have an auto loan, and school loan. I?ve been out of my job for 4 months. I have dried up every savings. I don?t know how I will afford next month rent!

It?s a nightmare! And nobody cares whether we live or die!!

</rant>

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yea... this isn't a USCIS problem...

You are likely flagged in the system for some reason. Most Fall 2021 OPT requests were processed in 40-60 days.

Alternatively, you may have an issue with your SEVIS recorded via the school. I have never had an RFE for these additional documents for a student except when they made a significant error in their application.

OR... you are Cuban, Iranian, Libyan, or North Korean passport holder.

- New Comment: If an RFE issued after 60 days of graduation doesn't that mean you have to go back home ?

- New Comment: I agree. It is a huge issue. However, USCIS does not have any incentive to improve.

- New Comment: Also contact your congressman's office and speak with the immigration caseworker, who can follow up with USCIS about the status of your application.

<https://www.house.gov/htbin/findrep?ZIP=00000>

In many situations, congressional inquiry can serve as a nudge, leading to action on the application by USCIS.

Because of the seriousness of your financial situation, also consider asking others to contact that congressman's office as well, including:

* your future employer

* your university department chair

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* your university's "external relations" / government affairs office (you may need to contact them via your department chair, etc.)

That additional follow-up will highlight to the congressional office the importance of your case and can lead to a higher-level inquiry with the USCIS congressional affairs office, prompting faster action.

If the employer is willing to write a letter to USCIS about the severe consequence of not having you available for work, that may be helpful as well.

- New Comment: Hey - i have the exact same problem? it's been months.

Did you receive an RFE receipt? I haven't even received confirmation that they received the documents I sent back in November.

I really don't know what to do anymore.

- New Comment: Did u ever figure this out OP

Title of the post: I don't know what went wrong here , inspite of showing the correct documents. I a

Body of the post: Me:Good Morning Officer

VO: Passport passport...(did not greet was in a lot of hurry)

(Passed Passport)

VO:Who is sponsoring you?

Me:Sir my father is sponsoring me.

VO:What does your father do?

Me:Sir my father works at XYZ...(cuts me off here)

VO:What does your father do?

Me:Sir he works as a chief manager of marketing services....(again cuts me off)

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VO:Whats his annual income?

Me:Sir his annual income is 53 Lakhs per annum.

VO:Show me his Income Tax Returns.

Me:shows , took out the ITR papers and handed him..

VO:These are not the ITR papers

Me:Sir these are the ITR papers(i also was about to explain him but he was not ready to listen) ,I have the salary slips also apart from that.

VO:(passes the papers back) you got 5 seconds show me the ITR papers

Me:Sir these are the only ITR papers I have.

VO:you lied to me these are not the papers , sorry you are not eligible for student visa(passes back my passport)

I did show him the correct ITR's , I am shocked and devastated as to what went wrong. i don't even know what to change for my next attempt as he hardly asked me anything. kindly help.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Omg where was this? My F1 visa interview was veeeerrryyy different? did you send in all the paperwork with your application?

- New Comment: share pictures of the ITR docs u showed him

- New Comment: Did you show the papers to your CA before the interview? Or a student immigration expert?

I remember them not asking so much but I got my documents checked with my CA and a student immigration expert before taking it along with me to the VO.

I am really not sure what papers you took with you as ITR. But having read your post you might have taken the ITR Receipt/Acknowledgment papers and not the papers itself(since if you downloaded from the site, it must have been a

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receipt)

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: OPT vs CPT and how to do internships during undergrad without eating into your

Body of the post: hey sorry if this has been asked but I can't find something super specific, i'm going into my junior year and am trying to find an internship, I found an unpaid one and accepted, however, after reading labor laws surrounding the F1 visa I am about to drop it.

I am in the predicament of the fact that I need to find an internship before I graduate, so will this eat into my OPT if i find one for the summer? and if that's the case, does that mean I'll only have 9 months of OPT after I graduate? Is that possible, and do companies even accept that?

I'm a comp sci major, so I don't really understand CPT either, but can I use CPT for the summer internships if I find one? and if I do this will that allow me to save the entirety of my 12 month OPT for after graduation?

i feel like i'm in a situation where I need to find an internship before graduation but it's nearly impossible because if it eats into my OPT that will damage my opportunities for jobs after I graduate, can someone help out. thank you so much

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: CPT has no impact on OPT unless you do one year of full-time CPT. One year of full-time CPT ends eligibility for OPT. Anything less than one year of full-time CPT does not impact OPT eligibility (as long as the CPT was properly authorized).

- New Comment: Technically anything less than a year on CPT (full time) would still make you qualified for OPT! However, you can only work for 20 hours a week during the semester and up to 40 hours during breaks! As far as I

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know, this "less than a year" rule only applies if you do full-time CPT for a period of one year (i.e. more than 11 months and 29 days total), but ask your DSO about this.

You do not need sponsorship to work on CPT. Once you receive an offer letter, you enroll in a course (schools do have a course called internship) and the international office at your university will let you know once you're approved! It usually takes a day or two.

Title of the post: F1 Visa interview appointments are a mess (Schengen)

Body of the post: Dear all,

Due to COVID-19, I've had to postpone the start of my master's degree by one year. After a year of waiting I was excited to finally start this summer, but lo and behold... the next available visa interview date is in 2022! (The Netherlands). The consulate general doesn't allow F1 applicants to ask for an expedited appointment (or, more accurately, they'll turn down any such requests), even though my university (Columbia U) clearly stated that all embassies and consulates received orders to accommodate students as best as they could.

The university doesn't allow me to defer by another semester, so I'm afraid I'll have to cancel my study altogether after a whole year of waiting.

I've tried to arrange a visa interview in Germany or Belgium, but the only consulate that accepts foreigners (Frankfurt) has no F1 interview slots. On top of that, foreigners are not allowed to request to expedite their appointment in Frankfurt. It seems to me that I am terribly stuck.

As an act of desperation I'm turning to Reddit to ask you this: What would you recommend? Should I simply wait and hope that the situation will change for the better? Should I still attempt to get a visa interview arranged in a different

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country? I would love to hear some thoughts.

Thank you all for taking your time to read this.

EDIT/UPDATE: I managed to get an appointment (this month even!). The consulate general in Amsterdam seems to open up new dates/times from time to time. I would personally recommend those who did not get an appointment yet to NOT plan an appointment elsewhere and simply wait for new dates/times to open up in Amsterdam.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: First of all I'm sorry for your situation. I know how much this sucks, especially if you've already had to defer a year. Are you sure you don't qualify for an expedited appointment? I applied for one in Milan, Italy, first available slot was in October, but I requested an expedited appointment which took almost 3 weeks to get approved. In the end I did get a slot for first week of July though. Maybe it's different in your country but typically expedited appointments are granted for F1 visa applicants during this time.

- New Comment: Hi, I'm in the UK and emailed the embassy to request an appointment and received an email back the next working day and an appointment the following week. Hope this helps ??

- New Comment: Hey, fellow Dutch person here,

I know three other Dutchies that got an appointment in Rome at the end of July. Brussels also accepts foreigners, but they won't grant you an expedited appointment. The average waiting time for Brussels is only 40 days, so you might be able to get it a bit earlier

- New Comment: Hi! I had a very hard time too in Budapest Hungary, I was trying all other Embassies but no one would accept third country or if they did, I needed a 14 quarantine to travel. I gave up all hope, but then one week before my school started they started appointments again. So maybe you will get lucky too, or try the embassy in Slovakia, when I

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spoke to them they were accepting third country citizens, or try Budapest because they definitely are doing visa. I think they will all start to open up again, it's a terrible situation and no one seems to care, but since Europe is doing good with covid they don't have an excuse anymore.

- New Comment: Hi, a bunch of spots opened up in Frankfurt today. I managed to book one for early August!

- New Comment: Just to let you know I have called Vienna, Bratislava, Oslo today and the answer is no for TCN unless you are a resident or have strong ties to the community.

I think it's the same everywhere. Any ideas?

- New Comment: I'm in the same boat :(, I'm trying to get a long-term Spanish student visa but there are no available appointments at all. I booked my flights for the 27th of August when there were cheap but I don't know now.. I'll keep you updated on the procedure but let's not give up!

- New Comment: Four days later after you post the earliest appointment is on Nov 8th. They might be opening up more spots as time goes. This happened to me last year around August. Long waiting time and then after a week or so as the covid situation got better there waiting time shortened to few weeks. ps. not Netherland consulate tho

Also, what does the Amsterdam consulate say about the fact that school starts in September? Do they just simply not care at all?

- New Comment: Hi! I'm Dutch. I'm with the agency Interlanguage and they recommended me to go to Paris to get my visa as they've sent all their students to go there. The aprox. Waiting time there for an appointment is 15 days. Would you recommend me still trying for Amsterdam? My classes start Aug. 30.. I'm so stressed lmao

- New Comment: Do you know if 15 days wait time is correct?

Title of the post: F-1 Appointments in India

Body of the post: Hello all,

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For the past 3-4 weeks, I have been trying to get Visa appointments for the fall semester which starts in August. Despite saying slots are available, I am unable to book any slots. Could any of you please help. The embassy advises us to check again and again, but despite that unable to get any appointments. Please help.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Unfortunately every F1 student is in the same boat.

The slots are rarer than oil and when they do open up, everyone rushes in so bad that the server thinks that its a DDoS attack.

All we can do is hope more slots open up as lockdowns are eased in the country.

- New Comment: Facing the same problem!

- New Comment: Hi. Even I'm facing the same issue..

- New Comment: join telegram and WhatsApp groups for quick notifications.

- New Comment: I might be wrong but I think right now all travel from India to the US is suspended due to covid? until the situation gets better in India I doubt there will be interviews, and even then you won't be able to travel

Title of the post: What are some tips you have for the job search?

Body of the post: Title says it. If it helps, currently looking for a job in data analytics/BI/management consulting with a focus in marketing (preferably). I thought this could be a good way for everyone to come together and help each other by maybe putting in some resources, job boards, tips, advice, what worked for you, what didn't work for you etc. This phase of life for all of us is really crucial and any help could go a long way! It could be anything, really! Maybe how you organized your application process to make it more streamlined?? Idk.

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Just one off the top of my head is Tableau White Papers. Amazing source of knowledge!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I currently use an extension called f1hire that would be helpful in LinkedIn and Indeed for finding out if the company had H1B sponsorship history and e verified or not. It also compares your resume with the key words from the Job description and displays how much it is relevant to your resume. It's free of use and premium can be purchased as well. It's helpful for me

- New Comment: I created an Excel job tracker with a raw-data sheet where I do Data entry (date, role, level, status, company, referral, salary ranges) helped by macros to do some auto entry, and data validation and vlookups from a Forbes 1000 sheet to get locations & size.

Then a pivot table sheet to summarize by company and status.

Planning to run a simple machine learning algorithm on the raw data (since I can't do it at a company) to predict if an application is likely to get rejected or moved forward.

- New Comment: For me, I've been keeping track of jobs by making a spreadsheet and constantly updating the status and adding new jobs along with job description, salary, work site status, etc.

So far I've only had 2 interviews out of 360 applications.

I've been trying my best to tailor my resume by continuously seeking feedback from mentors and online connections on LinkedIn, and ChatGPT has been an effective tool in creating cover letters as well.

I've data analyst background, so if anyone wants to connect to discuss more strategies, refer me, or even vent, please DM me.

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I'm feeling hopeless but I truly feel that one gives up the moment they decide they've given up. The grind continues.

Title of the post: Health insurance suggestion for f1 opt student

Body of the post: Any suggestions for unemployed f1 opt student regarding which health insurance to choose? prefer it to be cheap and has decent coverage in case of emergencies.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Answered this here: <https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/s/pe4bFnpJ0r>
- New Comment: +1
- New Comment: I've had ISO, it's cheaper and has decent coverage. Except for vaccines I never had to use it though.
- New Comment: If you are staying in Newyork, you will get free insurance
- New Comment: <https://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/student-health-insurance/>
- New Comment: I had Aetna from my school and if you chose in network it covered pretty well.

Title of the post: I got my Interview on the 18th of June 2024, and consular told me: Congratulations

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Sorry for your inconvenience. Is there anyone else who took their visa interview recently? How quickly did you get your passport stamped?
- New Comment: My visa got approved on 15th and still waiting :(Seems like a lot of people are in the same boat

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Chennai consulate, receive passport with stamp within 5 days.
- New Comment: Hello, can you share questions that was asked? Mine is still coming up and although I have been watching YouTube vids, getting feedbacks from people who have experienced it is vital to me. Thanks

Title of the post: Urgent - Please advice :

Body of the post: I have been outside the USA on OPT for 11 months now. I left the states after my graduation due to family medical issues and have been working on an unpaid internship for US based company but from outside the US. I was also laid off in between and found another unpaid internship. Both I started from outside USA. I have finally gotten a paid offer and I wanted to enter USA. My sevis is active and DSO gave me i20 - however said I might be denied entry. Please advice me if this is a status violation or I can even enter the USA.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It's not a status violation. However you have no guarantee to enter the US and can be denied entry, even with valid documents.

You have been gone, outside the US for 11 months on unpaid work and suddenly want to come back just before OPT ends. It looks highly suspect and I would not be surprised if you were denied entry.

- New Comment: This is wild.
- New Comment: nobody can tell exact answer but u been away for a while and opt is almost over so what legal status do u have other than almost gone opt ?
- New Comment: As far as I know, there is a rule that you cannot be outside of the US for more than 5 months on F-1 status. You might likely be denied entry since OPT is also considered under F-1. I would suggest coming back for a higher degree if you really wanted to come back on F-1, otherwise you would need to find other ways to gain work authorization. I am really sorry.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: You will likely be denied entry as your Form I-20 should have been terminated as you've been outside the United States for more than five months.

- New Comment: How long is your EAD valid for?

Title of the post: Job change advice

Body of the post: Hi everyone,

I'm currently facing a tough decision and could really use some advice. Here's my situation:

I'm on F1 OPT, and my EAD started in February. I managed to land an internship at a great company which was supposed to last 3 months. I've been giving it my all, but instead of offering me a full-time position, they ended up extending my internship. As this extension period draws to a close, I have a feeling they might extend it again because they know the job market is tough, and I won't have many options. I'm living in NYC, and the intern salary makes it really hard to get by. Plus, I missed this year's H1B lottery because I was still an intern.

On the other hand, I've received an offer from a large company in San Diego for a contractual role that lasts a year. The pay is significantly higher than my current internship, which would really help with my financial situation. However, it's a contractual role through a staffing company, and I'm not sure if I'll be able to apply for an H1B with this position. Missing another year of the H1B lottery isn't something I can afford.

I'm mentally exhausted from the uncertainty and financial strain of my current situation. I need to decide soon, and I'm torn between the stability and potential full-time opportunity of my current internship versus the better pay and new opportunity in San Diego, but with the risk of the contractual nature and H1B complications.

Has anyone been in a similar situation or have any advice on what I should do? Any insights on how staffing companies

Reddit Posts

handle H1B sponsorship would also be greatly appreciated.

Thanks in advance for your help!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: don't bet on h1b since the chance is super low, gunning for GC through EB-3 or EB-2 NIW. Well, if you are India or China born national, then marry a USC is the only viable way ig

- New Comment: Stay in NYC

- New Comment: Usually staffing companies do sponsor visas, ask them if that is possible. If yes, take that off position.

For the internship, explain your situation to your manager in a one-on-one. The fact that they extended your internship implies that they are interested in keeping you. Explain your situation and tell them you need sponsorship. If they say no, i would recommend taking the contract work, earn more, save up and really grind to secure a fulltime position

- New Comment: Talk to your Manager at the current internship and see if they are looking to sponsor you after you've completed this term. If not then take the CA job.

- New Comment: Regarding the San Diego role:

Ask the staffing company if they will apply for your H1B as a lot of them do that. That could also act as a test to see if they do things properly or are shady. They might mention things like you paying for your H1B while they apply for it, which is illegal.

I am currently based out of San Diego and I am not sure which industry you are in but San Diego is not the best place to be at if you are in the tech sector, especially if you would be looking for jobs. The city is beautiful and laid back but not a lot of tech companies here. However, if you are in defense etc, you should be fine.

Regarding the NYC role:

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Talk to your manager and tell him that given your visa situation, you would like to have some stability in terms of your work and an internship doesn't provide that. Ask him what the company's plan is for you and based on how honest you are with your manager and how genuine they are, you can even mention that you have the SD role and would switch if things aren't looking too good at your current company. They extended your internship that means they like your work, so if they really want you, they should extend a full time offer.

- New Comment: When you are in this hesitation, please clear it. Talk with your boss or HR head sharing your concerns.

I'm sure many employers are aware of the difficulties of international students. If they openly tell you that they can't sponsor it's high time that you need to speed up your job search to find a sponsor.

Talk with staffing agencies, they also sponsor while you work on a contractual role for them.

- New Comment: H1B take priority over everything else if you don't have any other visa to work on.

Questions for you:

1. Can staffing company sponsor you?
2. Can the hiring company extend your employment after a year?
3. If they can't extend, will the staffing company keep you on payroll and give you another contract? Most staffing companies do that and even file for H1B.
4. Will you get full time offer from your current employer?
5. If yes, when? Because you don't wanna waste another year for H1B.

Employers see interns and employers differently.

Reddit Posts

IMO, your chances of getting H1B in San Diego is higher than being in nyc.

Title of the post: Is it too late to apply for visa for this fall?

Body of the post: I am an Indian going to penn state university park this fall. Is it too late for me to apply for visa? Pov: i haven't even got my i20 yet.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Not late, but entirely depends on the visa slots available.

I would suggest you start looking into completing the process for obtaining I-20 from your University and then filling the DS-160 right after that. Select the earliest visa date available which could be well past September 2024.

Then keep looking for slots and book a slot which is before your start date when it opens up.

- New Comment: May isn't too late. When I came for Fall, I got the slot on July 23 for Biometrics and July 28 for interview. Got Visa by August 5th. Left USA by 11th. Arrived by 13th morning.

As long as you have I-20 there is a chance.

- New Comment: You could try the emergency visa slot- forgot exactly what it's called. I got one of them because I started earlier in Summer instead of Fall as planned. Reason was just earlier start date. Not sure if it'll work for you but maybe worth checking.

- New Comment: I got my Visa on July 25th. Travelled in August. It's not too late, as long as you can find a slot.

PS: I'm a Penn State grad. You're gonna love the campus.

- New Comment: PDSO here?not too late but like many have mentioned you need to get your I-20 ASAP and schedule

Reddit Posts

the earliest interview slot available (even if it's months in the future).

You mention that you're Indian, when I last checked, consulates/embassy in India are running way behind on interview slots. So what you want to do is after scheduling a slot, check daily to see if an earlier slot opens up and take that you.

You are allowed 2 changes before that option goes away. If your interview date is after program start date, then at the 60 day point before start date you can request an expedited (not emergency) interview based on start date.

Good luck!

- New Comment: You can try going to singapore to get your visa they have a specific section for foreign national to get a visa , you can get a singapore visa online easily

- New Comment: Not late according to my experience.

- New Comment: Depends on your location. Visa wait times this year are very long. Much longer than usual for this time of year

- New Comment: Depends on your country

Title of the post: How long did it for you guys to receive the STEM Extension?

Body of the post: Good morning, guys.

After roughly 4.5 months since submitting the STEM extension, I finally checked this morning on the USCIS website and found that they are estimating a response within 30 days (either approval or non-approval).

So, it looks like it's going to take the full 6 months for me, and luckily, I submitted it 50 days before my initial OPT expiration. This gives me roughly 3 months to stay in a peaceful state of mind. Thanks to my DSO and international office for continuously sending me emails since D-90 days, advising me to prepare ASAP, or I could be in trouble.

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Now, my question is, how long did it take for you guys? I've spoken with my HR just in case the delay is longer, or if some messed up situation arises (like receiving RFEs with short preparation time), and HR told me that if I want, they can process an E-2 visa status change with an expedited process, where I will get my status changed within 31 days or so. (However, prefer not to as company policy is not support H-1B lottery once they process E-2, so possibilities of my status tied to E-2 until Green card processed and issued later on.)

So, should I just wait until that 30-day mark and see if they delay again? Or should I just wait peacefully until July and go for the E-2 status change if anything goes wrong? I am feeling quite nervous at this point as my time is also ticking, and USCIS has no means to process my application any sooner.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: they desperately want that premium processing money .
- New Comment: Applied on Nov 28 and Approved on April 13. The myProgress timer showed 5 weeks left but I went in the Documents section and saw the approval notice.
- New Comment: Yeah USCIS is backlogged af. They are prioritising premium processing a bit too much I feel. Applied for STEM 2 months from deadlines but I got nervous so applied for premium and got it approved in a day lol
- New Comment: Just got the approval almost 5 months after applying, about 3 months AFTER OPT Expiration Date. I did not pay for premium, although had debated trying to pay because it was taking so long. I don't think initial OPT expiring is a problem, as long as you've already applied for the extension and don't plan on leaving the country
- New Comment: Took ~5 months and it got approved on May 2nd, December 11th for the submission date. No premium processing.
- New Comment: 145 days and still running. 12/20 date. People with 12/21 got approved already. Uscis agent said to wait more 30 days. I applied 30 days before opt expiry. Which gives me 1 month beyond projected decision date. Its

Reddit Posts

insane coz my feeling is they need me to do premium processing which I am hesitant since any delay is their mistake and should nt require us to pay a whooping \$2000. Just so fucking insane.

- New Comment: Took 7 months for mine. Get premium processing done and get it over with

- New Comment: What?s E-2? Is it EB-2?

- New Comment: I had to process premium and I got it within two weeks. Can?t gamble it.

- New Comment: submitted nov 30 got standalone approval april 21. card was shipped last week, still don't have it so over 5 months if u don't pay pp

- New Comment: 12/28 receipt date and no progress yet.

Damn USCIS made me turn into a poet

Title of the post: How long can you be unemployed for under STEM OPT?

Body of the post: I just found out yesterday that you only have 150 days to find a job. Any longer than that you need to go back home, the issue is I don't think it's normal in today's job market for anyone to find a job in less than 4 months, at least more than 6 months usually.

I just want to make sure, is it true that you only have 150 days and then any longer than that you need to go?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You get 60 additional unemployment days on STEM OPT adding with the 90 you got in initial OPT. 150 overall but the unemployment days used in initial OPT should be subtracted.

- New Comment: But to get those 60 additional days you need to be eligible to apply for Stem extension. For that you need e verified employer and a paid job.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Look for a job at the start of your last semester before graduating for OPT and hopefully the extension on the same job but if not, work there and look for another job that's STEM extension eligible, no need to wait until your OPT ends.
- New Comment: I agree. 150 days is not enough to find a job right now and there should be considerations made for that
- New Comment: 60 + unused unemployment days of OPT

Title of the post: My F1 Dropbox Experience for Fall 2024 - INDIA

Body of the post: Hey guys, I just wanted to share a detailed review and process of F1 visa dropbox process in 2024.

As of Jan 2024, Dropbox/Interview waiver is only applicable to those who have had the same class of visa that has expired in the past 48 months or any US visa except B1/B2.

B1/B2 holders were also eligible for F1 Dropbox till 2023 but now the rules have changed.

Steps to apply: PART A

1. Fill out DS160
2. Pay the SEVIS fee. This is mandatory and is about \$350.
3. Login to ustraveldocs portal.
4. Select application for F1 visa and proceed with questions asked.
5. On being prompted for interview waiver, pay the visa fee. I used credit card as the method of payment and got the confirmation immediately.
6. On payment confirmation, select the date for your Dropbox.

Reddit Posts

Note: Dropbox appointment will show up as OFC appointment and also as of 2024 all Dropbox appointments have been centralised to Chennai so that is the only consulate you can select for appointment.

You can drop off the documents at any of the locations including Bangalore, Hyderabad , New Delhi , Pune etc. at the time and date of your appointment.

PART B : ON THE DAY OF DROPBOX (I visited Chennai itself to minimise the processing time as much as possible)

1. Reached the location about 45min before my appointment time and was allowed to go in for my appointment .
2. ONLY The following documents were asked:
 - original valid passport (if your old visa which makes you eligible for the interview is in an old passport you?ll need to get that as well)
 - DS160
 - appointment confirmation page
 - I20
 - 1 photo of size 2x2 (standard US Visa size, 80% face, white background)
3. Submit your passport and it will be delivered in 10 - 14 business days.

I?m also sharing my timeline so you can compare:

Apr 22 - Dropbox appointment

Apr 25 - Application Received

Apr 30 - Approved

Reddit Posts

May 1 - Issued

May 2 - OS

May 3 - Ready for Pickup

Thanks for reading this review and I hope your doubts get clear. Comment down if any.

All the best!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Is the Dropbox appointment only available from Chennai? My residence is in Delhi and the ds-160 also contains Delhi name. Can you ease confirm if Dropbox is available in Delhi or not?

- New Comment: I had my Dropbox appointment on May 17th. From then on until today my visa status check shows "no status", that's after indicating "NA" under my passport number and surname. I have no clue on what's happening, is this just for me or is the system messed up.

Please help me. I'm going crazy with this unprecedented process.

- New Comment: Do you require any additional documents apart from these? Do they ask for these documents when you're in the VAC or are they already told to you before you visit?

- New Comment: Thank you for this really detailed summary!! Would you mind mentioning which visa class you had prior? I was on H1B and I was eligible for drop box - but I haven't seen that in other places - thank you so much!

- New Comment: Did you have any visa other than B1/B2? Because I think having only B1/B2 doesn't make one eligible for dropbox, right?

- New Comment: I have 1 year left on my stem opt, is it safe to apply for drop box?

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- New Comment: Hey guys.

I have an active F1 visa and visited the US last year. I have an option for Dropbox and I've opted for it. I'm from Bangalore. Why am I seeing so many posts about no Dropbox this year when I've gotten the option to do it?

- New Comment: Did you take all the documents in an envelope? Like what is the best way to carry these documents? Is it similar to the interview boxes where they ask you these documents and go from there? I appreciate your help on this!

- New Comment: Hey u/Scorpion_187 ! My H1B was picked in Aug2023 , got approved. All good. I am planning to go for stamping in the next couple of months. One thing that is not clear-- whether I am eligible for Dropbox or not.

Personal Situation --I came here on F1-Visa and it still has validity(wrt dates expires in Dec,2025). But My status got changed to H1B in Oct 2023, and the stamping is pending. if someone has been through drop box recently, please reply or if you know of any thread, please point me to it.

Title of the post: Should I visit home to renew my visa or should I finish up my education?

Body of the post: I came to the US on an F1 visa in 2017. Graduated with a bachelor's degree in psychology and went on to do a master... because a direct entry into licensed psychology is excruciatingly competitive. I started my master's in Fall 2021 after graduation - and my visa was due to expire in May 2022. Due to COVID-19 - the US had closed borders with my country in the Summer of 2021 and I did not want to risk coming home. In Summer 2022 and Summer 2023 I had to take in-person classes and only had a short 18-day interim break between the semesters. I graduated in July 2023 with my master's degree and started my PhD in a licensed psychology program (not going to specify the details for anonymity over Reddit). I graduated in late July 2023 with my MA and MS and started my PhD shortly on August 15th. I did not have to do a transfer form because I got into a different program in the same institution - so just a change of education level. I had to make a transfer request when I moved from my undergraduate institution to my master's institution. All this while being on a valid I-20 and maintaining my student status, DSO whom I am in close

Reddit Posts

contact recommended I do not go home unless I have a burning desire to visit my family (which I do - but I also value my education. My parents did tell me that they will come visit me instead since they have a valid 10-year visitor visa).

So - now enter 2024, summer just started, and I have classes until the July end, so I doubt I will be able to cut it close since I will only have a break of 20 days at tops from July 25th to mid-August. Do you recommend that I schedule an appointment for next summer (I finally get 3 months next summer because my classes are online)? Or should I just finish my next three years and call my parents a few times over break instead? I am at the finish line and I am worried that I could get denied for a renewal after looking at all these posts. I am from India.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: My recommendation is always the same: do not leave the country.

- New Comment: Per the current Department of State guidelines, if you are within 48 months after the expiration date on your last visa, renew now or next year and you will qualify for the interview-waiver program as long as you're applying for the same visa category. So essentially just drop off your passport at the Dropbox and they'll stamp it and send it back.

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/News/visas-news/important-update-on-waivers-of-the-interview-requirement-for-certain-nonimmigrant-visa-applicants.html>

If you wait until past that deadline, they'll ask you to interview again and they might raise questions about why are you renewing after so long. Nonetheless, you should not have any issues as long as you were not out-of-status at any given point during your studies. I had a similar scenario as yours - my F-1 (issued in 2016) had expired in 2021 but I visited India a year later in 2022 to get it renewed and had no issues. Make sure you have a travel signature on your I-20 and the program end date listed on it is at least 6 months into the future.

- New Comment: As someone that had the same problem, I did go back and renew. I understand there is a risk involved

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and it gets a bit stressful but at the embassy they didn't really ask any questions. The issue might be the amount days you have during the break as I did it over the winter break and got my passport back 2 days before I flew back to the US

Title of the post: People who got their F1 visa approved

Body of the post: Hello, to all those students that got their F1 Visa approved, how did you answer the question "What are your plans after finishing college?"

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: "Going back home?" simple as that, the whole point of the interview is to show proof that you're returning back to your home country so if they suspect immigration they will deny you instantly.
- New Comment: No, never give one word answers like "go home?" give details of what exactly u plan to do after you studies which mean what u plan to do when u return back to your home country, if u have a family business u could say u going home to take over the business etc or u plan to use your degree to get a job at ??..
- New Comment: "Go home?". It's always the correct answer.
- New Comment: India is a rapidly developing market and I am sure that my masters from this university would help me in landing a good role at one of the big companies.
- New Comment: Get an internship, come back home and do xxx. I wanted to build a school so I said that
- New Comment: When are the f1 visa slots opening in India for fall 24? How are you guys monitoring them?
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: I said I want to work for a research organization. Very simple.
- New Comment: So, I am in the similar situation, except that I am studying outside my home country, and I have a fully funded phd offer. I was thinking of saying, I plan to come back to the Turkey (third country) and extend my research in

Reddit Posts

my current lab, and work as a researcher at a company in my specialized area. I am not sure if this is convincing enough that i plan to come back.

- New Comment: They never asked me that, my questions were ?why x uni? ?how are you paying? ?what do your parents do? to this LAST one THE OFFICER CUT ME Off as soon as I was done with the first one. This happened in Santiago, Chile

- New Comment: 8 years ago, my response was: After my graduation, I will come back with the skills and knowledge that I have gained from my degree to apply to to our current system and help improve the government in information sector.

But, I guess the answer now seems too naive. People share their visa interview experiences on social media and other sites. It?s best to follow them up and come up with genuine answer.

- New Comment: Upon my graduation , I plan to co-found a tech startup specializing in system solutions for small and medium businesses in my country. We plan to start by helping my family business like my fathers company to build foundation and reputation. On the long term , I aim for our company to be the leader in the data utilization and system development.

Title of the post: License renewal on F1 Stem OPT

Body of the post: Both of my driver's license and F1 OPT EAD expiry date was in February. I live in SC and have applied for the Stem OPT extension in January (yet to get any sort of update).

Will I be able to renew my drivers license or should I wait till I get my Stem OPT EAD?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I?m on the same boat, except I?m in Illinois. They won?t renew it unless you?ve got the approval letter at least.

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But give it a shot at your DMV, worst case, they'll turn you down. If it doesn't work, an international license will suffice until the OPT comes in, if you've got one.

- New Comment: SC Here! I was on the same boat last year, STEM OPT took forever to come in. If I remember correctly, you can choose to present other documents to show lawful presence instead of EAD. I showed my I-20 with the STEM OPT recommendation note on it (and its dates) and that was enough. Sadly they just gave me a license for just a year and I have to renew it again this summer for what will be my 2nd year in STEM OPT.

- New Comment: The California DMV requires only an I-94, passport, and proof of residency with the same address as your current license for renewal.

- New Comment: I've heard some states will give you a few months with a pending STEM OPT application if you bring the receipt. I would probably try and check with your DMV as it's not every state that does this.

- New Comment: I got 5 years ?

- New Comment: I'm on the same boat here, I'm in VA

- New Comment: Can you renew online ?

- New Comment: I was in a similar situation and got a better solution. Instead of waiting for approval. Get an appointment at your local RMV. Walk in and explain your status.

The solution I got : Switch to standard ID (valid for 5 years) and when you get your EAD, make an appointment and request for a real ID.

If there is any confusion, just tell me that you need to be able to drive legally.

It worked for me. All the best.

- New Comment: What's the point of extending DL before immigration status wait until you have it.

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Title of the post: On OPT, can I volunteer at random things for fun?

Body of the post: For example, I'd like to go volunteer at the local cycling non profit where they fix up people's bikes. I don't mean to count it as employment - I just want to make friends and help the neighborhood. Is that still illegal unless it's 20 hours a week, work related etc?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If they are paying you, then no you can?t. Otherwise, you can go to random things unless you don?t have to put your socials or your bank information or anything that can get you in trouble.
- New Comment: I vibe with this. The states can be quite lonely.
- New Comment: Yes, if the volunteering is out of humanitarian nature.
- New Comment: they cannot pay you but they also can?t compensate you through other ways such as meal vouchers and free entry to a certain event

Title of the post: Internship offer for 8 months, but CPT is only 4 months. What do I do?

Body of the post: I got an internship offer for 8 months between May and December 2024.

However, next semester (May to September 2024) will be my final semester in which I will do my CPT.

My university has this weird rule where I can work outside campus on my CPT only if I'm enrolled in the Capstone project.

The offering company also requires that I stay in school till the end of the internship i.e. December 2024. However, my expectation graduate date is in end of August 2024.

Reddit Posts

1. I cannot take a Reduced Course Load to work in this role and return back to CPT for the remainder of my internship, as my university doesn't allow people to work outside university without being enrolled in the Capstone project.
2. I cannot have a start date and end date beyond the CPT semester start and end dates.

Is there any way I can still do the internship? Please advice!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes. By letting your employer know of your situation. You cannot legally work on CPT after you graduate (CPT applies co-curriculum). Also, I'm assuming your school allows you a CPT to complete capstone (i.e. it's part of the requirements for the degree) which is pretty standard for many universities.
- New Comment: Get CPT for 8 months. You can be on CPT for 364 days maximum to not lose your OPT.
- New Comment: I worked from May to Dec on CPT for my internship.

first I got approval from may to aug, next from sept to dec. Later I extended my i20 to accommodate remaining semesters

- New Comment: I am not quite sure about the capstone but i think there are ways to solve this. Correct me if I miss something.
1. Extend your graduation date. Something like select 12 credits at summer semester 2024 but still have other core courses unselected. Then you can do this in spring 2025.
 2. Use OPT for the rest of the internship.

You will need to pay more(tuition housing etc) if you have method 1. You need to work really hard to find full time position while doing the intern, and waste a little bit of your OPT if you go for method 2.

Reddit Posts

I will say method 2 is a good deal.

Title of the post: Need help regarding H1B

Body of the post: Hello, I am a student with F1 Stem OPT currently working at a Non-profit organization that sponsors H1B cap Exempt visa. I am having a hard time deciding whether to make an attempt for a H1B cap visa. Simply because Non-profits don't have the best packages. What's the duration of a H1B cap exempt when approved? (My current org will approve at the end of my F-1 OPT visa). I have already lost one chance at a H1B cap cycle and have 2 chances left. Would appreciate any advice. Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: r/h1b could help you better

- New Comment: This year's cap H1B period is already over, so you won't even be able to apply until February 2025. Take the cap exempt job, and you can continue looking for other offers in the meantime. Especially that chances of getting selected are very low, I wouldn't bet on the cap-subject H1B as your main plan to stay in the US.

- New Comment: Are you Indian/Chinese? Are they willing to sponsor a green card? Are they willing to sign up for the future lotteries for you?

- New Comment: Hello,

I would suggest go with the cap-exempt. You can go for premium processing for fast processing. If you have 2 chances for H1-B cap then you can take them, or else stick with the cap-exempt role.

I am looking for a non-profit organization for a cap-exempt h1b. I am done with my last H1-B chance, i did not get

Reddit Posts

picked. Can we please connect and discuss further about it if possible?

- New Comment: What is H1b cap exempt visa versus a regular H1b visa? Can anyone educate me. I am planning to take my masters in the US.

Title of the post: SEVIS record showing in terminated status

Body of the post: I received this strange email today. I graduated on December 2023 and started by OPT on February 1st, 2024. I started my job on February 12th, 2024 and as per the guidelines I reported by employment on the SEVP portal within 10 days of starting employed and I informed by DSO as well. My DSO sent me a new I-20 on March 15th showing my employer details.

So yesterday, I was trying to login to my SEVP portal again to update my address as I recently changed the apartment. However the portal was too slow and just would not let me login. I searched Reddit and found that every one is having issues with SEVP login due to a new update. So I thought I would wait until Monday to speak with my DSO to update the address in SEVIS. And I created a ticket on SEVP portal help regarding login issues as well. Everything seemed normal.

Until today, at 5 pm I received an email from SEVP response center in response to my ticket. The email says that upon review of my record, my SEVIS record is showing in terminated status and it says that I would no longer be participating in Post completion OPT. I am absolutely freaking out. I followed all the rules. Why would my SEVIS get terminated? It just doesn't make sense. My DSO just sent me a new I-20. How can they send me a new I-20 if my SEVIS is terminated.

I think I won't be able to sleep until Monday morning to call SEVP and DSO. But until then, does anyone have an idea about why would this happen? What should I do? And if this has happened to anyone else ?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Confirm that the I-20 you received is yours. Mistakes happen.

Call your DSO tomorrow.

If a mistake did happen, they should be able to fix it with SEVP/SEVIS.

- New Comment: Call SEVIS directly as well to let them know that your university is fixing the data or just get the confirmation if your university submitted the request . Be on the top of this because in the end this is your career .

- New Comment: I don't mean this in a rude way, but first level SEVP reps are just entry level jobs and they aren't always the most up to date on regs or have any extensive immigration experience.

I feel like your DSO wouldn't even be able to do an Authorized Early Withdrawal since your program date already ended.

They don't have enough man power to monitor if students report within 10 days. Most students don't even get terminated if they accrue more than 90 days of unemployment so don't freak out.

It could have been a DSO error because hey, they are human. Additionally some schools use programs like Sunapsis or Terra Dotta to make updating easier and there can be glitches with the software at times.

I'm sure your DSO will submit the Datafix asap. Once they do, it can take SEVP a few days to respond and sometimes they ask the Dso for additional evidence which can take time . It will all work out

- New Comment: I know this is trivial, but are you absolutely sure the email is legit and not a scam attempt? Check the address again. Forward it to your DSO and call them first thing in the morning. Your best bet will be your DSO as they're a lot more informed and it's always good to have everything documented in communication with your DSO. If anything

Reddit Posts

goes wrong, they'll be able to help you.

I hope everything gets sorted out

- New Comment: I don't get it. Even if they terminate it, won't they do it on 1st May?
- New Comment: Hey, thanks for the clarification. It does make sense. I called the SEVP and they checked my status in the system and the data fix is already processed and my status is now back to active.
- New Comment: What error you were getting while login?

Title of the post: Second F1 for Masters

Body of the post: Hey all! I don't think I have been selected for my H1B and am preparing to go back to school next year for my masters. I will need to travel back to my home country to have my F1 visa renewed and am nervous for the interview. I did my undergrad here and then got a job out of college and have now exhausted all 3 years of my STEM OPT so I will be going back to school. Does anyone that has been in a similar situation have any advice for the F1 renewal process? Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: They just transfer your sevis record to your new school
- New Comment: If you transfer your sevis to your new school and then go back home to renew visa once school starts it shouldn't be a problem. You are eligible for dropbox and probably won't even have to do an interview.
- New Comment: Have you already been accepted to a school?
- New Comment: Following
- New Comment: Many rejections in this case are because the student can't prove strong enough ties that they would return to their home country

Reddit Posts

You shouldn't mention wanting to get a masters degree for any type of work authorization or an eventual change of status or that you want to stay with your current employer on Cpt

Title of the post: I submitted my STEM validation report on time but it is still says ?PAST DUE?

Body of the post: I have weird issue I submitted my stem validation report on Feb to my DSO and I did check it I says submitted in the portal however after update of the portal now it says ?PAST DUE? and also I got email saying the same . I called the SEVIS directly and they said as per their it is indeed submitted and ask me to ignore it but obviously it was bothering why it is show past due and also emailed my DSO to check on his SEVIS account what he is seeing ..did anybody face this issue ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This is a common issue that SEVP says was due to the portal update they did last weekend. The I-983 is not required to be uploaded to the portal, but not having it uploading is triggering this alert.

If your DSO says it was reported, don't worry!

- New Comment: We've been showing students their event histories to confirm date and time the STEM reporting was done- if you got a confirmation from your DSO it was done you'll be ok

- New Comment: I hit the same issue. The DSO told me they already submitted on Feb But it shows past due on my side. I just found the issue when I try to update my address on USCIS portal.

- New Comment: This is one if two reasons we advise all of our students to report to the DSO all employment and address updates during OPT. The SEVP Portal is glitchy as hell. If our students want to use it, that's on them. It's not something the university can access or manage. If students want to use it, they can but all questions about the SEVP Portal go to SEVP. We don't get paid to be Homeland Security's tech support for their glitchy software.

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: Is this true? Employer saying they can't file h1b

Body of the post: Hello so I'm working as a contractor now for company A for company B. Company A is saying they can't file H1b for me this year since B is not paying me enough for the LCA wages amount. I just wanted to ask if this is true? I have less than a year of experience and make 60k I haven't heard of a minimum salary or anything for the H1B and I think my salary meets the requirement according to my experience? I just wanna make sure if im getting played or not

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: there is a minimum salary for h1b approval, but it'll be based on your position + industry + location. i think it's called "minimum prevailing wage" or something. try looking it up on google, i remember the us department of labor has the database for you to refer in your application that you're being paid enough for your specialty.

- New Comment: Your employer is correct. They can't file H1B if your pay is under the prevailing wage for that position + location.

You should really try to move to get a pay bump.

- New Comment: this is true in general. In one of my internships, my manager said the roles they had open for me didn't meet the minimum salary requirements for H1B sponsorship. However I don't know the exact amount, and I've heard from others that this amount varies depending on job type, company, etc.

- New Comment: Is 60k the minimum or prevailing wage? As in, say you work as a nurse and the prevailing wage for nurses is 50K, what would the minimum salary need to be?

- New Comment: This might be one of the few things where job title actually matters, for example, if you are a software engineer your wage requirement will be higher than the one for web developer.

Title of the post: What has been your Premium STEM OPT timeline?

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Body of the post: I recently got Premium processing for STEM OPT.

But it was 30 days away from an important flight and just wanna see how long it actually taken for everyone?

After standalone approval, how long did it take you to receive the card?

Thank you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It took me roughly 1 business week end to end. But I applied for premium during the OPT filing.

Timeline for 2024.

Feb 20th - Filed for OPT with Premium

Feb 23rd - OPT approved

March 1st - Card Produced

March 3rd - Card at hand.

- New Comment: Normal processing took me a month. I applied on Feb 8th and got it approved on March 11th. You should def get premium approval in a few days (happened to multiple friends who upgraded after me) and 2 weeks tops for getting it thru mail(tho most got it 7-8 days)

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Applied for premium on 15th Feb. Got approval on 3rd March and card on 9th March

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- New Comment: Applied on 11th Jan

Approved on 16th Jan

Card produced on 18th Jan

Card was mailed on 22nd Jan

Received the card on 24th Jan

- New Comment: I applied premium processing to my case to on March 15th. How long did it take your case to be approved?

- New Comment: Sorry to digress but how hard is it to file the I-907 form? Do we have to fill a lot of information or you just have to give the receipt number?

- New Comment: paid premium processing on Friday night and got the decision Tuesday morning

- New Comment: What is your status now? Did you hear back?

- New Comment: For STEM, Maximum within 3 weeks you will have card in your hand.

Title of the post: Travel on OPT

Body of the post: Hi guys, I have a bit of a situation. So I am planning to graduate in June. I have an offer but my start date is not yet decided. I can probably start in August/September. I wanted to travel back to my home country after graduation. But my immigration advisor told me that even if I have all the documents, including the EAD card, it is not advisable to leave US during OPT. Can I get some insights as I really want to go home before I start my job.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Copying my response from 5 days ago when this same question was posted here:

Your DSO is just advising conservatively.

It's important to remember that F-1 status is a non-immigrant status. As a non-immigrant, you are never guaranteed entry into the US. This means every time you choose to travel outside the US, there is always some risk you will not be allowed to re-enter.

Choosing to travel then becomes a matter of risk assessment and risk management. It is then not a yes or no answer your DSO can always give you. Your DSO is advising cautiously related to those risks.

The list of items you mention you plan to have is the same as what the US government provides you should have to request to re-enter the US once your classes have ended and your OPT has been approved. Have your EAD and your job offer available to show if asked for if requesting to re-enter the US once your study has ended and your OPT is approved.

There are times when risk to re-entry is lower and times when it is higher. In the middle of your degree returning to continue study with a valid I-20, travel signature, and valid F-1 visa is a lower level risk. Traveling when you need to get a new F-1 visa before coming back is something that increases risk. Traveling once you've finished study, your OPT is approved, but you have no job offer is much higher risk. Traveling with a pending OPT application after study has ended is a little higher risk.

Reddit and even a DSO can never guarantee you trouble free re-entry. People can get denied for some rather unexpected and random reasons. Be careful about what you have on your phone/electronics. There are stories of

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students getting denied entry because of information CBP found on their phones as part of secondary inspection. Instances of them finding evidence of unauthorized employment, drug use, or academic dishonesty are all things that have caused a small number of those requesting F-1 entry to be denied. These are all things that a DSO advising you is almost certainly not going to be aware of.

Be aware of the requirements (which it sounds as though you are). Decide what level of risk upon re-entry request you are comfortable with related to how much you really want to travel. Make your decisions.

- New Comment: I have a friend who went to his home country after graduation, and returned to the US with his OPT approval, Offer letter and a scanned PDF of his EAD Card (Physical EAD card was not present with him during immigration). As the other big reply says, your DSO is just advising you to be on the cautious side, since it is impossible for anyone to give you a straight yes/no answer.

- New Comment: I leave the US every week or two for weekends or longer, and I'm on OPT. The longest interaction I've had with border agents was "I'm working in the US - i-20 please? welcome back - thanks?"

I've never been asked for my EAD, offer letter, or anything but my I20.

- New Comment: I went to India for two months during my CPT, but I still had one credit left

- New Comment: Well according to my DSO you have to be physically present in your new job before leaving the US. I started my job on OPT in January and I am traveling home next week. You have to enter the US to RESUME work. As long as you have a valid F1 visa, EAD, I20 and an offer letter, and you've already started a position, you should be fine. I am also paranoid about all this so I got copies of my paystubs, and a letter from my supervisor mentioning that my leave is approved, I am regularly getting paid, and will be returning to US to RESUME work, and I have to be physically present in my workplace to carry out the tasks.

I know I am making a big deal about RESUMING work, but this is directly from the [ice.gov/sevis/travel](https://ice.dhs.gov/sevis/travel) website. You

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should also look it up. The exact question in the FAQs is ? May I re-enter the United States if I left while on OPT??

I even got a printout of this webpage to show them that I meet all the requirements if things go sideways.

Good luck!

- New Comment: Huh. I've left the US 4 times while on OPT, twice in the same year. Just be sure to carry your i20 and offer letter. They've never bothered with my EAD.

- New Comment: If you have EAD with Job offer (preferably fixed start date) then there would be ANY problem reentering US. I even went to my home country before my OPT got approved and my roommate got EAD card and forwarded to me.

- New Comment: Do I need an I-20 even after I've graduated?

- New Comment: I am visiting Seattle next week and planning to travel to Vancouver and other cities in British Columbia. Currently, I am awaiting my OPT approval and do not have a full-time job. I am working as a freelancer for my previous internship during the first year of my OPT. Given that it's my first year and the OPT allows for this type of field-related work, do you think I will encounter any issues re-entering the US from Canada?

- New Comment: I've left and reentered the country at least 6 times on OPT and it's never been a problem. I understand that we are never guaranteed entry into the country, but quite frankly, the risk is minimal.

- New Comment: I don't know that I have any advice, but I'll share my experience.

Finished my studies in May 2021, had a signed job offer already by then (pending opt), opt was approved in June 2021, I travelled to my home country in July 2021 (entire month), came back on Aug. 2nd 2021. I showed my EAD, I-20, signed job offer. Got a snarky comment from the CBP officer "wow you start your new job tomorrow and you're coming back today? What if something went wrong with immigration?" Which I thought was very unprofessional, but that's the worst that happened. Got sent to secondary inspection, but when they called my name they did not ask any additional

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question and just gave me my documents back and welcomed me in.

Title of the post: f1 but living in someone's house?

Body of the post: hello everyone! i plan to go to university in the US, and while i can afford the tuition, I'm not so sure about the living expenses (like, a house i mean). i was an exchange student years prior however, and the people that were my host family would be ready to have me stay at their house for the time of my studies. is this possible to achieve? would i still have to provide additional money?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I have gone through this. so I can share my experience.

The person hosting you will provide a letter saying that they will provide you with housing in a room for 365 days and this room's rent is this amount per year. And they will provide the room for free.

And they will provide a bank statement.

And they will fill a sponsor form covering the same amount. Your school will help you with these forms.

And these forms will be given to your school and they will put these funds in your i20 and this amount is going to be deducted from the total amount required to be covered

- New Comment: Most of the time, you will find the estimated living expenses on the school website under admission fees tab or the cost of living on the international student page.

You would most likely have to show the same amount or higher in your bank statement.

- New Comment: My experience is that it does not matter. My college in FL could care less, regardless of whether it's a tent, trailer, RV, or whatever else as long as I put a local address on my student profile. But I understand that this might depend on what state you'll be in/school policy etc.

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Title of the post: OPT ending soon? need help making the smartest decision

Body of the post: Hello! I have an MPH and currently working for a research institution on my OPT. OPT is expiring Feb 2024 and employer was willing to sponsor H1B but the position I'm currently at is not eligible for sponsorship (it's mostly PHD required).

Therefore I'm exploring options that I have:

A) enroll in a day 1 CPT school that has a start day of 3/18/24 therefore I'll be able to keep my current position. I will only need to take a leave of absence for 5 weeks which my employer said it's fine.

B) enroll in a second masters or PHD for Fall 2024 (I've already got in to one) and transfer my SEVIS status during my grace period. The only con to this is I'll have a 5 month gap.

Any advice or guidance would be very appreciated.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: B. Is the better option.

Day 1 CPT schools are on the radar of the government.

- New Comment: If a PhD aligns with your work, that is likely the best idea. Get paid to do what you already know

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: If your position is a research position, maybe try for J1 visa?

- New Comment: Are you sure you can go back on OPT with second masters?

- New Comment: What's day 1 CPT ?

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Title of the post: F-1 Visa renewal on OPT, risky?

Body of the post: Hi,

I am an international student from India. I graduated in Aug'23 and am on OPT and have a STEM degree so will get STEM extension in future. My F-1 visa expired in July'23. (I did 2 degrees which exhausted F-1) I need to travel back to India but I am concerned about risks involved in visa renewal.

Can it be declined? Any suggestions?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >Can it be declined?

A visa can always be declined.

It is no more or less risky than a normal visa application. What changes is the problems if the visa is denied. Which would be the potential loss of your job if you could not return timely.

- New Comment: I had the same situation and it was a breeze. Go ahead and renew. Message me if you want more details

- New Comment: Honestly it's as 'risky' as when you first applied. Just have your documents in check and the process is pretty much the same. Did it as well and I had no issue. Super quick, got it the next day

- New Comment: why are you renewing your visa if you're on OPT. Genuine question.

- New Comment: Hi everyone,

Need advice: I am an international student from France with a F1 visa expiring in August 2024. I am also an attorney in France. I have already completed a degree, an OPT, and am currently pursuing a Master's degree in Sacred Theology in LA, which I expect to finish by 2026 (3 years). I would like to renew my visa, but I am concerned about the possibility

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of denial, especially since I am not pursuing a STEM degree. Is there any risk associated with this?

Thank you very much!

- New Comment: Did you have a Dropbox appointment?

- New Comment: You'll be fine. I have loads of friends who have done this. Afaik you don't even need to go for an interview, just drop your passport

- New Comment: Don't worry about a thing and don't let anyone scare you. It's safe to renew your visa on stem opt. I just got mine done from Mumbai, got it delivered to me in 5 business days. Just make sure you have the right documents (i20, valid passport, appointment letter, valid photographs). You're chilling

Title of the post: STEM OPT Extension Denied - SEVIS record does not match the conferred degree

Body of the post: Hello all, new to here, just got the notice of denial today and am currently in a panic...

****Timeline:** Year-1 OPT started in July 2022; Submitted STEM OPT in June 2023; Added Premium Processing in early November; RFE in late November; Responded to RFE within a week; Notice of Denial today.**

Reason for RFE:

The evidence you have provided is not sufficient to establish that you have graduated with a STEM degree from XXX University. The most recent I-20 and your SEVIS record list your CIP code as 45.0603 - Econometrics and Quantitative Economics. ****However, a review of the documentary evidence you submitted indicates that you completed Master of Arts in International Economics and Finance, which is not listed on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List.****

The evidence you have submitted does not show how your degree relates to the CIP code listed on your I-20 and in SEVIS.

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My response (letter provided by the school official):

Please accept this correspondence as confirmation that XXX successfully completed all requirements for the Master of Arts in International Economics and Finance at XXX. XXX matriculated in July, 2021, and was officially conferred the Master of Arts in International Economics and Finance on June 17, 2022.

****The Master of Arts in International Economics and Finance is a STEM-designated program with the CIP code of 45.0603 - Econometrics and Quantitative Economics.****

The Notice of Denial that came in today apparently is not satisfied with the school's response:

... the degree that is the basis for the extension must be a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree that is assigned a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code that appears on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List.

****The acceptable STEM CIP code must be assigned to the student's primary or secondary major.**** Your diploma/transcript shows you were granted a Master of Arts in International Economics and Finance. Your SEVIS record shows a CIP code of 45.0603 - Econometrics and Quantitative Economics ****which does not match the conferred degree.**** As your SEVIS record does not reflect an approved STEM degree on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List, you are ineligible for employment authorization.

I really need some help here to understand the situation as my school officials are as clueless as I am:

1. ****Do I have a chance for a Motion To Reopen?**** If so, what documents should I be providing (asking the school to provide)?
2. Since my year-1 OPT expired back in July, ****am I able to legally stay in the US while they process my MTR?**** While the Notice of Denial does not explicitly say I need to leave within XX days, I searched online and there seems to be a mixture of interpretations on when the grace period (60 days) start counting.
3. I understand that from the day I receive this notice, I won't be able to work anymore. How should I be talking to my employer? Asking for Leave of Absence (LOA)? I still have 2-3 weeks left of PTO. ****May I use PTOs during this period**

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(while I file for MTR)?**

Thank you in advance for your time and help.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I think this is the school's error. It absolutely sucks because there's nothing you can do. It reads to me as a DSO that your school never added your program to their program list on the I-17. Schools are only supposed to issue I20s for approved programs, but really, they can put whatever cip code/major they want when they issue the I20. It appears that your program was never correctly added to the school's I-17.

- New Comment: Does the degree happen to be the MIEF at SAIS? asking for a friend...

- New Comment: Number 2: you are legally allowed to stay while waiting for MTR but remember that if your appeal is denied you will start the unlawful presence immediately. You plan for the worst case scenario and get everything in order now.

Title of the post: No update on the status after 15 days

Body of the post: Hi all,

I had a dropbox appointment for my F1 visa renewal at Ahmedabad for Chennai consulate on November 21st. Due to thanksgiving holiday, my case was not opened until the 25th of November and it's 6th of December today and there are still no updates. Is it normal? How long should I expect to take before seeing any further updates for the renewal?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Mine took like 20 days. Was shit scared that it might get refused, but it did not. The status got changed to Issued after almost 3 weeks. Hang in there. I understand it's difficult but trust me do not worry!

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- New Comment: I am in the same boat as you. They changed my status to application received on the same date as you.

Chennai consulate is closed today due to the cyclone. I am hoping they open tomorrow and work on my application.

- New Comment: I had the same issue a few weeks ago - it took about 10 business (no holidays, no weekends) days for it to turn to ?Approved? and when I emailed the consulate told me average processing time is 10-15 business days.

- New Comment: Is anyone here with refused status for their F1 renewal? Mine got refused on Nov 30, but haven?t received back the passport yet since then. (Hyd consulate)

- New Comment: I am stuck in the same situation!

- New Comment: dull drunk sheet summer tap yoke agonizing wasteful roll meeting

This post was mass deleted and anonymized with [Redact](<https://redact.dev>)

- New Comment: Should have gone to Delhi instead

- New Comment: I had mine at Bangalore for the Chennai embassy on Nov 16 - the status has not changed yet and I?m booked to fly out this Sunday to go back to work?... I don?t know what to do; any advice?

- New Comment: I am also in the same situation.

Title of the post: Re entry to US, sent to secondary.

Body of the post: Went to home country for two weeks. Currently on stem opt. POE was in Abu Dhabi. After giving the documents, and letting the officer know I was a student he looked over the documents and sent me to secondary processing. There the next officer just asked a single question ?where do you work? and after answering he let me go.

What could be the reason for secondary processing? Were they checking luggage or something?

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Also I'll be traveling to Mexico for a week long vacation in spring, will I have to worry about this happening again?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I don't think you should be worrying at all about getting asked a single question, you are really overthinking this. Thousands of people a day get stopped, you just happened to be one of them

- New Comment: Its common.

- New Comment: Had same exact experience a few months ago. Irish citizen entering via Dublin preclearance on STEM OPT. Got sent to secondary where I was asked what I did for work, then sent on my way. Criteria for eligible STEM OPT occupations are stricter than for regular OPT and I suspect they apply more scrutiny as a result.

- New Comment: I read on another sub where someone explained that the CBP computers don't have access to OPT sevis information so they have to send you in secondary to verify your information. Seems to only happen at airports though.

- New Comment: This happened to me 3 times so far and they were all after I changed to OPT status. In the secondary room, they just take my documents, make me wait for some time while they check everything and let me go

It's scary the first time but I don't think there's anything to worry about if all your stuff's legit

- New Comment: My friend got strip searched once. Nothing happened after that, they just let him go each time he goes thru immigration. Just relax

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: r/cbp

- New Comment: Same thing happened to me. Don't worry.

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- New Comment: Hello. I have a similar doubt with traveling to Mexico on F1 OPT. Do I have to worry about entry to Mexico with a US visa and reentry into US on F1 OPT?

Title of the post: Am I safe to leave the US?

Body of the post: I'm on an f-1 opt visa rn and I haven't received my EAD card but I have a pending application. Would I be safe to travel internationally?

Thank you in advance!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: As others have stated, it is possible but there's a risk involved for sure. You need to make the decision.
- New Comment: Not certain. But some people showed their receipt of stem opt application to cbp when they went back and luckily, that worked for them.
- New Comment: Leave? Of course. You are not a prisoner.

Return? Not until this is approved.

- New Comment: OPT and STEM OPT applications have a requirement that the candidate must be physically in the US. If you leave while the application is pending, your application will become invalid and they will deny your STEM OPT. So I would suggest not leaving until you have your EAD. It would have been fine to leave if you hadn't applied for STEM extension as then you could have just traveled on your current OPT EAD. But since you applied, I'd say No bueno. Not legal advice, just a suggestion based on the knowledge I have.
- New Comment: So you have EAD in CPT? Or OPT STEM is the first EAD that you have not received yet?
- New Comment: Generally not recommended. Highly risky.

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- New Comment: Don?t leave until you get your EAD card.
- New Comment: Leaving while pending on stem opt is not as risky as post completion. I advise my students to take all original receipts, previous ead, updated i20 with travel endorsement. It's a good idea to take a letter from your employer stating your job duties and that they expect you back on x date, your i983 and anything else you can take. Many of my students have reentered the US while pending c3c. Of course, there are always risks anytime you reenter the US. Good luck
- New Comment: nope !
- New Comment: Thank you all for the info, really appreciate them!
- New Comment: Uhh do you have a valid F1 visa stamp? If your plan is to re-enter you won?t be able to unless you do, regardless of EAD
- New Comment: had a friend in your position, he left and when he returned cbp said he had enough education and didn't need any more studies and denied him entry.
- New Comment: Personally, I wouldn't leave America. For several reasons.....including but not limited to:
 1. Diseases our bodies don't know how to fight. Even parasites in the food, water, environment, etc.....
 2. Laws that might unknowingly get broken and get one arrested with no recourse from the US.
 3. Emergency medical care protocols, procedures, etc...
 4. Not knowing social norms.
 5. Food safety laws, sanitary standards & policies, etc....

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6. Crimes against Americans.

I like being where I belong and know the laws of the land and language and traditions. Along with not worrying about picking up some bug, toxin, parasite, or other environmental funk.

Sure, call me paranoid or a worry wart. I've heard and seen too many seriously scary things that people experienced from being in a foreign country, and I'm not willing to take those chances. Then again, that's just me.

If you end up going to far off lands, have fun, but please be super cautious. Don't be complacent. I hope everything works out great and as you planned.

- New Comment: I have just done that and it worked. They will send you to the immigration office, but eventually will let you enter. I recommend the following:

- get an endorsement letter from your DSO stating that you are maintaining your status, have applied on time but is postponed due to uscis, and they endorse your return.

- get a business return flight! This may sound weird but this will make you the first person in line to stamp your passport. This eliminates any human factor regarding officers being already exhausted/annoyed and take bad decisions. If not possible, just try to be early as possible (get out of the plane faster and move to immigration faster).

- have your expired ead card, uscis application pending status, visa, and I20. This isn't news, just a reminder.

Title of the post: Came from Vacations while STEM OPT, and they almost didn't let me in to the US

Body of the post: Hi All,

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Just like you read, I was out for vacations (DXB) while STEM OPT, and they almost didn't let me in to the US (NYC). When I arrived to the US, the officer at the counter only ask for my passport, and I give him my I-20 too (New I-20 and with travel signature of course), then he told me: I can't admit you because on the system you are no longer active as student, your sevis number is not active.

Then he told me to follow another officer and they put me in the detention room. They called me, ask for my password and start asking questions like: where did you study, when will you graduate, confirm your address, etc to finally put a stamp on my passport and said you are all set now.

I asked if there is any problem with me and the agent told me that my sevis is not active and if I go out again, they will have to do the admission manually again, but that there is no problem.

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So, my question is: I'm having another trip out to visit my family in my country, how can I re-activate my sevis number? what are your recommendations on my case?

​

Thanks in advance guys!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Washington dc is good

- New Comment: Something similar happened to me a couple years ago. I had everything I needed to enter (passport,

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visa, i20, etc). Was taken to the detention room. Was there for about 5 hours. They told me my SEVIS record was inactive but I was literally coming back from summer vacation and had already enrolled in my classes. After the first 2 hours, I showed them my class schedule, my tuition payments, bank statements - everything I/they could think of. They still kept me for 2 more hours. I called my university the next day because all this happened after office hours. They said everything was good on their end. ????

I've travelled back and forth about 5 times since and haven't had any issues. It was probably just that one officer that looked at me and thought 'let me mess with this one today :p'

- New Comment: Happened to me in NY too, two times! First time was a huge scare, second I was calmer and didn't sweat as much but definitely annoying

- New Comment: Speak with your school. See if your SEVIS is actually terminated/completed.

If it is, fix that if you can.

Also, don't travel through NYC if possible. Pick a different location.

- New Comment: how was dubai bro

- New Comment: The whole us immigration system is broken.

- New Comment: Did they ask you to show employment offer letter when you arrived ? Do you know anyone who wasn't let in because of something similar to you?

- New Comment: What password did they ask you for??

- New Comment: I am on OPT as well, and I had a similar experience in July when I was taken into secondary questioning without any explanation. After showing my employment document and OPT card there, I was let in.

In November I am traveling to Canada for an academic conference and I am a bit nervous that they will take me to the secondary questioning again.

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- New Comment: I was in the same situation twice in a row now, the latest one being yesterday. I asked what's going on and if there's anything wrong with my record. They told me there are some issues with STEM OPT, and this will continue to happen every time I enter until I change my classification. Kinda annoying.

Title of the post: Am I screwed???

Body of the post: This is going to be long, but please someone help me. I'm panicking so much right now.

I'm a f1 undergrad student (going to start 2nd year). I applied for a job listed as on campus student position offered by my university a while ago. I didn't think too much about it when I applied, because 1. my school's international students center's website said that on campus employment does not require authorization for f1 students and 2. the job was posted by the university and listed as on campus, part time, student position. Maybe I should've been more cautious, but I feel like it's reasonable to believe a job posted by the university that's listed as on campus, is actually on campus, which is why I didn't double-check with my schools international center before applying or accepting the offer.

During the interview and application process, i was asked whether I'm eligible to work in the US, and I said yes as I was under the impression that it's an on campus job and my schools international center said f1 students can do on campus jobs without prior authorization.

I got accepted for the position and already signed the offer letter. But employment/the offer is contingent upon completion of onboarding and i-9 form, which I havent done either yet. So, i havent actually done any work, just accepted the offer letter, and probably not even officially employed as I haven't satisfied the full requirements yet (onboarding and i9 form).

Heres the thing. After accepting the offer letter, I wanted to know more about the department ill be working for. But as I research deeper about the university department I got hired in, I'm now not sure if it actually counts as on campus

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employment as defined by immigration services. For example, the department is not actually located on campus, but rather in the university village outside of the main campus. And its service (as the campus human resource department) seems more directed to faculty and staff rather than students.

And now I'm panicking a lot because I'm worried I might've accidentally engaged in unauthorized employment.

So did I violate my f1 status? does this count as unauthorized employment? Me trying to sort out this situation is giving me more anxiety. I'm waiting for the international student center to get back to my email, and I scheduled an appointment with the DSO. But I'm just so scared that I totally screwed up and would lose my f1 status because of this.

Please help, any insight will be great.

Edit/update: thank you to all the kind people who replied and offered advice and reassurance. it truly means a lot to me and my panicking nerves. I was lucky and got to schedule an appointment with my dso today, and they confirmed that because the job is paid by the school, it counts as on campus employment. I'm just still waiting for the employer to get back to me whether they're willing to take in international students. Again, thank you to everyone who commented, I really appreciate it.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: When it says on-campus employment, it doesn't need to be on a main campus. Some universities have 3+ campuses that require driving/taking a bus, and employment on any of those campuses is considered on-campus employment.

If you didn't start working, you didn't break any laws. Simply interviewing is not illegal. You can ask your DSO to give you guidance on I-9 in case you are actually eligible for the position you applied for. Some on-campus employment is tied to

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government/government contractors (they are often defense companies), or they want only students eligible for Federal Work Study.

It is the best to reach out to your employer to ask if international students are eligible and if the position counts as on campus employment. Explain that you were under the assumption that this was a case. Another thing is that since you are 2nd year student, you are eligible for CPT.

- New Comment: Technically work -> working hours. Onboarding, accepting job, etc are just formalities. They aren't employment under any conditions. Companies want to ensure you are eligible to work as much as you do as it is liability for them too..don't worry unless you have worked any actual hours

- New Comment: Dont worry!

As long as you did-not accrue any work hours and got paid, you are safe.

Simply resign.

Did you use this employment offer and apply for ssn?

If yes, dont give your ssn to your employer.

- New Comment: Before u work u need your social security card so even if you wanted to work the employer won't be able to let u work without that.

- New Comment: Are you based in Buffalo?

- New Comment: Make an appointment with your International Student Services Office and see someone to clear this up. You don't have a SSN which I'm pretty certain about so dw, you're not officially employed, you cannot be.

- New Comment: You have nothing to worry about from what you have said. Go talk to your international student advisor face to face just to be safe.

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- New Comment: Should be fine but talk to international office to be sure. I have known students who worked for the university cafeteria, which is subcontracted to non-university institutions. But better safe than sorry.
- New Comment: if it's on campus you're fine i think you're reading too much into this and also contact your ISO to be safe. but generally once it's on campus you're fine. The school has your records.
- New Comment: don't worry it is considered as an on-campus job as long as it is a part of the university. I was in your situation 3 years ago.
- New Comment: Look, i was first offered the position at the campus. Then i spoke with my DSO, and she guided me with the process of getting my SSN. You didn't do anything bad. Speak with her and ask her about the process of obtaining your SSN.
- New Comment: Us F1 students can be so paranoid at times! You did nothing wrong! ? If the job is at your university, regardless of campus, it is an on-campus job (i.e., you are allowed to take it). So you are eligible to work! Even if it wasn't, you haven't broken any laws because you haven't started working yet and don't even have an SSN. If you don't do onboarding and complete the I-9 though, there's no way to get you an SSN, so make sure to complete those as soon as possible and check with your school (DSO directly or website) how to apply for the SSN, cause you can't work and get paid until you have it, and getting it can take some time in some states. Congrats on getting a job!

Title of the post: F1 visa approved in Vietnam (I am from India), interview experience

Body of the post: Hey all! This is to put it out there that I got my F1 visa in the second half of July, 2023, after my visa denial in India in the year 2022.

It was quite hard to get visa slots for previously refused in the months of June/July in India, so I was willing to risk it and go to Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh) and give it a shot.

My visa interview experience:

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Officer: Hi there!

Me: Good afternoon officer! Here are my documents.

Officer: Why US?

Me: I am going to pursue Ph.D. in Computer Science at UT Dallas.

Officer: Do you already have a Masters?

Me: Yes officer, I have a Masters in Computer Science from xxx in Delhi.

Officer: Oh Delhi! (Typing) So why UT Dallas?

Me: Well, I would like to research in the fields of misinformation and hate speech. There are two great professors, Prof. X and Prof. Y who are doing interesting projects in these fields.

Officer: Y? Is that her first name?

Me: Yes officer, I didn't know how to pronounce her last name which is Z, and I didn't want to mispronounce it.

Officer: Can you tell me about your Masters Thesis?

Me: So I worked on XX project which is on various NLP tasks on tweets. It could be sentiment, humor, parts of speech

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etc. So given a tweet, my algorithm could classify the tweets into a set number of categories that can further be used to study the tweets better and take proactive actions on inappropriate tweets.

Officer: Oh, that's great, quite interesting! (Typing) So your program is fully funded?

Me: Yes officer. It is fully funded by the university as I have got a graduate teaching assistantship offer from UT Dallas.

Officer: (Typing for 45-60 seconds, I thought that's it) So I see you have applied for a Master's course previously, why did you change your course? (I applied MS CS in 2022 and got refused)

Me: Well, I wanted to research further in the field of Computer Science. After I was refused last year, I reconsidered my options, and since I already had a Masters, a PhD program objective adds more value to my research interests.

Officer: Makes sense. (Typing) Alright, your visa is approved!

(Returned all documents including passport)

Me: Don't you need the passport?

Officer: Oh yeah! (Took the passport from me)

Me: Thank you, officer!

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There was no hostility towards me for having come to Vietnam to apply for a visa. It felt like a regular interview that I would have given in the Indian US Consulate. In fact there were four other Indians I could spot during my slot! (With the passports they were holding)

Tips and steps for visa application and getting your passport back:

\- There is no online payment for MRV fee. You need someone physically go to a Vietnam post office to make the payment on your visa application number (They just need one page printout of application number and your passport Bio page printout).

\- You just need your passport, DS160, and i20 to attend the interview. The rest are just supporting documents that you intend to carry.

\- Vietnam does not discriminate appointment slots for residents and non-residents. (Singapore and Thailand US Consulates do) So you get earlier dates

\- I attended my interview in Ho Chi Minh and everything was smooth. I believe Hanoi should only be better since it is a bigger one.

\- You can opt for premium delivery of passport to your hotel address which should be quick (I hope as claimed on their website). I opted for pick up and it took two more days after the US consulate dispatched my passport. Also if you are opting for pick-up, you will get an email with the airway bill number. Once you get that email, just give a shot at the passport pick-up center (of that post office) since their website does not update the current status of the parcel correctly. I luckily got mine when I went there at 4 pm that evening, so I could leave the same night.

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\- Rest you can check out places in Ho Chi Minh when you are around there, you have to just wait it out till you get your passport. You can't leave the country without your passport :P

\- Grab is a good app for taxi and food delivery. Currency exchange rates are good enough in airport so you can change everything needed there.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hey I refused today in india consulate Chennai can I apply next day for vaitnam? What's the process please tell me bro

- New Comment: Hii, I am having great difficulty in payment for interview. Could you please please guide me. I am also planning to give my interview in vietnam because the waiting time is short and the conference is in 4 months.

In the payment options, it's only showing cash payment. I'm unable to pay via credit card. How did you pay??

Please reply, it would be of great great help. Thanks!

- New Comment: How long is the interview waiting time?

- New Comment: Hey I refused today in india consulate Hyderabad can I apply next day for vaitnam? What?s the process please tell me bro

- New Comment: Vietnam visa approval chance ?

- New Comment: Hi, could I please know how much the wait time was for getting the visa interview slot after paying the

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MRV fee?

- New Comment: Hi, thanks for the detailed and useful post.

1) How were you able to log in to the portal and schedule an appointment in Vietnam? I am unable to login and US Travel Docs account tells me that I need to migrate my India US Travel Docs account using a new email to be able to create and access slots in VN.

2) Lastly, how long did it take between your interview and the consulate to dispatch your passport?

Title of the post: Is a single admit a red flag for F1 visa?

Body of the post: I applied to 12 universities for Fall 2023 and got in to 1 of them.

I absolutely dread the question "How many universities did you apply to and how many admits do you have?" . How do I prepare for this?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It literally doesn't matter. It is more of a warm up question for "Why choose this uni over the others?". That's the main one you should be prepared for.

- New Comment: I applied with just one application and one admit. I did not have an issue getting the F1 visa. Shouldn't be a problem as long as you can say why you applied for that particular university.

- New Comment: I had one application and one acceptance and they didn't ask me that question even.

- New Comment: Not at all! They just start off with why the particular university and they do not have an idea of how many you applied to, they just have info on the no of i20's you've obtained. So maybe just mention 4-5 to be on the safer side! Good luck ??

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- New Comment: I wouldn't worry about it. I applied to one university, and I was admitted. I didn't have time to submit applications to several universities. They didn't ask me that question during the visa interview. So maybe it depends on context, but in general terms, it matters less.

- New Comment: Nothing will happen.

But let's just say it comes to that. You know you could just lie right. Say you applied for 3-4 universities and gotten admits in 2 and the others are still in decision pending. The officer won't know this because he only knows if the Sevis ID is generated for i20 of some university. So it literally doesn't matter.

- New Comment: I just started naming random university names lol. Its not a big deal

- New Comment: The fact that you are applying for f1 visa after seeing the work permit fraud going on implies

1. You are planning to phd
2. You are desperate to get into us and then disappear.
3. You have scholarship.

Nobody in their sane mind will spend 50k on ms degree from us. The only reason it was appealing was due to higher probability of getting selected for work visa from us universities. Now you get squat.

People are collecting degrees like newspaper here. It's meaningless.

Consider this before you visit the consulate. Not worth it.

I am advising every incoming student to not get into this visa crap nightmare. There are much better alternatives.

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On the side note.....the audacity of the us consulate to reject tourist/f1 visa for silly reasons is Infuriating. Here in California people drop in across the border with impunity and nobody gives a damn.

It's far far far far easier/rewarding to be an illegal immigrant in US then a legal immigrant.

- New Comment: What I have been asked before was ?why chose the US?? ?Why this uni??. Never been asked how many applications.

- New Comment: That's not a typical question.

Title of the post: Can I change my university details after paying the visa fees to schedule VISA inter

Body of the post: Incoming student from India

(Visa fees

NOT SEVIS fees)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yeah you can just fill up another ds 160 form and update it in cgi. furthermore you can edit your cgi info at the time of your biometric at embassy.

Title of the post: CPT Internships - "will you now or in the future..."

Body of the post: For internships, are you replying yes to "will you now or in the future require sponsorship?"

I understand "the future" means that the answer should be yes, but since it's for an internship (CPT) and I have OPT and STEM OPT after graduation it seems frustrating to say yes and maybe get immediately disqualified by the system.

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I want to hear your thoughts. Thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I always answered no. I know I will only be able to do internship and if I get STEM OPT, I will be able to work for 3 years. If you are planning to apply for H1B, and if the current company does not do sponsorship, say no and get your foot in the door. Once you do, look for companies that do sponsor while also gaining relevant experience.
- New Comment: I have always said no. Now I'm at a job that is sponsoring my GC and they never questioned it. As long as you are able to work for at least 6-8 months past your start date with valid EAD, it won't be an issue. I always say ?I have valid work authorization? or ?I will have work authorization by x date so I can start after then?. No one has ever questioned it because everyone knows about the bureaucracy of government and immigration departments.
- New Comment: I will tell you this. I graduated with 2 internships under my belt and if I had answered yes to this question. I never would've had any these opportunities. For internships especially, the system just weeds out your application as soon as you answer yes to this question.
- New Comment: Technically, you have to answer Yes. However from my experience, answering No won't hurt you at all because for some companies, they ask but they don't really care so why we should limit ourselves? For the companies that do care, worst case they will rescind the offer when they find out (provided you passed their interviews) which will waste everybody's time. That's the only downside of doing that.
- New Comment: If you answer yes, most places just deny the application.
- New Comment: If you answer yes you'll get auto rejected in 99.99% of cases .
- New Comment: I always answered yes which lost me some opportunities but made the ones that came through more

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worth it

- New Comment: I had an offer rescinded from Neiman Marcus, they pretty much ghosted me, when I told them I needed to be put in the h1 lottery, despite having said yes in the application as well

Title of the post: About health insurance??

Body of the post: Hi everyone!

I'm an F1 student and I have epilepsy, I would like some health insurance. My epilepsy isn't really serious, but I would like to be able to get the medicine here instead of having my parents send it to me with my aunt because it's late sometimes and then I have a seizure. Last time someone called an ambulance and I woke up and asked to leave immediately. They wanted to do blood tests but I refused and kept asking to leave. They sent my parents a bill of 3600\$ which is crazy. Then I had to go to an urgent care and pay another 250 to see a doctor(which may or not prescribe me the medicine) so I just want to be safe. I'm 24 by the end of the month. What prices am I looking at per month? What is good? I called some companies and they said they don't do it for F1 students. The one that did said it was 500\$ / month- is this an average rate?

Sorry for rambling i'm tired :)

Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Honestly, every school has a health insurance partner for students. If you have been trying to avoid it until now, despite knowing that you have a serious Health problem, it sounds scary. Take care , stay safe.

- New Comment: [ISO Health Insurance](<https://www.isoa.org/>)

- New Comment: Get it through your school

- New Comment: You should get health insurance ASAP. You're lucky that the hospital only billed you \$3600. One

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ambulance ride can cost that much and one ER visit can easily exceed \$10,000. I'm speaking from experience and not trying to scare you. Regarding where to get health insurance, check out [\[https://www.healthcare.gov/\]](https://www.healthcare.gov/)(<https://www.healthcare.gov/>)

Also a word of caution, make sure you understand copay, co-insurance, out-of-pocket maximum, and deductible while shopping for insurance plans. Don't just focus on the monthly minimum. Say you were supposed to pay 20% and insurance pays 80%, which sounds very reasonable. However, that can add up very quickly (20% of \$10,000 is already \$2,000). A serious medical event that requires a couple days of hospital stay can easily cost you \$50-100k. Imagine you're responsible for 20% of that.

Edit: To provide context, I once had a 4 day hospital stay and the total cost was over \$200k. Even after insurance, I got a bill of over \$30k and it took me years to resolve everything. No, I didn't pay \$30k but it was a nightmare to deal with.

- New Comment: are you able to take some of your medication with you to the us?

- New Comment: Yes I think student health insurance is the best one. I have been using that a lot for my health condition. My insurance cost around 2500 for a year.

Title of the post: My F1 visa application is in administrative processing under 221g (TAL). I will be v

Body of the post: My phd work is not related to rocket propulsion. I got 221g for Computational Fluid Dynamics.

/u/Codetornado I would like to know your opinion on this.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It will just put a delay in your visa acceptance, but i have not seen anyone getting rejected for the same.

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- New Comment: These are the most sensitive areas. But since they gave you AP instead of rejecting right away, I guess it's fine. But likely you'll get visa of only 1 year
- New Comment: It'll likely take a few weeks to get your visa but you're most likely fine.
- New Comment: Hey, my intended research is very similar to what you've mentioned. I've been in AP for more than 3 weeks now! How long has it been for you?
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Any updates on the people who were waiting for their visas ? Would be really helpful! Thanks
- New Comment: Can someone please help me!

My mom got 221g for her b1/b2 visa because she's a chemistry scientist, they sent an email asking for her c.v and previous work plans and proposals but she has over 50 papers published so should I send the proposals for all these papers or what ?!

She's just coming to visit me!

Title of the post: SEVIS Record Terminated. Solutions?

Body of the post: Hi everyone! So my brother dropped a course last semester (Fall 2021) dropping him below full time status.

He just got an email saying that his SEVIS record has been terminated and that he has to leave the US with no grace period.

I wanted to ask you what are his options out of this situation? Can he get a new I-20 and re-enter the US without having to reapply for his F-1 visa? (His VISA is still valid)

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Any and all comments/suggestions are greatly appreciated!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: There are two options when status requirements are violated by the student and the SEVIS record is terminated to reflect that F-1 status violation.

1. Apply to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for a reinstatement of status. That is by submitting an I-539 application to USCIS along with a new reinstatement I-20, a statement from the student describing how the status violation was beyond the student's control, a fee (currently totaling \$455), and copies of various immigration documents. And then waiting many, many months for a response. During which the student is essentially stuck in the U.S. waiting for a decision without having any F-1 status benefits other than being able to study. No on-campus work. No off-campus work. No internships. No ability to transfer the SEVIS record to a new U.S. school. In the statement the student needs to convince the U.S. government why the status violation was not within the student's control. In this case, what caused it to be beyond your brother's ability to be enrolled full-time.

The U.S. government guidance says that for this option the application has to be received no more than 5 months after the violation took place.

This has to have support of the school because they have to create the reinstatement I-20. If they don't believe the student's situation is one where the student could honestly declare that there was nothing the student could have done to meet the F-1 status requirements, they might not support the reinstatement.

2. Get a new SEVIS record and new initial attendance I-20. Pay again the SEVIS fee to the U.S. government. Have departed the United States. Use the new SEVIS record and new I-20 to request to enter the U.S. again for new F-1 status. Generally, as long as the F-1 visa hasn't expired, this does not require applying for a new F-1 visa. This process

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resets the student's F-1 status clock in the U.S., so the student won't be eligible for any CPT or OPT until after having returned to the U.S. on the new SEVIS record and having completed one full academic year of study under that new SEVIS record.

- New Comment: Will this affect the H1B process?

Title of the post: OPT requirement ?directly related to major?- does my case satisfy it?

Body of the post: Hi,

I am preparing to apply for OPT and I would like to clarify ?directly related to major? part for OPT.

My major is computational math and it combines curriculum from math, computer science and engineering, stat, engineering department. I had to take CS courses such as Data structure and Algorithm, combinatorial, machine learning, programming languages to graduate. I am planning to work in software engineering industry, but I am not quite sure if USCIS would consider my major satisfies ?directly related? part as title of the major sounds like something related to math or for any other reasons.

I will contact school international student advisor about this, but they didn't give me clear answer before other than ?make sure to explain to USCIS if they ask about it?

Does anybody have idea about strictness of this OPT requirement? Or is there anybody in the same situation as me?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Your Optional Practical Training is continued F-1 student status for continued study in your field of study through practical experience. This means that to meet your F-1 status requirements, the position has to be giving you practical training in your field of study. That means in your field. You honestly know what your field of study is as you

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spent years studying in it. You should not work in a position you honestly know isn't actually providing you with practical experience in your field of study.

You have to be able to document to the U.S. government how the position is providing you with that practical training in your field. In initial reporting, you just write a brief statement of how that is true that gets recorded in your U.S. government SEVIS record.

However, if they ever ask you for additional, more detailed information, you would also have to be able to provide it. This can happen at any time, but it is even more likely at times you are applying for a new benefit or status from USCIS such as an F-1 OPT STEM extension or H-1B status. Not being able to do so could cause you to be denied that new benefit or status for which you were applying.

There are some DSOs in international offices that may have hundreds of programs of study at their universities. They're not going to be able to better tell you what is work in your field of study than you are after you've spent years in that study. Or else something has gone terribly wrong with your study program. If you truly aren't certain what type of work would be in what you studied, your academic school/program office at your university or their associated career services office might be a good place to ask.

Or you can return to get a new degree in the field in which you actually want to work. Then apply for OPT based on that degree.

- New Comment: Hi, I recently graduated with civil engineering specialized in Construction Management. I have lot of project management coursework than that of designing courses. I have also taken up two software course work which are Java programming and application programming. I also cracked Amazon SDE-1 and about to start full time employment. I would like to know how can I relate my major with my employment for direct relations for OPT application, Any ideas are very much appreciated. Thanks.

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Some of the coursework i have enrolled are:

Fundamentals of leadership

Innovative Design Thinking

Interdisciplinary Innovation

Java Programming

Application Programming

- New Comment: You'll be fine. This is relatively flexible at the OPT stage as long as you can clearly link some of your coursework to some of the job duties.

(Technically it's in reverse ? OPT is meant to be ?practical training? after a degree program, so you need to start with the job duties and connect that back to your degree program to argue that you're getting practical experience in whatever you studied.)

In practice, people from lots of STEM fields do their OPT in software engineering, not just those who studied pure CS. I studied both math and aerospace engineering and successfully linked software work to both degree programs.

At the H-1B stage, USCIS might get picky if your job has a posting that doesn't sound math-y, but that's a non-guaranteed problem that you can't do anything about at this stage.

- New Comment: Can I relate a job in journalism (possibly covering climate, environment) to a STEM degree in Earth

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sciences / geology?

Title of the post: Tax Question Megathread 2021 Tax Submissions

Body of the post: **All Tax Questions must be posted here. All other tax posts will be removed**

[Please see last years post for more information](https://old.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/ljb2hk/tax_question_megathread)

>Do I need to pay my 2022 taxes?

No, tax filing now is for the calendar year 2021 and begins January 2022, and ends April 15, 2022.

>I did not work in 2021, do I need to file taxes?

[You should have filed the 8843 even if you had no income.](<http://blog.sprintax.com/tax-form-8843-filing-instructions>)

"There are 3 things that every US international student and J-1 visa holder needs to know about American tax:

*Every US international student and J-1 visa holder has a tax filing requirement.

*It doesn't matter if you have earned income. You must still file your documents before the deadline.

*The IRS takes this stuff seriously! In other words, if you don't comply with your tax obligations, you may encounter complications when applying for US visas in the future. "

>Do I have to pay/file/submit taxes?

Reddit Posts

Yes, all F-1 visa holders regardless of employment or not need to file their taxes.

If you worked in 2021 you received tax documents from your employer (likely a [W2](<https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-form-w-2>) or a 1099 of some sort). You will need that form(s). You also need to file a [form 8843](<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8843.pdf>). If this is you continue on to the next question.

If you did not work then you need to file a [form 8843](<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8843.pdf>) That is all that you must do if you otherwise did not work or receive taxable payments.

>Can I use Turbo tax or another program to file my taxes?

Yes, but you need to find out if you are a "Resident for Tax Purposes" or a "Non-Resident For Tax Purposes". You can find the questionnaire [here](<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/determining-alien-tax-status>)

Alternatively, you can go to [Sprintax.com](<https://www.sprintax.com>) sign up for their program and use the tax determination questionnaire at the beginning of their software. You do not need to pay to use this portion of their software.

If you are deemed a non-resident for tax purposes and you like their software you can continue to use it for your taxes and pay them for convenience. If you want another option there is [Glacier tax Prep](<https://www.glaciertax.com>) Both of these companies specialize in Non-Resident Taxes. You can also just complete the 1040NR

If you are deemed a resident for tax purposes you can use any other tax software designed for an American. Such as turbo tax, Tax Slayer, etc.

Reddit Posts

>I was deemed a "Resident for Tax Purposes" am I now eligible for permanent resident benefits?

Your **TAX status** is separate from your immigration status.

Your **TAX status** is informed by your immigration status.

Your **TAX status** has no impact on your immigration status.

That's why it says, "Resident for tax purposes". You are not an actual resident of the US and your immigration status has **not** changed. You are just now given more flexibility with your taxes and qualify for some additional tax benefits you didn't otherwise qualify for before. That said, you also have more tax liability now compared to before.

It is 100% separate from your immigration status and does not, can not, and has not granted you any sort of permanent residency in any way shape, or form.

>I got a 1098-T, can I use it?

You can only use a 1098-T if you are a Resident for Tax Purposes. Otherwise, it does not apply to you.

>I have Dependents on F2

You need to file your taxes based on the above and file an 8843 for each dependent.

>My spouse on their own F1 needs to file

Have them follow the procedure above and file their own taxes separately.

Reddit Posts

>My friend got a refund and I had to pay

That happens, there are many reasons it could happen. Taxes are VERY individual. It is possible your friend also filed using the incorrect status Resident vs. Non-Resident etc. You also could have filed wrong. If you are concerned, then use the software linked above to get an answer. If you are still confused after that contact the software provider for support.

>How do I use tax form 1099-A/M/J/L/Misc

You can use the tax software above to file your taxes or follow the instructions on the 1040-NR for non-residents or 1040/1040-EA for Residents

>When do I get my refund?

If you are eligible for a refund you must submit your application as a non-resident via the mail to the IRS on/before April 15 and will receive the refund in July-October. If you elect to have it be a direct deposit, please list your valid US bank account. If you want a check, give them a mailing address where you will be later this Fall.

Residents and Non-Residents who can file electronically can receive the refund in a few business days depending on how you filed your taxes. Via the mail, it takes several weeks. If you elect to have it be a direct deposit, please list your valid US bank account. If you want a check, give them a mailing address where you will be later this summer.

I don't know where I will be in the Fall/Summer or I am leaving the U.S. this Spring/Summer! Ask a friend you trust to use their mailing address.

Reddit Posts

>Can I file my non-resident taxes online?

Yes, but e-filing can be limited by the tax filing services.

>I do not have a Social Security Number (SSN) Can I file taxes?

Yes, but if you are not filing only the 8843 then you need an ITIN or an SSN.

You can get an ITIN using Spritnax (for an additional fee) or via a private company using the [Acceptance Agent Program](<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/acceptance-agent-program>) (for a fee) or you can schedule an appointment with the IRS at one of the [IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers](<https://www.irs.gov/help/tac-locations-where-in-person-document-verification-is-provided>) to both submit your taxes and the ITIN request form in person at one of their offices for free. You will need to call, schedule an appointment and bring all completed documents to the office for the submission of the ITIN request and submitting your other tax forms. If you use one of the software above as a non-resident then you can print and bring the documents from that software to their office.

>How does one pay for taxes on the medical ratio refund? But if you don't pay for insurance ex it is covered by a fellowship/scholarship then how do you account for it on your tax return?

I assume you mean the 1095 forms.

****Form 1095-A: ?****

Healthcare coverage purchased through Health Insurance Marketplace ? ?ObamaCare?? or the Affordable Care Act

* *Generally not applicable to international students & scholars? unless you have a special tax treaty*

Reddit Posts

* Can be used on a ?resident? tax return, in limited circumstances?

****Form 1095-B: ?****

Healthcare coverage provided through an insurance provider or self-insured employer?

You do not need 1095-B for your non-resident return?

****Form 1095-C: ?****

Healthcare provided through an employer (generally more than 50 employees)?

You do not need 1095-C for your non-resident return

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: anyone know of free/very reasonably priced ways that non-residents can file taxes online? any recommendations? thanks

- New Comment: I worked as a TA from Jan 2021 to now. I would be using sprintax. Sprints shows I need form W2 (I?ll be getting this from my university) and it says I need 1042-S and/or 1099? I don?t understand what 1042 S and 1099 are for ?

Do I need to fill out 8843 still?? I receive scholarship from my university and have a savings account also. Not sure what other form I need ?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: PSA: sprintax isnt e-filing returns right now and says that service will available later this month. I paid and completed the forms and it just provided me with documents that I am supposed to mail myself. The only reason I chose sprintax was to avoid this hassle.

Reddit Posts

Hopefully they will fix the service the let me e-file till then dont rush to file using sprintax

- New Comment: I've determined that I'm a non resident for tax purposes. Ive had an on campus job all of this year. Can someone please ELI5 what I need to do next? Do I need physical forms? Do I need to get something from my employer? I'm just very lost

- New Comment: I'm a TA so I earned some money as salary. I also got ~1000 in credit card bonus and referral bonus. What all do I need for taxes for?

- New Comment: Do I need an ITIN to file taxes? I would be using W2, 1042 S and 8843. I only have an SSN. My university provides help using TaxSlayer btw

- New Comment: 5 years in the US and never filed taxes.

I came to the US before 2017 new year and I thought taxes was for only for residents and citizens. Now after 5 years, I am aware of the need to file taxes. I am doing internship since october 2021. I have my W2 for 2021. Since its has already been 5 years.Do I have to file taxes as a resident? I pass the substantial presence test considering I was only present 184 days 2021.

Can I file taxes for all the 5 years? If so do I file as a non resident or resident ? Is it the 6th year I file as a resident?

It is quite confusing looking at my situation. I would be glad to have any information or I can explain the questions more if you dont understand.

Thank you for your help.

- New Comment: I have filed all federal taxes, do I need to file state taxes too?

If yes, what software can help me generate just state taxes? I tried sprint tax but it forces me to buy the federal tax package too.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I am qualified as us resident for tax purposes. I want to efile on TurboTax. However, my form keeps being denied because I do not have Identify Protection PIN. How can I obtain one?

- New Comment: Tax Help

Hello, I am an international student in Chicago, IL.

I was wondering if anyone here can recommend a tax consultant who specializes/is familiar with international student taxes?

I have done my taxes but not yet filed and as this is my first time doing taxes in the US, I just want someone to review my taxes with me and answer some questions I have.

- New Comment: I had first entered the US in Aug 2017 on F-1 status, but as far I remember, I started filing taxes from tax year 2018 and did not file a Form 8843 for 2017. Is it advisable to complete that form for 2017 or not needed?

Thanks in advance!

- New Comment: Hi all,

I've been in US since 2016 and found out that I need to file my taxes as resident for 2021. While doing so, I found out about the lifetime learning and American Opportunity tax credits. I did my research about my qualification and it seems like I do qualify, but I have some doubts that causing me not to claim it. Does anybody know if F-1 students qualify for these credits if we have been here long enough ? I'm using form 1098-T for this credit.

Any help or direction is much appreciated !

- New Comment: Hi, a resident for tax purposes (F1 visa, in the US for more than 5 calendar years) can efile 1040, right? 8843 is not required?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Student on F1 in non resident status and spouse on J1 also non resident for tax purposes. First time filing for F1 and 3rd time for J1. Can we file jointly? And if so, can we report tuition costs to improve refund?

- New Comment: I have been in USA since october 2017 until now. So 2022 will be the sixth year I will be in USA but I fulfil substantial presence test only for 4 years except 2017. Do I need to pay FICA taxes for 2022?

- New Comment: Is the tax rate for residents and non residents on F1 vastly different?

When I enter the same details as a resident on tax estimator sites like turbo tax and hr block I get much higher refund estimate then what I get from sprintax.

My income was under 30k

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: My friend started school this Spring term(Spring 2022) on F1 status. He arrived US on December, 2021. I heard that if you were present in the U.S. in F/J status for any portion of the previous calendar year (the year for which you are filing), you need to file Form 8843. Does he need to file the form 8843 for 2021 tax year since he arrived US on Dec, 2021?

- New Comment: thank you for the answer. Will filing for 2021 be as resident or not? Thankyou

- New Comment: Hi guys,

I sold some personal belongings on eBay in preparation of moving into a place that's closer to my university and eBay is asking for an ITIN number in order for me to receive my payout since the sum is greater than \$600. They want an ITIN to send a 1099-K form to.

I went to an IRS TAC today in person with my W-7 form filled out in hopes of applying for an ITIN number and the

Reddit Posts

person working there told me it was not good enough. He told me I needed to come back with my tax returns filed + my W-7 and then they would be able to proceed with the ITIN process. It appears there are a few scenarios where you can be exempt from filing tax returns when applying for an ITIN but apparently I didn't meet the criteria.

I got home, looked at a few IRS resources that will help you file your tax returns for free, but I cannot use any of them because they ask for an SSN and I'm not currently working on campus.

What options do I have here?

- New Comment: **Can an F-1 International Student sell personal belongings through Paypal that they don't need anymore online at a loss?**

Current Status: F-1 Post-Completion OPT with Full-Time Job

I recently sold some personal belongings that I don't use anymore. However, I was not aware of the fact that as of 2022, PayPal now reports cumulative transactions under Goods & Services over \$600 to the IRS through the 1099-K.

I used the PayPal Goods & Services option because it provides seller and buyer protection in case the seller or buyer gets scammed or package gets stolen etc., the Goods & Services platform on PayPal remediates the issue and protects both sides.

Since I am selling my personal belongings at a loss (Sold 3 electronic items, all at a lower price than what I bought them for on Facebook Marketplace), the IRS will not tax the income associated with the sales in my 1099-K as it is a loss. However, I believe the income will be reported on the 1099-K as per the new legislation but I did not engage in any unauthorized employment.

Will I be okay, or do I need an immigration attorney or tax accountant who specializes in international student tax reporting?

Regardless, I have stopped selling things online now as it seems really, really risky with my F-1 OPT Post-Completion Status and potential H1-B / Green Card chances.

Reddit Posts

Apparently, I have to file a schedule C for my Form 1040NR? not sure how accurate this is.

it's for a sole proprietorship/small business profit/loss form but I didn't plan to be self-employed because that's unauthorized work outside of my opt status. I really wanted to use PayPal to make my payments safe as it protects both parties from being scammed. Do not have intent in making a profit or starting my own business at all, just selling things I don't use anymore in a place where both parties are protected.

would I just have to explain the situation to USCIS if I end up having an AoS for H-1B if selected or GC process if this is brought up?

reference for schedule c for 1099-K (user LeonardS)

<https://ttlc.intuit.com/community/taxes/discussion/i-received-a-1099k-of-1-000-sold-personal-items-on-ebay-how-do-i-report-this-im-not-a-business/00/1987779>

- New Comment: I have a student savings account with 0.01% interest . In 2021 I earned 0.15 dollars (so 15 cents ?) from my bank. Would I have to report this? My bank keeps saying I won't be getting a 1099- INT from them but I just need to confirm?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I've been an F-1 student since Fall 2018 and literally never heard that I needed to file taxes if I made no income. What consequences will I face?

- New Comment: Hi. I was under an independent contractor contract for 6 months. My employer said that because I'm a nonresident they won't be sending me any document, since they only issue tax documents for domestic employees. I made around some money with them, they gave me the exact figure and that's all. What document should I fill in to report this? A 1042-s? A 1099? Thank you! I feel a bit lost with them

- New Comment: Hi. I am on an F-1 visa for more than 5 years and resident for tax purposes for the first time. My spouse is on an F-2 visa for the first year. Is it possible to file jointly?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Is it better to be a non resident alien vs resident alien for tax purposes? I know answers may vary depending on each person, but in general what status pays less taxes? assuming your only income is in the US? Even though we pass the substantial presence test can we decline to be treated as a resident alien? It looks like we can but I'm not too sure. I would like to avoid paying social security and medicare since I might never use it.

- New Comment: Hi! I filed my taxes with Sprintax. Apparently all my income is exempt from taxes at a federal level due to a tax treaty. Therefore, my gross income on the first page is 0. That feels weird to me, is that correct?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Is anything deductible for F-1 students on OPT? Awesome thread, thank you.

- New Comment: Last summer I interned at a company and claimed tax exemption benefits. They did not ask me to fill out W-8BEN. They just asked me how much I was exempt on and wanted to see where it is stated. I showed them the article and they applied it. The exemption was only applied to federal taxes.

Now, I got W-2 from them, where the state income is the actual income I received. But the federal income is my actual income minus the amount on which I claimed tax exempt. Now my question is how did they report the remaining federal income on which I was tax exempt? Will they give a form 1042-S like my university does? Sprintax asks this as federal income is less than state, and I did not get any other form other than the W-2.

- New Comment: So I'm trying to look at both HR block and Sprintax. For HR block I get federal returns refund (approx \$1k+) but for Sprintax I would owe \$400.

I spoke and paid tax pro from both tools, Sprintax says I can't add standard deductions because I'm a non resident alien but hrblock says I can include standard deductions (I bought a car, medical expense, vehicle excise tax etc) because I passed substantial presence test. (Last year when I filed with hrblock they used a 1040 form because of that reason as well)

Reddit Posts

Which do you think is right here?

Background:

I moved here in Aug 2019 for graduate school, graduated in April 2021 and now on my OPT. Filed tax last year because I had a paid CPT while at school.

- New Comment: Hi, I'm trying to figure out "my country of tax residence". I am a F-1 student working in the US on my OPT. I started working about 6months back and was about to open an investment account. I know I'm considered a non-resident alien as I've been here for less than 5 years but I just wanted to confirm that the answer would be my home country and not the US?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I used sprintax for filling federal and state tax. I got a w2 from university so i filed tax based on that. I saw that there is no other document in my bank account so i did not care about that. Federal tax i efiled using sprintax. State tax i filled the sprintax questionnaire and paid them \$40 to prepare docs but they have taken the money and havent given me the docs yet (been more than a month).

Anyways, chase later sent me a 1042-S for a \$100 account opening bonus. Total income on it is \$100 and total tax withholding is \$0. Will i now need to amend my federal and state tax? I tried telling sprintax to adjust this 1042 in the prep of state taxes but they are not doing so.

Any idea/recommendations on what I should do? Will i need to ammend both taxes in april?

- New Comment: Hi Guys , I am not working on campus or anything and I don't have an SSN.

Reddit Posts

I have a savings account in bank of America which produces 1 cent every month or so.

So BOFA sent me a WENB-8 form which I had to fill and send back to BOFA.

Now while filling taxes should I just file the form 8843 form or should I fill something else as I have an savings account.

Your input is highly appreciated.

Regards

- New Comment: I was on f1 from 2015-2020 (includes my year of OPT). I had been filing through Sprintax until switching to Turbotax when I needed to file for taxes as a US resident last year (for tax year 2020). After so many confusing convos with many tax assistants I was told I needed to file the parr year resident form (IT-203) because my visa expired and obviously I had to move back to Asia halfway through the year. (Looking back I don?t know if that was even correct because I?ve asked other international friends in the same situation and they never did anything but then again they all had their personal tax accountants who helped file for them).

Basically because I filed part year NY resident, I had to put my address in Asia and ever since coming back I?ve been receiving tax letters from the IRS (notifications of stuff irrelevant to me, but I did still receive the 2021 stimulus from overseas). Was I meant to file something or let IRS know I?m not a resident for tax anymore or something? Just feels like they think I just moved to Asia and every time I receive a letter from IRS in Asia I low-key get anxiety because taxes have always been anxiety-inducing anyway lol.

I don?t need to do anything right?

Also does any of this affect how I file my taxes when I go back to US for my masters later this year? (Currently waiting for my I-20 to be issued) When I return on an f-1 agaib, my I pretty much start all over and file as nonresident again

Reddit Posts

right?

Also, now that I'm stressing myself out writing this, how closely does the embassy look at your previous taxes during the visa interview? Will they check? What if I did something incorrectly? (I don't remember if I missed my taxes in freshman and sophomore year bc everyone around me didn't do them either and we were all not working ? I obvi know now that you need to file regardless)

- New Comment: If I am a "Resident for Tax Purposes" as I came to the US in 2015, but had no income this past year of 2021. I was informed that I may not be obligated to submit a tax return if I had no income last year. Then would it be recommended to still submit the form 8843 even if I am considered Resident for Tax purposes?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Like many others, I've only learnt now that even though I'm unemployed, I still need to submit the Form 8843. Since I've been here since Sept 2018, I read that you said we could back file our taxes, how do we do that in addition to the Form 8843 I would be submitting this year?

- New Comment: 1) Are GAship allowance/stipend considered Compensation for Personal Services Performed in United States Exempt from U.S. Income Tax Under Income Tax Treaties?

2) What if there's a maximum amount of compensation under a tax treaty?

- New Comment: I'm a PhD student and a non-resident for tax purposes. My 2021 W-2 has boxes 16-19 empty. I inquired with my university (since this was different in previous years), and apparently my stipend is exempt from taxes in my state (and I assume my county too). In my local taxes form, there's a field saying "If you had NO EARNED INCOME, check the reason why?" and one of the options is "student?". Should I check that box?

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: I tried to file the tax using sprintax and filled up everything, and submitted it for e-filing but then after an

Reddit Posts

hour I got an email saying *"Unfortunately the IRS did not accept the electronic filing of your 2021 Federal tax return"*.

what to do now?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hello everyone,

I am filing my taxes through turbotax as resident for tax purposes(5 years in US) I put in my 1098T but I am not sure if we are eligible for education tax credit. It also asks if I received third stimulus payment which I put no and I am aware that we don't get stimulus payment. But it is offering \$1400 return for not receiving the stimulus. How do I skip that part? Has anyone gone through the same issue?

Thank you

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: According to Glacier my "Residency status change date: 7/3/21 to resident alien" & "Residency status start date: 1/1/21 to resident alien". Springtax also said I am a RA. However, I failed to finish my degree in Jun 2021 and became out of status, left US in mid Dec 21.

1.Should I file my 2021 tax return as dual status or RA or NRA? I complied with visa requirements when receiving stipend, so RA for the first 5.5 months of 2021. And became NRA from mid June when I became out of status?

2. Or am I NRA for the entire 2021? Since I fail to maintain visa status to reach 7/3 and didn't stay in US for the entire 2021 and none in 2022.

appreciate any help

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: How do I file taxes on stocks or report capital gains/losses if I did not receive a 1099 or 1042-S from my brokerage?

- New Comment: Hello, I just filed my 2021 tax return and I was wondering if I did it right. I am an F1-OPT currently and in the year 2021, I was still a student but have worked under CPT.

1. So first step, I went into Sprintax as I have always done in the past years, and once I put in the dates that I have been in the US (2016-now), Sprintax says that I have been in the states for more than 5 years as of 2021 and should file as ****resident for tax purposes.**** I'm not sure how to count the days in a year to be considered passing the 5 year test, but I used my I-94 travel records so I'm assuming Sprintax has an algorithm to count these?

2. After that, I made an account with Turbo Tax and filed as a resident with tax purposes. I had 2 jobs in that year, one in my university for about 4 months before summer, and another one was a remote internship during summer. I live in Florida so there are no state taxes but I did file a state tax with the internship state I worked for (Indiana) even though I was in FL the whole time.

3. I put all my information from the W2s in and was informed that I was eligible for the "Standard deduction ****\$12550****" for single status. Overall, they state that I overpaid ****\$832****.

4. On top of that, I believe because I am now considered US resident for tax purposes, I am eligible for the stimulus check credit? They asked me if I received a check and I clicked no because I didn't. And because of that they put a ****\$1400**** credit on my tax return.

5. Overall my total return is ****\$2079**** after the state tax deductions.

****Did I do everything correctly?****

- New Comment: Hey, I've become resident for tax purposes (arrived to US in 2016). I went to H&R Block to file taxes, but in 2021 I didn't work and didn't earn any income. The tax services person said I don't need to send in anything! Could you please reassure me he is correct? Thank you

- New Comment: When interning during the summer, do we pay the state tax of the state where our school is or the state where we reside during the internship? Or both? I have seen conflicting information?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I wrongly filed my state tax return as a resident in California, what do I do?

Just want to know if anyone has been in this situation. I did it last year (no tax refund) and again this year (tax refund this time) by mistake. Form 540 instead of 1040. I did it online on california ftb website and had no idea that it's wrong until recently because the website didn't raise any suspicions.

I am still in the university in my program since fall 2020 in california.

- New Comment: Hello I know F-1 not supposed to earn any income except under CPT and OPT. But what if?

1. My friends and I are going on a trip and I paid for the hotel/flights and they are paying back for what they owe. Is this okay if they transfer it via venmo or zelle. How would the gov know it's not income?

2. What about when we sell our old furnitures? or used goods (not for profits ofc)

thanks!

- New Comment: Hi Team, I filled my form 8843 as I dint earn any income in USA in 2021 , so used sprintax and they asked me to send the form by mail to IRS. I sent using USPS and had a tracker. I sent it 4 days before last date.

When I check the tracking number till now it shows my package is still in Austin distribution facility and did not reach IRS. Is there a way I can check the status of my form 8843 and if needed to redo my taxes can I do it online now guys?

Thanks

- New Comment: @u/codetornado

Reddit Posts

I filed my Tax Returns in April. I had recieved \$300 from bank as joining bonus on receipt of Salary \geq \$500 (as TA). I waited for the bank to provide 1042-S/ 1099-T but they didn't before deadline so I filed the \$300 income under other expenses - bank. It shows as income from Business on my filed returns. They sent me 1042-S quite later after filing the taxes.

I've also recieved my check for refund, albeit very small amount (\$18). But I'm worried if I need to file an amended return as being an F1 student, income from business is not allowed.

Please advise me on this.

Thanks.

- New Comment: I filed both federal and state taxes on sprintax and it said I will get a 18\$ refund on the state taxes. Its been 3 months now and I still didnt get anything. Should I be worried?

- New Comment: Hi guys,

I need major help! I feel like I have messed up my taxes since 2019. I used Turbo Tax for the year 2019, 2020. For 2021, I used one of the free websites on the IRS sites. I also received stimulus checks.

Now, I wanted to amend my taxes so I signed into Sprintax. It asked me questions like list all the entry and exits of USA. and asked if i am still in the USA. It then prompted me the message saying

" Based on the information you provided, you are deemed a US resident for tax purposes, which means Sprintax software isn't suitable for you. Sprintax facilitates non-resident tax return preparation only."

Reddit Posts

I am so confused. I am still an F1 so why was that message given?

Background info: I have been in the USA since 2013 as an F1 and i already started filing for taxes in 2019 as I started work then.

Can anyone please guide me?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hi, I became a resident for tax purposes about 2 years ago and have ever since been confused. I filed form 8843 in 2019 when I used to be a non resident alien. After becoming a resident alien, I heard that I'm not supposed to file 8843 anymore. I also don't have any world income nor American income. My school only has programs for students that are non resident aliens. I called a tax consultant and he sounded confused about my situation and told me to perhaps wait till I get an internship and then start filing tax return then, but the school policy is saying whether or not I'm making money, I need to file a tax return. What should I do here ? What forms should I file ? Thank you in advance !

- New Comment: Tax-free as non-resident alien? What happens after five years?

Hi everyone!

I've been one year in the states for my masters on an F1 visa and will now join a PhD program which will likely take 5ish years to complete and where I'll earn a salary. As far as I'm aware, I don't have to pay taxes as non-resident alien for the first five years on my f1 visa (my home country has a tax treaty with the US), but what happens after the first five years when I become a resident for tax purposes? Do I need to repay all the taxes for the first five years or do I only start paying taxes from year six onwards? I'm studying in California.

Reddit Posts

Thanks for the clarification!

- New Comment: Can I buy I bonds if I'm classified as a resident for tax purposes?

- New Comment: I didn't know that I had to file tax in the last 4 years. In May 2022, I used TurboTax to file my tax and did not know that it only supports resident filling. I got higher refund because I answer no in the question "Did you get the stimulus check?" What should I do now? I tried to contact IRS past months but they weren't available. I'm currently on my OPT so I'm worried it might affect my extension in next June. Thank you in advance!

- New Comment: Hello! I'm on opt now and considered a resident for tax purposes. I logged on to www.irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript to check the status of my returns

It all looks good except apparently they did not receive my 2019 returns that I filed physically. I made money but have (or had since it's past 3 years) a tax refund. I also didn't file an 8843 in 2016 when I first went to school. I was non resident for both or those tax years

I don't care about receiving any refunds, just wanna sort my taxes out.

1) How should I go about correcting this? I imagine I can go to a tax prep service. Now that I'm a resident, should I use TurboTax or Sprinttax?

2) are there any future implications of this problem? There was no intent of fraud. 2019 was filed physically and I guess I didn't do my due diligence to make sure everything was good. Plus I don't owe taxes. In 2016 I was a fresh student for 3 months making no money

Ty Ty

- New Comment: If an F-1 student has a YouTube account (the income from which goes to their bank account in their

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home country and not to an American bank account), and they pay income tax for that to their home country as well, then I have two questions:

1) Is this considered employment by the law even if the student is not making and sharing videos in the US but earning passively from content uploaded prior to their entry in the US?

2) Is this considered tax fraud even if the student not an employee, resident, or citizen of the United States? Is passively earning from the platform (which the student started outside the country by the way) considered tax fraud if one pays income tax to their home country's government?

Again, I am not saying in the above two questions that the student is moonlighting as a content creator while they are situated in the USA. I am asking if it is legal to consistently earn money from work done prior to one's entry in the USA.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hi,

I went to US under F1 visa and study my master degree, but apparently it didn't work out. So I withdrew from the program after 4 months. When I was at the Uni, I applied for job as lab assistant and got my SSN. but apparently I already withdrew the program before even manage to work (I got the SSN tho).

Now, I already leave the US and stay at my home country .

My question is :

1. Could I (or should I) fill tax for my period of stay (I stay in the US from April 2022 until August) ? or should I wait until Jan 2023 to fill the tax ?

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2. Will I get trouble in the future because I applied for SSN to work as lab assistant, but then I withdrew from the program without working at all?

3. should I use sprinttax for my filling ? or is there any recommendation of tax software for my case ?

Any advice and suggestions is highly appreciated. Thanks

- New Comment: Has anyone been able to get fica tax return when filing as non resident? I filed all the paperwork when I filed my taxes and I still haven't heard back

- New Comment: Taxes are filed on income in the US.

Federally Income Tax and State Income Tax.

Social Security Tax and Medicare Tax may also be removed- depending on if you have been an f1 student on opt/stem in the US for over 5 years- i.e. now a ?resident alien? for tax purposes (See- <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/foreign-student-liability-for-social-security-and-medicare-taxes>)

****Tax Withholding vs Tax Returns:****

Tax Withholding is the amount held back from my paycheck and paid to the IRS on my behalf. This amount withheld is based on a W4 form you will fill and give your employer when you first start working each year. That said, why do I need to still file my taxes?

Because if the amount withheld was too much or too little based on what the IRS will properly re-calculate when you actually file your taxes with them (and based on other things that may have come up in the year that were not put into your W4 at the time you filled it like loans, or a mortgage, etc), you will be able to get a refund on the overdrawn amount of tax that was deducted from your income, if these are deductible items that reduce your tax bracket or to get notification of what you still owe in taxes to the IRS.

(P.S. This means that if you are self-employed and living in the US, you don?t exactly have an ?employer? above you who is paying you a taxed income. Meaning if you don?t file your taxes and make those withholding selections at the start of each new year on your own or pay your taxes monthly or quarterly with methods I have zero knowledge on right now, you and your business are owing the IRS taxes and it?s how people get into tax issues/tax fraud not stating their

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taxes correctly)

3 out of 4 taxpayers receive tax refund after filing their tax return form. And even if you may not get a refund, it is illegal not to report your taxes and if you ignore it, just know that they will be sitting there waiting for you, accruing for each year you are in the US, with monthly fine penalties for each month that passes after the filing deadline period- April of each year but usually still possible till about October. So you should always file a tax return for the past year (e.g. 2021) during the tax filing period usually Jan to Apr of each new year (e.g. 2022), even if your employer has withheld and paid taxes from your income for you.

****Forms:****

What is W4 (Employees Withholding Certificate)- You as an employee are the one who fills this form, letting your employer know based on your responses (responses on? if single or married, if multiple jobs or not...) if some deductions should exist or not), and therefore how much tax should be withheld and sent to the IRS from your income.

What is W2 or 1099 (Wage and Tax Statement)- A W-2 tax Statement shows important information about the income you have earned from your employer through the year, the amount of taxes withheld from your paycheck, benefits provided and other information for the year. You use this form to file your federal and state taxes. YOU GET THIS FROM YOUR EMPLOYER BEFORE THE TAX FILING PERIOD BEGINS IN EARLY JAN OR FEB. If you don't have an employer, but need to file taxes where do you get it from? Or is there no need for it? I guess the IRS sends you this at the end of you personally filing your own taxes, for the start of each tax return period each year.

****Tax Deductions:****

A tax deduction lowers your taxable income and thus reduces your tax responsibility. You subtract the amount of the tax deduction from your income, making your taxable income lower. The lower your taxable income, the lower your tax bracket and so the lower your tax bill, meaning you will get some money back in tax returns, if these deductibles come up through out the year after you had already filled your W2 form and given it to your employer to make a general tax withholding on your behalf to the IR.

****What are tax deductions (write offs) that can help you get tax refunds when you file your taxes in the filing Jan to Apr period?****

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Standard deductions ensure that all taxpayers have at least some income that is not subject to federal income tax.

Standard deductions generally increase each year due to inflation. You have the option of claiming the standard deduction or itemizing your deductions. However, you can never claim both in the same year. You will find that many states that impose an income tax will also allow you to claim a similar type of deduction on your state income tax return.

Because you can only use either standard deduction or itemized deduction on your taxes, to lower your taxable income, the IRS recommends that you take the time to run the numbers to see which option gives you a bigger deduction otherwise you might actually be losing yourself some money by deducting less, having a higher taxable income, and paying more in taxes as a result. (See:

<https://turbotax.intuit.com/tax-tips/tax-deductions-and-credits/what-are-standard-tax-deductions/L7oiVM1DH>)

****Things that can go towards an Itemised Deduction (If you choose to do this, instead of the calculated flat standard deduction that the IRS provides for):****

- Interest paid on your mortgage
- State income taxes can be deducted. Only up to \$10,000.
- Charity donation slips
- Medical and dental expenses that exceed 7.5% of your adjusted gross income
- Property taxes

****Some more resources (Some of these are state or school-specific but good just for generally understanding how things work):****

<https://www.optnation.com/blog/f1-opt-student-tax-return-and-exemption/>

<https://www.taxesforexpats.com/articles/non-us-citizens/f-1-international-student-tax-return-101.html>

<https://blog.sprintax.com/opt-student-tax-guide/#:~:text=As%20an%20F%2D1%20visa,for%20more%20than%205%20years>

<https://www.novacredit.com/resources/opt-tax-rate/>

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/international_student_services/about/news/2021/tax2020.php

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- New Comment: On a F-1 CPT Visa for dental residency from Canada.

Am I allowed to get bank bonuses and file a 1099-INT? Or is that not an eligible source of income for F1s? I recall that for F1 CPT, your income has to be from a source relevant to your field.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: In 2019, I had no income, and my DSO explicitly told me not to file Form 8843 because it would signal to the government that I might want to stay here for the long run. I got scared at the implications of that, so I believed her, but she has made multiple mistakes in the past so I am currently trying to correct them so I don't run into any issues in the future.

I just read that you must file Form 8843 for all the years you did not have income, which in my case would only be 2019.

Can I file Form 8843 retroactively for 2019? Should I do it immediately or wait until I file my 2022 taxes next year?

- New Comment: I came to usa on f1 this semester of fall 2022

I have not been employed anywhere and I don't have a ssn

Should i need to fill any tax form?

- New Comment: Hey Y'all

I'm current working on campus and am getting Federal and State Taxes on my paycheck. I was talking with a coworker who is also an international student and he informed me that he never gets Federal Tax on his paycheck.

<https://imgur.com/a/ANJCznz>

Should I not be getting federally taxed?

- New Comment: I'm on STEM OPT at the moment and filed/paid/sent my tax for 2021 in April (before the deadline) via guaranteed delivery. As I checked with the bank, it seems my check was cashed out by the IRS soon afterward. However, checking on the online portal, they still show me as having no filing history, no notice, nothing.

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IRS operation status (updated on December 30, 2022) says everything before October 2022 has been processed excluding those needs special handling or error correction. I used Glacier Tax Prep from my school to generate the 1040NR. I also don't expect to receive any money back, but just want to have all this tax stuff cleared out (first-time submission).

Does anyone have a suggestion on how to proceed? I tried reaching out to the IRS, but they were unreachable (as always).

- New Comment: Can anyone recommend any tax services for filing non-resident taxes online? I paper filed for 2021 and still haven't received my refund yet and I'm hoping to e-file this time around. TIA!

- New Comment: I forgot to file for taxes since 2019 but I have only worked during 2019 and 2020. I am now filing for 2022 taxes. Do i have to file 8843 since 2019? Do i have to file 8843 if i am considered resident for tax purposes?

- New Comment: Hi everyone,

my employer is deducting a COPL tax (Colorado Paid Family Leave tax). I am in the state of Colorado and on F1 visa. Does anyone know if these taxes are for H1/citizens? My employer had previously deducted FICA taxes too and now I need to get it reimbursed

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I didn't enter "NRA" under step 4 on my W-4 and now I got taxed on things I'm not supposed to. In the past, I've had an on-campus job for 3 and a half years. The student employment office instructed I leave step 4 blank and has never taxed me for my social security or Medicaid. Now I graduated, got my first (temp) job on an OPT. I filled out the W-4 like I always did and then after weeks finally got my paycheck... and it was missing a lot of money. I realized I was taxed on things such as MEDI EE, OASDI EE, and Federal Income. Now I don't know about Federal income, but I'm sure I'm not supposed to be taxed on MEDI EE and OASDI EE until next year. After searching around on the internet I realized I was supposed to put NRA under step 4 on the W-4. Now, HR definitely knows I'm NRA cuz I filled out all the

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information honestly. However... will they refuse to refund the taxes because of this mistake? And how should I proceed if I do want the refund?

Title of the post: F1 student arrived before admission date. What to do now?

Body of the post: My good friend got accepted in US University with F1 Visa. The program starts in August but the visa was open in May. As he tried to enter US now, he got told that he can only enter 30 days before the program starts. Now he is being detained at the airport. Do you have experience with such cases? What to expect? What to do?

Wishing all of you all the best!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Time to hire a lawyer who can then prod DHS into a decision or maybe even get an immigration judge to force the release of your friend while DHS deliberates.

A lawyer can advise your friend whether he will be able to study in the USA or not. If the answer is no, then the lawyer can try to get him released so that he can go home.

If the lawyer thinks he will be able to study then the lawyer can press DHS to admit him.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: As long as your friend doesn't lie to the immigration officers, he will be deported without prejudice. If that happens, he will still be eligible to fly back to the US once he is within that 30 day window.

- New Comment: One of my friend is in a similar situation. She was studying abroad and entered to US 30 days earlier. Due to some reason she can't go back to her home country (country A) and she canceled her everything in the country she was studying (country B) previously.

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She told the immigration department that she has fear to go back to country B due to the mentioned reason? since then she was locked up in jail, no one tell her anything about when will she be released?.

She was planning to apply for asylum.. any other option other than seeking asylum?

- New Comment: Which university?

- New Comment: How long have they been detained?

- New Comment: Return and come back?

Title of the post: Online F1-OPT applicants - How long have you been waiting?

Body of the post: Just really curious to see everyone's timelines. I applied late, was supposed to start work on the 23rd - thankfully my company is really flexible.

Applied April 16th

Receipt April 16th

​

No updates since then.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Seems pretty normal and in line with paper applications. 2-3 months wait. Usually for OPT by this time if you haven't got RFE or anything probably mean you'll be approved.

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Since OPT is rather a simple process, there isn't much update in between ? it will literally go from ?received? directly to ?card is being produced?

- New Comment: Takes up to 90 days to receive EAD card I got mine in little above 60 days
- New Comment: Stem opt, applied on May 8th. ?Case Was Received And A Receipt Notice Was Sent?
- New Comment: Its frustrating. Given the volume of paper applications, it makes sense that they are focussing on paper for now. According to the trackers, online applications are only around 10% of paper applications. So if they get to it, they can approve all of online ones in 4-5 days.
- New Comment: Could you tell me around what time did you apply on April 16?
- New Comment: Applied online on April 30, got receipt about 4 days later and now still waiting
- New Comment: the case received on April 5 and the status still reads "Case Was Received And A Receipt Notice Was Sent? on the online portal
- New Comment: Applied April 22, receipt date is also April 22.

Do you have any update on your case?

- New Comment: My receipt date is May 17 and still no update. Any mid-May applicants here?

Title of the post: Has anyone with an expired F1 visa but valid i20 (basically visa expired before you

Body of the post: I know that it should be okay because of automatic revalidation (see [this link](<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/visa-expiration-date/auto-revalidate.html>)) BUT I just want to know who has actually done it and when and was it fine? Bc I know you're doing it at your own risk in case they say you can't re enter or something, but yes, lmk if you did and what happened!

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Also if you did it after covid I would like to know too, but pre-covid as well. Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I did it once to Canada (driving), and once to MX (flying)

Both times they sent me to secondary, and there was no problem.

- New Comment: I did this once flying back from Canada. The CBP officer didn't even raise an eyebrow. He just processed me regularly, no questions asked.

- New Comment: I studied in a border town so I used to go back and forth to Mexico with an expired F-1 visa ALL THE TIME. In 2019 I'd go almost every weekend out there for days at a time and come back with no problem and yeah sometimes I'd get sent to secondary revision which is kind of scary the first time but after that first one you get the hang of it. Then from 2020 to now, I have been on OPT still with my expired visa and have had also NO problems crossing over to Mexico, I been there like at least 6 times in the past year. I don't know about the adjacent islands or Canada but going to Mexico should be fine.

Title of the post: We need help! -- Joint Appeal From 28997 Chinese International Students to Rescind

Body of the post: Hello everyone in this community,

I am Danny Lian, a new Chinese international student from Beijing.

I am sharing a joint letter of appeal from 28997 Chinese international students with federal representatives' offices and the community of education and human rights organizations, hoping to express our severe difficulties with respect to our F1 visa status due to [the Trump Proclamation 10043](<https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-suspension-entry-nonimmigrants-certain>

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-students-researchers-peoples-republic-china/) issued in May 2020.

This racial-discrimination Trump Proclamation unfairly targets innocent students with Chinese origins specifically could cause almost all the new incoming Chinese International Students? F1 visa rejected. In such a dire situation, we are voicing our hope for support from communities that we trust and value.

This joint letter is a united effort from 28997 Chinese International Students from over 100 US Universities, who are desperately seeking help and support from federal representatives? offices and the community of education and human rights organizations.

Could anyone in this community tell us any suggestions and advice to fight against this unreasonable proclamation since Biden has won the whole election?

Please unite efforts in helping us end this cruel and racist **Trump proclamation 10043**.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I don't see this as being changed anytime as the proclamation was sort of a nothing proclamation. When it came out we were worried, but after the details were announced, no one was really worried anymore. Like many Trump policies, it was a lot of flash and show and big words, but in actuality it didn't do muchm

There are 300-400,000 Chinese students in the US. Of those, this policy would impact between 2-5,000 of them based on the best estimated numbers. So around one percent of the total Chinese student population is expected to be impacted. That said, more than likely these students were already being denied under other State Department policies on visa issuance.

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This Proclamation was mostly political posturing for Trump in the U.S. during an election year. Even before this proclamation there was already an internal policy on restricting Chinese students (and other non-allied countries like Russia, Iran, Turkey, etc.) with military and intelligence connections.

Policies like this have been in place for several decades (Cold War) and Trump did not really add anything other than make a previous internal policy more public to show he was "strong on China".

The actual impact to Chinese students as a whole should be more/less unnoticeable. Obviously for those who are denied it is pretty impactful, but we shouldn't really see a difference in approval numbers.

[If you are curious you can see our professional groups evaluation of the proclamation.](<https://www.nafsa.org/regulatory-information/proclamation-suspending-entry-chinese-students-and-researchers-connected-prc>)

As this is a National Security item and has been of concern to the US intelligence community there is no Political Win for Biden to reverse this policy or really address it as the actual impact is tiny or even insignificant if many of the impacted students were already being denied visas.

I can also tell you, China has a similar policy of restricting visas to current/former foreign military or intelligence employees. Most countries have similar policies for non-allied or non-friendly countries.

Trump just made a show of making it more public to gain more foreign policy credibility during an election year.

If you are concerned due to the lack of visa issuance at Embassy/Consulates in China, this policy has nothing to do with that. The embassy closures are due to COVID-19, limited staff after the evacuation flights, and on going staffing

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limitations. We expect that May/June as embassy staff return to China that visa processing will begin again. This is mostly around vaccine availability and retraining/training staff returning to the embassies. There was a lot of turn over and it takes time to get embassy and consular staff trained as well as to get the embassy fully up and running again after a closure.

So, with that context, I hope it helps alleviate some of your concerns on this topic and also why it has not come up as a higher policy agenda.

By all means continue to advocate because having the discussion is NEVER a bad thing, but also don't expect any immediate responses to the proclamation. There is no real political win there outside of removing a talking point from publishing houses wanting to gain views.

Edit:Typos

- New Comment: As noted, this would impact a very small number of Chinese students. It does not apply to undergraduate students at all. Undergraduate students are those studying for an Associate or Bachelor's degree, and that's the majority of Chinese students studying in the United States. It impacts only some graduate level study for only a small percentage of those applying for an F-1 visa for graduate level study.

Everyone should have the right to petition governments, and you should absolutely use freedom of speech to speak out against government policies with which you disagree. If you disagree, it is your right to speak out for and petition for change. I fully support that right for everyone.

OP: "...could cause almost all the new incoming Chinese International Students? F1 visa rejected."

Factually, this Trump act would not any any way result in "almost all" Chinese students being denied F-1 visas as the

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OP claimed in this post. 1% is not 99%. It may not be helpful to try to scare students into thinking their visa will be denied for something that wouldn't even be a consideration for the vast majority of F-1 visa applications.

So speak out. Petition. Gather and protest. But don't scare Chinese students who would not be denied a visa based on this to think they might be denied.

Title of the post: How to look for a OPT position

Body of the post: Hello everyone, as I enter my last semester of undergrad in Mechanical Engineering I been apply to jobs but haven?t been successful.

Does anyone have any advice on how to look for a OPT position after graduation or should I focus on going for a master.

Thank you for any advice!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Not sure in mechanical engineering field, but I?m in data engineering field, and I only started applying for jobs after my graduation and I got an offer within 60 days and now I?m working full-time. I think you should continue applying. I applied via Indeed, over 100+ jobs, and did 20 interviews (at least half of them said sponsor). But if your field is not so great atm, going for a master is not a bad idea at all

- New Comment: Join linkedin, monster, indeed, etc, and look for jobs through there, but do not apply through them. If you find a job for let's say toyota, go to their website and apply directly.

There are many headhunters and contractors that can help, but I found out that it's better to apply directly.

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Also try looking for companies that are e-verified and that have a record of sponsoring for h1b visas. Companies that do sponsor for work visas, sometimes do hire OPT students.

Don't get discouraged and just as a reference, I had 1 interview for every 100 applications submitted.

- New Comment: Does your school or program have a career services department for students? They might have some established employer connections that could be beneficial.

Also search for employers who sponsor individuals for H-1B visas - they might be more likely to consider international students on OPT as well. www.myvisajobs.com

- New Comment: Handshake is one of the options, you can filter which companies will hire opt/cpt !

- New Comment: Sorry to sound disappointing but if you have not found a job before graduating, it will be very hard to find a job on the first 90 unemployment days. With covid, I think the job market is already pretty bad.

The best bet would be to look for masters/phd if you already have that lined up. Focus on getting the job from the start of the program.

Title of the post: Spring 2021 guidance same as fall 2020

Body of the post: I just heard back from SEVP that spring guidance will be same as that of fall 2020 so yes just wanted to tell ya'll.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: They have spread this information everywhere, but official sources. Two interviews and some emails, but no official announcement nor posting via the normal channels.

The DSO professional group is moving forward with this information, but everyone is a little irritated by how this was

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done.

- New Comment: Yay! Where did you hear it though?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Thank you for letting us know. I wish they could at least release a one page guidance outlining that the Fall 2020 guidance will continue on to the Spring 2021 semester so it remains clear for everyone.

- New Comment: Here's another useful page you may want to bookmark if you haven't already.
<https://www.nafsa.org/regulatory-information/sevp-covid-19-guidance-sources>

Title of the post: People returning to the States on an initial I-20, please post your experiences and

Body of the post: There have been varying reports lately on whether we will be allowed to enter, I think it would be enlightening for those who still have to fly if those who already traveled to the States can share their experiences with CBP!

ETA: Please only comment if you were *not* a ?returning? student, so only if you had an initial attendance I-20 upon entering.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I've got the visa interview today in US Embassy in Warsaw, Poland. The consular officer was very kind. My visa application got approved :)

My plan is to travel to the US between August 3rd-August 7th.

I'm quite worried about being denied at the border.

If someone has already entered US with initial or active sevis status - please let us know.

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- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Appointment kept getting cancelled. Eventually applied for an emergency appointment and it got approved. Will be entering USA early august. PhD admission from new zealand.

Title of the post: F1 student visa schengen

Body of the post: Hello,

I have a valid F1 student visa and I am currently in the EU. I emailed the U.S. Embassy in Slovakia and they told me that I can travel to the U.S. without applying for NIE. They referred me to the paragraph stating "***Student travelers that already have valid visas and I-20s may return to the United States without further administrative steps.** Please ensure that you follow any quarantine or social distancing requirements upon your return."

Does this mean us F1s with valid I-20 can travel from Schengen now? I'm so confused why no one has announced that we can travel...

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I contacted Iceland, Vienna, and Poland- they all said it should apply across the board, but to contact the airline to see if they would require any further documentation.

- New Comment: If you are planning to travel in the next few days, keep a copy of the email from the embassy with you, to be on the safe side. If you are scheduling to travel in the coming weeks, I would watch out for any new updates from DHS/ICE in the coming days (if that would factor into your travels plans)

Keep in touch with the Embassy for clarification. I would also contact your country's embassy in the US to seek for

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further clarification as they too would be following the developments in the US right now. Take care

- New Comment: Okay so us embassy in frankfurt now says that the travel ban for f1 students from the schengen area has been lifted

Title of the post: Will an F1 visa holder engaged to a US citizen entering the US have risk of immigr

Body of the post: Hi all,

My question is basically the title. I'm currently on F1 OPT and working at a firm in the US. My girlfriend is a US citizen and we're planning to be engaged before December and be married before end of next year.

My question is around travelling abroad after we're engaged. I've read in certain places that travelling abroad and returning to the US after being engaged is considered immigrant intent and may lead to severe consequences so I'm trying to understand if I need to either cancel my travel or postpone my engagement if there's a non zero chance of this causing an issue either while entering the US or at the time of AoS (if we decide to stay in the US).

Any advice is deeply appreciated. Thanks.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Being engaged isn't a formal thing is it. Just don't tell them.

- New Comment: My husband is on a f1 visa as a canadian and living here in the states with me. As long as f1 holder has an active visa and they are following along with the rules of it then you'll be fine. Plan to apply for greencard asap once you're married so you don't have problems in the future.

- New Comment: I think as long as you don't marry on paper before 90 days of entering you should be fine.

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- New Comment: They are not going to ask you at the border if you are engaged to a USC so unless you bring it up they wouldn't know
- New Comment: Well you're not married, so technically there shouldn't be any issues. But I suggest you find an immigration lawyer if you plan to live with your American spouse in the US in the future. You're going to need one anyway, might as well ask all your questions now so you don't risk making any mistakes that affect your future immigration, or end up needing to leave the country when you are married
- New Comment: Safest thing would be to get married on paper now and apply AOS and travel after you get your AP.

Title of the post: EAD Unemployment days

Body of the post: Hello all,

In the current job market, I was in the same boat as others searching for a job. And I was finally able to score one job. However, the issue was with OPT/EAD processing. My initial start date was July 01st. And my start date with the company was July 08th. Due to timing constraints, I requested an extension of my HR's start date. Now, my new start date is July 22nd. But, I received an update from USCIS on my application approval today (July 03rd). I asked my HR for an earlier start date, but they disagreed.

I am curious whether these 19 days (July 3 to 22) would count towards my unemployment days. And if so, is there something I can do, or should I just leave it as is?

Please help me with your opinions.

Thank you.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: How many days do you got left of unemployment?

As per your question. It will count towards your unemployment, but don't worry. Unless you anticipate to be unemployed once again until the end of your EAD expiration date. You should not worry about it. Hope it goes well with your new job.

- New Comment: You still have 70 days dude , chill. I recommend not annoying HR with flip flopping. I know many if not most companies have set days for onboarding several employees

- New Comment: Adding on to this conversation, when does the unemployment days start? Is it the recommended date that you apply with or is it after you receive the EAD?

- New Comment: Talk to your prof for some volunteering job

- New Comment: Hey! I wanted to know when u applied for it? I'm still waiting on mine

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: So I'm wondering, I ask to start on July 9th but I'm still waiting for my OPT to be approved. Would I need to notice my university and USCIS about unemployment while I'm waiting to be approved? Or I will need to file up unemployment once my OPT is approved or once my EAD card is received?

- New Comment: Yes agree with not contacting HR again, but I would also suggest you to keep applying and give interviews just in case as you still have 20 days.

Title of the post: Am I safe to leave the US? (OPT - Urgent)

Body of the post: Hi,

Reddit Posts

I I recently graduated and will be starting a full-time job in July (15ish). Plan on visiting my home country before I start.

I have my EAD card, I-20 with a recent travel signature, and signed offer letter. I plan on leaving the country on the 1st of July and returning on the 11th of July. Should I be worried about anything?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Make sure visa is valid on reentry

- New Comment: You will be fine. Make sure you have your offer letter in hand, I20 and EAD card at the US port of entry.

- New Comment: its out of context, but what job did you get and how did you get it? i have to get a job soon as well so I was curious

- New Comment: You should be fine.

- New Comment: I just reentered USA with OPT. Officer just checked first page of the I-20 and said welcome to USA. Did not even take EAD card and gave me back. Also he did not check travel signature or where I will work. Just calm, don?t need to be so nervous. If you have something legit you are fine

- New Comment: Yes.

- New Comment: Nope! You?re all set to travel. Once you?ve got your EAD, new I20 and the travel signature, you?re good to leave the country.

- New Comment: If I want to travel during my opt but my visa expired, will it be hard to renew my visa during my opt time at my country? Has anyone got denied the visa renewal with us embassy while in opt or stem opt?

- New Comment: What hole country?s

- New Comment: Given the information, you should be golden then.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: As long as you have i20 valid, valid visa, EAD, and the offer letter you're chilling
- New Comment: My wife travelled recently on fresh OPT and it was never inquired. However, according to USCIS you should have started your employment before your return date or your offer letter should have a date that is older.

<https://www.ice.gov/sevis/travel>

- New Comment: Yes you're safe!
- New Comment: I was in the same situation as you and travelled to Europe no questions asked on my way back. Make sure your F1 Visa is valid at the time of your entry to the US.
- New Comment: Theoretically you are fine. You can still be denied entry for any reason, so traveling until you get another visa is always going to be a risk.

Title of the post: F-1 and pregnant

Body of the post: I'm in my second year but I'm pregnant now and I'm due on November. It will be difficult to attend fall semester. Do international student centers give you an excuse if I bring a medical report? If you had this experience, what should be provided in the letter?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Are you by yourself? If you have your partner, or anyone from family, you will get through this. My wife and I did, and she is still in school, we have a one year old baby.. You got this!
- New Comment: Students could qualify for a medical record course load if authorized by a physician. However, with pregnancy, unless there is a complication or risk, I rarely see a doctor provide this authorization. This weblink gives the requirements for a medical rcl.

Reddit Posts

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevis-help-hub/student-records/manage-program-dates-registration-and-course-load/reduced-course>

- New Comment: First of all, congratulations! I hope you and the baby are doing well.

Talk to your DSO about the process of requesting a medical reduced course load (RCL). There are clear guidelines on what kind of documentation your doctor can provide to support this request. Pregnancy doesn't give you an automatic pass at an RCL, but with the right paperwork, I've seen plenty of pregnant students get this approved.

I also want you to know about other support your school should be offering. Title IX protects any student of any gender whose parenting status changes. This covers you for sure - if the other participant in the baby's creation is also a student, they're under Title IX protection as well. I'm a DSO and my husband attends classes at the school where I work. We are also expecting (due in August) and he is working with the Title IX office on campus to make sure he has accommodations when our child is born.

Best of luck!

- New Comment: I did have a friend who had reduced load because she was pregnant a semester, but you should ask your DSO to make sure your school could/would do that, they may ask for a physicians report or something too.

- New Comment: Generally, no - not unless it's a high risk pregnancy, and you get a medical excuse from your doctor advising bed rest, or something along those lines. In which case, a reduced course load might be possible. Talk with your professors at the start of the semester. Maybe they can let you sit the finals before you give birth, and you can have December to recover before the start of Spring term.

Good luck!

- New Comment: Does your school allow taking an academic break? Mine did after 1 year of taking classes.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Can we have a little more backstory on what happened? like the whole context. We might be able to help you if you tell us everything.

Title of the post: Travelling on F1 OPT while working unpaid

Body of the post: Hi people! I am currently on my F1 OPT visa which started sometime in February. I am also working as an RA for my professor at my university. However, it is unpaid. I miss my parents and I would like to travel back home to see them. Can you tell me if it is safe to travel and come back? My professor doesn't mind. Has anybody travelled recently who is in a similar situation. Please guide me.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Unpaid or paid does not matter. Having a legitimate job relevant to your degree does. If you have all the documentary evidence to substantiate the same, you should be good.

- New Comment: It's safe

- New Comment: I travelled internationally twice on my OPT for 1 month each (i was gone for the entirety of august 2023, april 2024), while doing unpaid research work for a professor. I was fine, wasn't really asked any questions at immigration, just provided my passport, valid I-20, and EAD card. I had all my documents ready (job offer letter on university letterhead with signature, hours per week, location: remote) but they didn't ask for it. Have the documents ready still but don't worry about it.

- New Comment: Yeah, you can travel just make sure your OPT is signed by your DSO. But, I would definitely consider getting a new job because you are definitely being exploited right now

- New Comment: Yea you can travel, I did the same, I was doing unpaid research with my prof on OPT. Just make sure to get a letter from your prof on university's letter head that says you are working under him for x hours of week, and your duties include xyz(related to your major). Along with this you would need your other regular documents, namely, I-20 with employer details and start date, EAD, and valid visa

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Wait... aren't graduate research assistants paid a stipend? Isn't that the deal?

Title of the post: Visa status change to Issued

Body of the post: UPDATE: GOT ISSUED ON JULY 2, INTERVIEWED ON JUNE 11.

Hi everyone,

It has been more than a week since my F1 visa was approved but status still has not changed from Approved to Issued.

Should I be concerned?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Edit (20/6): My status moved from Approved to Issued late 18 June, but haven't received any updates on the passport movement/delivery. US Visa Scheduling website has been in-operational for me since yesterday, hence unable to check the status.

Same here; interviewed and approved on June 6, but with no update on the status from approved to issued.

- New Comment: When it changes from 'approved' to 'issued', it means the visa was printed and pasted in the passport. It sounds like the Department of State's systems problems that we're leaving everyone stuck are resolved, however, they now have a large backlog of visas that need to be printed and they can't do all of them in one day (each one is printed, pasted, and QA'd by an actual human!). We should see the backlog slowly changing to 'issued' over the coming days as they work to print them all.

- New Comment: [deleted]

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I had a dropbox appointment on 4th and still on approved.

- New Comment: Any update?

I'm in the same boat. Visa approved on 11 June at New Delhi US Embassy and still not "Issued".

Title of the post: Sevis terminated

Body of the post: Hi everyone! I've been trying to find a case similar to mine but I haven't so I need some opinions and/or advice.

My SEVIS record was terminated due to being withdrawn from some classes, my instructor changed my grade to an F for my DSO to send a request to reactivate it, now my DSO just noticed I was also withdrawn from one class last spring semester (over a year ago) so I'm back to being screwed (I think?), I asked my professors to also switch my grade to F's but I'm still waiting on that, in the case that they say no what is the better option?

For context I was very sick and had mental health issues which are the main reason I skipped class, I've been in the US for 6 years now, never got into trouble or anything, I entered on a J-1 and did a status change which took forever to be approved and as of right now I haven't been home in about 4 years which is a strong reason why I'd like to go home so I can get an actual visa and visit my family whenever I can while I'm in school, I couldn't ask my previous sponsor to sponsor me again and that's why I didn't go home to re-apply before but I have a new sponsor now. I'm from argentina if it matters.

if there are any questions that can be relevant to answer let me know, TIA

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: First, request a reduced course load from your DSO. Having a legitimate and documented illness qualifies you for a reduced course load without losing your F-1 status (<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevis-help-hub/student-records/manage-program-dates-registration-and-course-load/reduced-course>). Then, discuss with your DSO about going back home and obtaining an F-1 visa.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: hey i?m kind of in the same issue. I was at 13 credits but there was a class that I really needed to take so my advisor asked me to reach out to the professor to add me to class which I did. The professor said he had added me to the class and looks forward to working with me. So i dropped the 1 class I picked prior. The class was one of those classes that started at the second half of the semester so when i didn?t see it on the student portal I reached out to the professor and he said i should go to the tech center. After knowing nthn was wrong with my laptop or account I went to my advisor and she told me that I was never added to class and the professor had lied. I hope I get reinstated.

Title of the post: 2nd F1 Interview soon?

Body of the post: Hi guys, I have recently reapplied and will be attending a 2nd visa interview soon after my first one was denied.

I was extremely nervous the 1st time around and ended up saying more info than required in questions. I am going to a Community College tho and am from Southern Africa.

Any tips and tricks is welcome. Also stories of those who have overcome rejection ??

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hello, I would say be grateful for the 2nd opportunity and, this time, relax and let go of the outcome. If it's for you to stay, you will get accepted. I know it's easier said than done, but don't let fear over take you. Also, prep for the interview. Find out what what are possible questions and rehearse them. Also, look on social media for interview tips. Good luck. Hope this helps.

- New Comment: Hi there! I wanted to ask if you had a form i-20 when you applied the first time?

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Keep a big smile bro, you?ll be fine ! All the best

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Yes, Dude chill! it's a conversation. They will ask you questions and you answer them. The key to a good interview is to drive it. Tell them only the info that they asked for and maybe tell them the things which can lead you to get another question from the topic you know and can talk about.

I hope you get it bro!

Title of the post: F1 visa status stuck at approved

Body of the post: I had my F-1 visa interview on 6th June in Delhi, but on CEAC portal it is showing approved since then and it is not getting issued.

Does anyone has any idea when it will be issued and I will get the passport back ?

Why such delay is happening?

UPDATE: got issued today at around 12:10pm.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: My visa got approved on june 5th HYD. It still shows approved.

- New Comment: Same thing happened with me as well. I got my VISA approved on 6 Jun. Be patient it will be changed unless you have some issues in the background check (which is very rare though)

- New Comment: I'm facing the same issue. My interview was on the 6th of June at the Delhi consulate as well. I had opted for pick-up. Do tell if there's an update on your end.

- New Comment: I am stuck at Approved for 32 days from Munich, Germany for f1 visa. Fully funded PhD in CS student.

- New Comment: I was a visa officer for nine years. This appears to be a worldwide issue with the Department of

Reddit Posts

State's computer systems. That happens sometimes.

- New Comment: hey op any update? i had my interview on the 6th as well in delhi still stuck at approved

- New Comment: Check other posts on this subreddit. Everyone is facing the same issue

Title of the post: Please, someone tell me I did not lose all my chances to apply for OPT.

Body of the post: The story is a bit lengthy, but I've tried my best to write it in the most convenient way for the reader.

Any help and advice are extremely appreciated and helpful, as I'm extremely frustrated and worried. Thank you so much to everyone.

I'm a Business Management major in a good-standing university in Florida. To give you guys a bit of context:

* Graduation date: May 4, 2024.

* Applied for OPT: March 13, 2024.

During my last term of school, I had two classes that were difficult for me, and my passing grade depended on how well I performed on finals week:

* Class X: Final exam date March 29, required grade on the final to pass: 90 (Credit Class)

* Class Z: Final exam date May 2, required grade on the final to pass: 80 (Major Class)

Based on a prior conversation with the professor from Class X, I was aware that I needed a 90 to get a C-, (which he told me was the passing grade, and which I knew was the passing grade in my school, and which, according to the syllabus, is the passing grade).

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On the same date as the final exam, I came back upset as I knew I was nowhere near passing the class. I went ahead and booked an appointment with both the international and academic advisor as I was a week away from graduation, and I knew I needed to act regarding the OPT and summer registration.

I was able to find the international advisor available that same afternoon. He told me that I would need to send a withdrawal letter to the USCIS ASAP, so I did the letter and sent it via overnight delivery with USPS. He told me it was good that I moved quickly and that he would work on extending my I-20 to repeat that class in the summer.

The academic advisor was not available that afternoon, so I booked with her for the following day. I told her I had failed a class a week before graduation and that I might fail another one if I do not get the required final grade. She assured me everything was okay as the office would allow me to walk in the commencement ceremony (my family was arriving in town), but they would just not send my diploma until I completed all credits, which I would need to do in the summer. She also informed me that if I failed Class X, I would need to repeat another class in the summer to cover those credits, and if I failed Class Z, I would need to repeat that exact same class in the summer. She promised to reach out to me the next day to send me the list of available summer classes.

Two days after that meeting, she sent me an email stating that I would graduate as long as I got a D- in Class X and a C- in Class Z. I was shocked as I had never heard of a passing grade of D- in my school, but those were her words, and to my surprise, my grade in Class X ended up being a D; therefore, I did pass Class X.

At this point, I decided to study even harder for Class Z, as the required grade was lower, and I was much more confident than I was for Class X. My family was already in town, and the commencement ceremony was in two days, so I had no time to meet with the international advisor until the next week. Additionally, I had yet to receive my final exam grade from Class Z, so I did not want to touch on the OPT, as there was a risk of failing the class.

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After the commencement ceremony, I went back to my country to spend time with my family, where I received the news that I had passed Class Z as well. Therefore, I now needed to book an appointment with the international advisor. He told me that he was surprised I left the country and that I should send a letter to USCIS requesting the withdrawal to be withdrawn, since I had now passed both classes, and there was no reason to withdraw my OPT. He also advised me that the most convenient thing to do would be to get on an airplane ASAP and come back because if my OPT were to be denied for some reason, I would have a problem. I told him there was no way I could do that until June 11 (one day ago) as I needed to stay for personal and family problems. I wrote the letter titled "Urgent Withdrawal of Withdrawal Request for OPT Application to Maintain OPT Eligibility" and sent it to my cousin who lives in Arkansas. He sent it through overnight delivery on May 14, two weeks after I sent the initial Withdrawal Request.

In short, my OPT was denied on June 4, 2024, and I had my airplane ticket to arrive in Miami on June 10. I had many appointments with my advisor once the OPT was denied, and I understood that there were not many choices to make. According to him, me being out of state and having my OPT denied meant I could not reapply from my country, nor could I reapply if I were to come back as I would enter the country as a visitor on my B-2 and not as an F-1 student. After much back and forth with the advisor and my family, I decided to take the flight on June 10, as I had no one watching my mail to know why it was denied, and I also had my car parked and my apartment to take care of. My advisor also told me that if I were not to take the flight, he could not guarantee a reversal on my application, so I was in a tough spot.

Once I arrived, I checked the letter in my mail and realized they based their decision on my first Withdrawal Request, so it was not a denial but a withdrawal. I have now met with the advisor in person, and it seems that I don't have many options. He told me that he will talk to his boss to see if she has any ideas on what could be done, but apparently applying again is not an option. He mentioned something called "Unbuzzment USCIS," which is a platform for them to ask questions and get solutions to requests that are stuck. However, he told me his office has never used it, and again, nothing is guaranteed.

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As of right now I'm in the states and the officer at the airport told me I'm entering on my B2 for max 6 months. When I first had my goal of studying in the states was because I envisioned myself working here, this is hard for me as my family invested a lot of money in my education and the fact that now it seems I won't get it back its sad and frustrating. Before anyone mentions it, I want to say that this is not the advisor's fault nor university, I was told that if I receive the application denied and I was out of country could be a problem, however, I did not know it was going to be the end. I should have known better before leaving the country, and I should have known better the responsibilities of being a student, therefore knowing the passing grade and not being at risk of failing a class. All of this is my fault and I'm aware I have made some mistakes, if any one you guys could give me any insights, whatever, everything is appreciated, thank you so much for your time.

In conclusion,

- * OPT was denied out of country.

- * USCIS received a mistaken withdrawal letter I sent when I first believed I failed a class and acted immediately. A week later, I was told I did pass the class and sent a letter to withdraw the withdrawal letter, however they based their decision on the first letter.

- * I have attached pictures of all the letters.

- * Picture 1.- First Withdrawal Letter <https://imgur.com/6lbShJ6>

- * Picture 2.- Withdrawal letter to withdraw the OPT Withdrawal Request.

<https://imgur.com/u2B6tJ8>

- * Picture 3.- USCIS Answer, dated on letter June 6. <https://imgur.com/keuHiWr>

- * Re-entered the country on B-2 a week later OPT was denied, I was given 6 months to stay as a visitor.

- * Apparently, now I cannot re apply for OPT.

Reddit Posts

What are my choices?

- * Apart from again applying to another program and paying a ton of money for a master, which I don't want neither I have as an option,
- * What about an immigration lawyer? Is there any way to apply for OPT attaching the letters and making sure an officer understand this was a misunderstanding?
- * Will an immigration lawyer even help with this case?
- * Is there any way I could change my immigration status from B2 to F1?
- * Could the fact that technically my OPT was withdrawn instead of denied play a role here and give me a second chance?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Talk to an immigration lawyer asap. As far as I am aware, by leaving the country after graduation, you've forfeited your 60 day grace period during which you could have applied for your OPT. I'm not too sure though
- New Comment: From what I can see, you graduated and left the country. You have now entered on a tourist visa, and are not eligible for any F1 benefits. You also cannot enter on F1 anymore since again, you've already graduated, and wanting to apply for an OPT is not a valid reason to enter on a student visa.

The only way to get OPT benefits now is likely going to be doing a PhD.

Didn't your advisor or international students office inform you that you should not leave the country after your final semester, before receiving your EAD card?

- New Comment: Well... Yea... You are no longer eligible for OPT. For multiple reasons.

1. You withdrew your application. (You cannot undo a withdrawal request)

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2. You left the country.

3. You entered on a tourist visa.

This is a simple case. You are no longer eligible. You don't have a valid reason to argue that you are eligible.

>Apart from again applying to another program and paying a ton of money for a master, which I don't want neither I have as an option,

This is your option.

>What about an immigration lawyer? Is there any way to apply for OPT attaching the letters and making sure an officer understand this was a misunderstanding?

No. You made an OPT request. Then you asked to withdraw it. They followed your request. Then next proper step was to reapply for OPT. You failed to do that, so... Here we are.

>Will an immigration lawyer even help with this case?

No. There was no mistake on the governments part.

>Is there any way I could change my immigration status from B2 to F1?

Yes, but it would absolutely change nothing regarding your OPT. application. That is gone forever. Get a new degree if you want OPT.

Reddit Posts

>Could the fact that technically my OPT was withdrawn instead of denied play a role here and give me a second chance?

You are absolutely, fully, and without any question or doubt completely and unequivocally no longer eligible for OPT based on your degree.

- New Comment: This is absolutely crazy. Your family, friends in the same university or your DSO should have strictly warned you against traveling.

I am so sorry OP but I think the ship has sailed. You re-entered on a B2 visa and the I-94 record will indicate that.

Its insane to me how you left the states in these circumstances. I understand there could be a shit ton of reasons for it but this was the biggest do or dont of your life considering this was your whole future in the states. I would advise you to take admission in a fast-track masters (typically 3 semesters including next summer) in the same university and try to secure funding for that.

Keep visiting professors and asking for waivers and hopefully the only thing you lose is a year of your time and not any money.

Dont forget to not lose hope and remember, the US is not the end of the world. Whatever happens, you got this.

- New Comment: This is my suggestion (I am not a lawyer) - speak to your DSO to see if there is another program you can apply to on the level you just completed.

For example, you completed a BS in Computer Science? is there a program in BS in Computer Engineering you can take? If so, are the core classes you took in CS eligible to apply towards CE? Perhaps if this is an option then you only need to complete an additional semester to graduate in CE. Since you did not utilize your OPT at the Bachelor's level,

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you are still eligible to apply at the completion of the 2nd Bachelors.

If this is a possibility, you can take this summer to depart and reenter the US with a new I-20 for Fall.

Another possibility, does your school have a 4+1 program? Your current SEVIS record is still within the 60 day grace period so they can do a change of level for the Masters program. Again, you would need to do a travel and re-entry to reactivate your f-1 status this summer.

Lastly, read through the USCIS notice to see if there is a way to appeal the decision. If so, you may want to consider submitting all of your documentation (do you have emails) and ask your DSO to write you a support letter.

All of these options have costs attached to them but it may be worth it to still try to pursue, especially if you are in a stem field. That's 12 months of opt and then the stem you would be forfeiting if you just return home.

- New Comment: They're talking about the USCIS ombudsman. But that office won't be of much help to you I think

- New Comment: damn

- New Comment: Not sure what to advise in such a complicated situation. Just be prepared for worst case as you try to manage the situation. 6 months is better than nothing, try finding out your options -- maybe a H1B employer, or enrolling in another degree program that would put you on F1 again for the spring intake.. Immigration lawyer might help find other options better suited to your situation

Title of the post: 1 year validity

Body of the post: I just got my visa approved and I'm starting my 5+ year PhD in August. The only thing that bugs me is that the expiration date is in a year. I don't understand why I have to renew it every time, going back to my home country for at least a couple of weeks (hoping I can get those many days off) and hope I get it approved again. Nobody

Reddit Posts

ever warned about this and I feel kinda betrayed lol.

Do I have to pay the MRV fee every time I apply for a renewal? Is it normal to get a one year validity? What if I have to travel abroad for a conference when my visa has expired?

I also come from a EU country, in case that makes a difference.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: They generally issue F1 for 5 years.

If you want to travel then only you need to renew visa.

Visa is needed to enter the country, legality of your status in the US is based on your i20. So even if the visa expires and if you maintain your student status then it's fine.

Only thing you won't be able to travel

- New Comment: A lot of Chinese PhD students are like this due to stressful relations between the two countries. I was lucky to get a 5 year visa, but others would need to renew (which could take a while) whenever they travel abroad for a conference, or choose to speak at the conference remotely. That way they can still stay in the US until you finish their studies.

- New Comment: It's weird for a EU country. Which passport do you hold?

As for me, since I'm from Burma, that is my story with US visa. Everytime I need to go for a conference, I have to set aside days (and money) to renew the visa outside of US.

- New Comment: Extend your visa before it expires. That way you don't fear being locked out.

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Title of the post: Employer change while F1 STEM extension pending

Body of the post: Hey everyone so basically my Post-Completion OPT is set to expire on 06/25/2024 so I applied for my STEM extension way before in April I.e on 04/25/2024 with the employer I had on my initial OPT, so here's a thing I recently secured a job offer from another employer like in the first week of June. So I'm not really sure how to change employer while STEM extension is pending given that the average time processing is 133 days. Some folks say that it's better to go for premium processing and get it approved and then change my employer. I'm stuck to either go for premium processing or is there any other way, if so what's the other way for doing that?

I have been clueless about this. So just help me with the suggestions. I have been also researching on internet but I'm getting diversified answers. So I'm just hoping to get a concise suggestion from y'all

Thanks in advance !!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hi,

Do you have any update on this???

Title of the post: Invest \$2k/month in 401K as F1 VISA holder on OPT

Body of the post: I'm currently on OPT/F1, don't know if I stay in the US long-term because of the H1B lottery next year. Worst scenario, I'll have to leave in Feb 2025, but may comeback for grad school (not sure).

I already maxed out my RothIRA this year, and contributing to the max % my employer will match (6%). However, I still

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have \$1k-\$2k cash left every month after spending on rent, grocery, travel, etc. **Where should I invest these extra \$\$\$, raising my 401k contribution or put it in normal brokerage account?** 401k is better for tax purpose, but I'm worried about the penalty & tax of 401k too.

Thanks all!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: See /r/personalfinance

- New Comment: HYSA

- New Comment: If you don't stay and retire in the US, 401k is a bad deal. Even if you wait until 60, withdrawing as a non-resident is a flat 30% tax, unless the tax treaty with your home country says otherwise.

Title of the post: Mistakes while applying for EAD card.

Body of the post: Hey everyone, a friend of mine got into a lot of trouble recently because of doing a digital signature on his I20s while applying for his EAD card. Apparently this is very common mistake students do, and our DSO even mentioned it in the EAD application slide deck, but my friend somehow missed it.

I will be applying for my EAD in a few days, I don't want to make mistakes like this. what are some common mistakes that students do while applying for their EAD cards?

Edit1- When i mentioned digital signature, i meant using a signature that the software does for you. Eg Docusign. Since most of yall did in your ipads and surface books, i do not think the pdf document registers it as a digital signature but rather an edit to the pdf. The best practice is to print the i20, sign it and then scan it before uploading.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I've signed my i-20 digitally from my tablet? got my EAD without any issues. What exactly was the problem here?

- New Comment: Signed it with my Surface Pen. Got EAD twice without problem.

Don't know what you're talking about

- New Comment: The digital signature that OP is referring to is the signature that the software does for you after verifying your credentials which is generally timestamped. That kind of signature is not allowed. The signature that you do by hand using a digital pen on your iPad or tablet should be acceptable.

- New Comment: Okay I just did the same thing, can someone explain?

- New Comment: I think this was more enforced pre-COVID. I've signed digitally and had no issues.

- New Comment: What's digital signature on I-20?

- New Comment: May I ask a question, which may not be relevant here. Should we upload all the I-20s we have so far (I have 5-6 of them), or just the latest one and/or the one with the OPT recommendation?

- New Comment: Did they reject their application? Even I signed digitally and now I am a bit worried.

- New Comment: Is it mandatory to upload I-20 with student signature? I just uploaded the original pdf without my signature.

Title of the post: F1 visa refusal chances for full aid in undergrad

Body of the post: My i20 shows 0\$ as i got a fully funded scholarship award from a reputed University. What are my odds of being denied. I know it's not 0 as I have seen people getting denied on full aid. What things that I need to do to eliminate any chance of rejection from here ?

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I think u are ok, but for peace of mind you could take a bank statement with extra money.

The most important thing really is just showing ties to your country.

- New Comment: You are very unlikely to be denied on financial grounds, but you can definitely be denied for other reasons such as clear immigrant intent, lack of ties to home country, or others.

- New Comment: You should be good, make sure to take some financial documents with you though.

- New Comment: Do you mind if I ask how you got a full ride scholarship for undergrad?

- New Comment: Document it and you'll be good. It's unlikely that you would get refused for financial reasons.

Try your best to document your ties to your home country as you might not get a chance to explain it you've gotta make it obvious for the officer

- New Comment: Chill, you will be fine. Most likely they won't even look at the financial section of your I-20. Though if they ask "how do you plan to sponsor your education," just say you have substantial scholarship and your parents have a savings of xxx rs and that's it. I would also make sure to get my bank statement which shows atleast first year worth of expenses.

Title of the post: Doubt regarding on campus + internship during Summer

Body of the post: I have a potential offer lined up for an internship, which would come under the 40hrs of my CPT cap. I also have an offer letter from my on campus job for 35 hours a week. I won't be utilizing my CPT for the on campus work. I wanted to know if there are any legal downsides if I pursue both the jobs. I am pretty confident that I would be able to manage the workload if it comes to it. Just wanted to know if it's legally allowed while on F1 status and any repercussions/consequences it might have down the road. (for H1B, OPT, etc.)

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It is allowed legally. But depends on your university if they allow it or not. My university allows it and I'm also doing the same

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: You can work more than 20 hours even in fall and spring if your University approaches that as a Co-Op and you are enrolled as a student full time during the academic session. It is capped at a Max of 365 days though.

You can also work on campus along with your CPT in summer if your University allows, as it is not considered CPT, at the same time, but you must be a student during that time. Most universities require you to take internship credits even in academic breaks such as summer, so that requirement is satisfied. And it does not matter if you are a TA or in any other contractual role or not. As long as you are registered as a student in that quarter/semester and taking credits, you can work on campus for up to 20 hours during the semester and work on an authorised CPT Too.

Note: I'm not a lawyer, but this is my knowledge based on my own experience as well as that of others from my University.

Edit: As for your case of 75 (40+35) hours a week, it is dependent on how your internship is treated at the University, and I would advise you to check with your academic advisor and DSO before proceeding, since it is not clear if you are eligible for more than 20 hours during the summer for on-campus employment.

<https://www.ice.gov/sevis/practical-training>

<https://www.ice.gov/sevis/employment#offCE>

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: Job Offer but no OPT

Body of the post: Hello All,

I am an international student that landed a highly competitive job in NYC. However, my OPT is still processing and the employer is asking me to return the offer letter within 48h.

I applied for premium processing, but am not sure whether it will get approved within 48h. Should I accept the offer and hope my OPT gets approved, or how do people usually go about this?

Appreciate any advice

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Did you explain your OPT situation? Some employers allow to start after 2-3 weeks, even a month. Accepting an offer does not mean to start immediately.

- New Comment: What's the start date on the offer letter? Isn't returning the offer letter just you accepting the offer?

Most people apply for jobs and accept offers way before they get OPT. As long as you followed instructions there's no reason for your OPT to be denied.

You don't need the EAD in hand to accept a job offer.

- New Comment: I signed my offer in October 2021 with a start date in July. You are fine.

Your employer will require you to verify your status via I-9 at most 1 day before work. As long as your OPT is approved by then, you are golden.

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- New Comment: The only thing that matters is that you get the OPT card by the start date. Accept the offer letter and leave it at that.

- New Comment: You don't need EAD to accept the offer, only to start working.

- New Comment: Congrats on the offer! Accept the offer IMMEDIATELY then you will probably go through a background check which might take some time. Also once you get an offer letter, you have the option to decide the start date.

Since you have filed for premium processing, your process should be expedited like really quickly and you SHOULD ideally get the EAD card within 3-4 weeks, if not 2.

Make an educated guess and give them the start date. A month ahead is preferable.

- New Comment: Start date beginning of June

- New Comment: Just communicate with the recruiter. Typically they'd be okay waiting for few weeks

- New Comment: A response doesn't mean a start date. You can accept and let the employer know that you need 2-4 weeks before you can start. You can also mention about card being processed.

- New Comment: Given your start date (June 1st) and you have applied premium processing for OPT, I believe you would be able to receive EAD prior to that, so it should be fine. Hope this comment will give you some reliefs before starting a new journey in NYC. Good luck on that!

- New Comment: Please accept the offer. You don't need EAD to accept the offer. In case you don't receive your EAD by May 25th also, you can explain your situation. Most probably they will wait for you to join rather than getting into the whole recruitment process again.

- New Comment: Hey Do you have any work experience in your home country?

- New Comment: Good to accept. Opt doesn't need to be approved to accept a job post graduation. It needs to be

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approved before start date.

- New Comment: One thing to note. Even if you get OPT approved, it will take around a month for the card to get shipped.

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Can anyone help me interpret this generic response from the embassy? Im kind of

Body of the post: Context: in 2022 june i got a F1 visa for a summer program in the US. I returned in august and didn't visit the US since then. Now i got into an undergrad program and they gave me a new i20 since last one couldnt be transferred as it was expired or sumthn idk my dso said i should get a new one. So i have a new SEVIS number and a new institution. I emailed the embassy about my situation and got this generic response.

Tldr: Can someone please let me know do I need a new F1 visa? It is valid till 2027 but the sevis number and institution name dont match with the I-20 and i have completed my initial entry on it.

Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: That email says you are fine to travel.

Based on your description, you are fine to travel.

- New Comment: I have entered the US multiple times while the name of the institution on the visa and the I-20 were different. There shouldn't be a problem as long as your I-20 is current and signed, your visa is unexpired, and your passport is unexpired.

- New Comment: If anyones wondering for future reference, heres the reply I got from CBP:

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?Thank you for contacting the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Information Center.

Students who have a valid (unexpired) F or M visa that was originally used for a different school or program can generally return to the United States with the same visa, even if the visa annotation has outdated information (e.g., school name, program dates, or SEVIS number). The student must have a Form I-20 with the current information.

Students should consult their Designated School Official prior to traveling. For further assistance, students can contact the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP). The SEVP manages schools and nonimmigrant students and their dependents in the F and M visa classifications on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security. Contact information can be found at <https://www.ice.gov/sevis/contact>.

- New Comment: Also, should I email CBP support so I have some sort of proof that I don't need a new visa in case the CBP officer asks for it?

- New Comment: What did your DSO say about it?

- New Comment: I think you should be fine with using your current visa. But I'd check in with your DSO at your undergrad institution, they can confirm it for you.

- New Comment: u/Codetornado some advice please

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Post degree things to do while moving back to home country

Body of the post: Hi everyone,

I am a student in the USA university and planning on moving to India around July this year. I have been trying to get

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information about what are the steps I need to take as wrap up my stuff here. For example, what happens to my credit cards, bank accounts - do I have to withdraw money from all of them or I can have them irrespective of where I reside, SSN they are individual and for life but do I need to inform some office to prevent identity theft, maintain my credit history, what about taxes, etc.

I have reached out to OIA multiple times to understand and if there is a list of things I am sure people have made this move. Not every student ends up staying here forever but they have not been helpful. The videos I found also just compared the life in the USA vs home country, etc.

I am hoping if anyone here who has done/ is in the process of doing the similar move from the USA to home country or they know someone who did it can help me. Thank you so much!!

I understand this is not during the F1 visa question but I believe wrapping up is also part of the F1 journey and could be helpful to others.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Definitely freeze your credit and change/remove your phone number from various websites especially financial ones. Not only may you run into issues where you can't access them but if someone gets your number they may be able to access through 2FA.

I took a year of academic leave and not being able to enter many apps/websites was extremely annoying and having to reach out to customer support.

If you plan on ever possibly coming back to America it might be great to maintain your credit card as this will build your credit. You could simply put a monthly recurring bill on it and pay it off. I would probably close my banks or at least

Reddit Posts

remove most of the money and leave a minimum amount needed to maintain the account if desired.

- New Comment: Are you leaving because the job market is tough or is it because you just don't want to stay here post college graduation? Just wondering

Title of the post: Delayed Stem OPT Application

Body of the post: Hey guys,

I applied for my STEM OPT November 2023 and I'm yet to receive a decision on my case. My EAD is expired and I'm due to renew my driver's license in a week. My current status says Case received and a receipt notice has been sent but I have not received a receipt notice either by mail or uploaded on my online uscis account. I have been contacting USCIS contact center since January 2024 and I still haven't been given a solution. I have also raised about 3 service requests and still no resolution. I am based in Indiana and the BMV has refused to renew my license without this receipt notice and they tell me I have no other option than to keep contacting USCIS. I need some advice from y'all please. What can I do to expedite this issue. It's frustrating as it isn't my fault but an oversight from USCIS yet I am left to bear the consequences.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: At this point applying for premium processing is what I would have done

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Can we get the driver license extension using just the receipt?

Does it say approval notice or an application notice?

- New Comment: Whats the relationship between drivers license and EAD?

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- New Comment: Did you get your stem OPT approved after all OP?

Still waiting on mine, tomorrow is 3 months since applied :(

- New Comment: any update?

Title of the post: I-20 shows personal funds as \$0 even though I submitted bank documents

Body of the post: Hi! I just got my I-20 form for a masters degree. In spite of submitting my own bank docs with more than \$10,000 dollars in it, the I-20 lists my personal funds as \$0. (I do have tuition and stipend from the college, but still)

Should I reach out to the college to change it? Will this impact my chances? I know I can show all my documents at the Visa appointment, but I'm still a bit worried since I can't find any similar stories on Google.

<https://preview.redd.it/wbu94agre0sc1.png?width=1096&format=png&auto=webp&s=6f70801821249ea69870cdb38c5786e4e3ce9472>

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I had the same situation and I asked my university about it. They said that this was the standard for funded students, so it shouldn't be a problem. You can show my own bank statements during the interview as you said.

- New Comment: Nah, you are good.

Your i-20 says that the stipend is fully covering living expenses, and that what the visa officer will be looking for. Feel free to bring your bank statement for an interview, If you need extra confidence.

- New Comment: It's showing 0 because you don't need to fund yourself lol

Title of the post: Is a greencard EAD really more valuable than an OPT EAD?

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Body of the post: I got my greencard EAD approved today but my greencard itself is still processing. So I guess I'm confused if I'm really in a better position than being on OPT? I'm a comp sci major but wondering if companies will still discriminate against me since I'm technically not on a greencard?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: OPT EAD requires you to work on jobs related to your major.

GC EAD is unrestricted.

If you don't intend to work on jobs unrelated to your major, OPT EAD and GC EAD has little difference.

Crappy companies will abuse immigrants, regardless of what EAD you hold. Companies that do discriminate against EAD holders will typically treat both types of EAD similarly.

- New Comment: I have a similar situation, once you use the EAD you will lose the F1 status. Since I'm still at school I can't use my EAD yet

- New Comment: How did you get GC? Your work experience? Highest degree level? How many years on F1?

Please share.

- New Comment: Yes. OPT EAD will expire and you cannot stay unemployed for a long time

- New Comment: Of course man! I guess your I-140 got approved and your change of status I-485 filing is underway. Green card means you are a legal immigrant and on the way to becoming permanent resident. You can work multiple jobs, any industry. OPT EAD doesn't stand anywhere close to GC EAD.

- New Comment: I'm on the same boat and my lawyer recommended to for sure stay on GC EAD!!! Also not sure if you would even get OPT EAD since you technically have to file the same form (I-765), which you already got approved?

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Title of the post: Very anxious

Body of the post: My dad left for the US in 2017 on b1/b2, due to family issues i cut all the contact with my dad and his side of the family in 2018. Also My mom divorced him in 2018. I believe he is still in the US and probably ruined his b1 visa. My mother on the other hand is my sponsor, pays for my school and has 2 business back in my home country, Income is high. Will this affect my visa? I dont want my horrible dad to ruin my chances of getting F1. Help im scared

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Your dad has no bearing on your F1 visa in your case
 - New Comment: No it won't spoil your chances, even if you are asked in visa interview you can just mention your mom dad are divorced and have no information on that. It won't be a problem, all the best!
 - New Comment: Don't worry i am in USA, my father had filed immigration after coming to usa on b2 when i applied for my f1 visa. So, i just suggest one thing mention everything honestly if asked.. visa officer asked me where is your father i told her he is in USA but we are separated. And i got my visa although my interview was bit long but went well.
- Good luck!

Title of the post: Postpone graduation to the Summer

Body of the post: Hi, I'm a master's student and I have a valid visa and I-20. I applied to graduate in May and I'm doing a reduced course load semester (only taking 6 credits). However, I'm not sure if I can finish my project and manuscript in time to accomplish it. What should I do to still enrolled for the Summer and graduate in August?

I know some people from other departments that postponed their graduation for a year, but they don't know about the process cause it was their advisor who did the process.

The International students office is closed due to spring break, so I am doing my own research before going to talk with

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them.

Can someone give me an friendly advice?

Thank you so much in advance

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: From what I know, if you have a valid academic reason to extend your graduation, which means, not being able to complete your project, your advisor needs to sign off the form and you need to request to extend your I-20 in a timely manner - and this needs to be done before your I-20 end date. After that, you'd need to enroll in the project credits according to your school's rules and regulations for the summer semester (assuming you are done with all required coursework for your program).

- New Comment: Check with your school if they allow Masters student to walk before finishing their thesis if you care about walking.

- New Comment: If required, register for 1 credit Research for Summer. Most Graduate Schools require to enroll in at least one credit during Summer for those on stipends. Just talk to your academic advisor/mentor for extension. Talk to your DSO and tell them that you need to extend your I-20. It's simple and easy process.

Title of the post: How to handle 90 days OPT grace period?

Body of the post:

Edit 2: This query has been resolved but not deleting because other people might find this helpful. Result of this post: After taking suggestions from many people and going through labor law, we are considering to reach out Professors to have volunteer job which is directly associated to degree program.

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Hey there, so one of my friend recently graduated and he also received approved EAD from USCIS but he doesn't have offer letter yet. I heard that, having offer letter (for unpaid job) from consulting company can help you to stop the OPT clock by report employment information to your DSO.

So I just wanted to know, Is it true? And please tell us more about it.

For your better information, he scheduled couples of interviews in coming days but process is taking bit more time. And if he gets offer letter from consulting company to stop OPT clock then he will not be seeking sponsorship for either H1B or STEM.

Edit 1: Due to lack of information we couldn't mention about volunteering job earlier in this post so we meant for volunteers job.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: USCIS has been cracking down on fraud like that.

Here's a lawyer posting about an example company that's recently caught:

<https://www.rnlawgroup.com/apex-it-systems-inc-fraud-alert-uscis-denies-stem-opt-extensions-and-h-1b-visas/>

USCIS sometimes even waits a while before shutting down the operation, so a few students think they got away with it, before penalizing everyone.

Ultimately, the person who suffers the consequences is the student. Because of the immigration fraud, they'll have any future visas and EADs (e.g. STEM OPT, H-1B) denied. With one bad decision, they've permanently ended any chance of working in the US, returning home with lots of loans and nothing to show for it.

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- New Comment: Advise ?your friend? not to go down this route. He might land himself in big trouble!
- New Comment: There is no such thing as a 90 days OPT grace period.

To maintain your F-1 status stay in the US during Optional Practical Training you need to be engaged full-time in practical training.

An absence of doing the thing required to maintain your F-1 status in excess of 90 days results in the loss of that F-1 status. That is not a grace period. That is a "you need to be doing practical training, and if not, your status is over."

The only F-1 grace periods are 60 days.

1) If you complete your degree program requirements by your I-20 program end date, you earn an F-1 grace period of up to 60 days if you haven't already applied for OPT. During that grace period, you can still apply for OPT.

2) If you apply for OPT, and you come to the end of that OPT without having exceeded the unemployment days maximum, you earn an F-1 grace period of up to 60 days that follows the OPT authorization end date.

During grace periods you cannot work. They are up to 60 days to wrap up your affairs in the US to prepare to leave from your non-immigrant stay. Though during those grace periods you can take action to extend your F-1 stay (start a new degree program, for example) or change to a different status in the US (H-1B for example).

- New Comment: Reach out to a professor and see if they can offer you a volunteer position. DO NOT go down the consulting route.
- New Comment: >I heard that, having offer letter (for unpaid job) from consulting company can help you to stop the OPT clock by report employment information to your DSO.

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Immigration fraud. If you are associated with such an entity the US government has Cancelled and denied current and future immigration applications.

- New Comment: If you have a good rapport with any of your professors you can ask them for a volunteer research position instead of going down this route.

- New Comment: Is this company public or private?

- New Comment: ?Your friend? yeah I?m sure.

Dude, stop committing immigration fraud and giving all internationals a bad rep.

Title of the post: 214b denial

Body of the post: My gf just got a 214b denial for her f1 student visa to study English as a second language in the US.

She?s a 3rd year law student in her home country, has done internships, and her whole family is in her home country.

One issue might?ve been that I live in the US and she?d be staying with me during her course.

Any tips on how to show stronger ties to our home country so she can reapply?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Unfortunately, a law student suddenly gave up studying and going to the US for an ESL program is too similar to countless unmarried women who use it as an MRS degree.

- New Comment: [deleted]

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- New Comment: Are you a US Citizen/GC Holder?
- New Comment: Tell her to apply for Master of Law (LLM) that will increase her chance as she will be in same profession seeking advanced degree
- New Comment: Lmao, who would even apply to English courses in 2024? Everybody knows that US consulates are stricter than ever on language courses

Title of the post: CPT Related to Major

Body of the post: Hey guys!

I recently got a brilliant internship offer it was hard to say no to, however, it's not very closely related to my major. It is related to my minors but apparently that doesn't count for anything.

The internship is kinda a general engineering one in renewable energy and my major is Industrial and Operations Engineering with a minor in sustainability.

Is it possible I won't get my CPT approved for this?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You could really stretch it to say something like this internship is helping to develop the engineering foundations you learned in undergrad. I personally don't think you'll have any issue, you could probably even come up with a better way to link it since you're more familiar.
- New Comment: Try to relate the courses you have taken till now with this internship of yours. Even if it's related any one of the courses, then you should be good
- New Comment: The federal regulation setting the rules for any CPT to be authorized states the position has to be "an integral part of an established curriculum."

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"_Related_" is a word that people who don't have a good understanding of CPT use. The regulation does not say just "related." The standard is higher than only being related.

A DSO would then not be in compliance with federal regulations if authorizing CPT for any position that is not _integral_ to the _established_ curriculum (plans of study for students in that major).

If that cannot be documented/established, the DSO should not be authorizing CPT.

- New Comment: It depends on your DSO and your exact work duties. Try to explain the situation to your employer and see if they can vouch for you. I got CPT authorization because although I work for a Geoscience government agency (USGS) my boss and director of the state branch where I work at drafted an employment letter with very detailed work duties highlighting how it is connected to my second major (CS, my first is EE), including about courses I am taking and will take in the future according to my curriculum. I got approved thanks to that.

- New Comment: My school said that if CPT can't be done bc it's not connected enough to the major, you can do pre-completion OPT

- New Comment: I have seen plenty of people 'stretched' the definition of established curriculum (this is still a gray area).

For example, I have seen a couple of IE people who jumped ship to SWE and/or interned for SWE position. When asked, IE, who specializes in system aspect of their degree, do program and write optimized system code. and this is PART of your curriculum.

Similarly, I have also seen someone who did computational chemistry/physics switched to SWE (though this is on the PhD level so the area is even grayer) and had no problem justifying it.

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For your case, it is actually not that far off of a case. General engineering consists of writing technical reports, potentially some CAD work, developing new products, implementing tools or systems for managing infrastructure or projects (ofc, ldk what the specific entails but this is what engineers do). In fact, I actually find IE to be the closest to general engineering. So I think you will be fine.

Your minor aligns with the type of industry. (but that is secondary as your major IE fits the "general engineering" job description)

- New Comment: Not saying you should do this, but I know people at my school who 'changed their mind' and declared to be a major related to their internship and applied to CPT, before 'changing their mind' again to go back to their original major.

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Switching H1B to F1

Body of the post: Hi, I am applying for grad school at the moment and thinking to study full time in the Fall and would need to convert to F1 visa. (I'm not here to get convinced and be told that I can study while working).

Question I have is, when can I quit my job and be lawfully/legally stay in the US? Traveling back and forth is a pain and is a waste of money and time. I'd rather pay for my rent. I am okay just having my I797A notice. When I got my H1B approved, I also didn't leave the country. I have never been out of status when converting from F1 to H1B.

I understand that with F1 status, if I come from out of country, I can only enter a month prior to the start of the semester.

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But what about those already in the country? I'd like to take a break from work before starting school without having to leave the country.

Update: My H1B to F1 change of status is approved. As recommended by my DSO, I worked with an immigration lawyer. Used premium processing. There was a small hiccup where my application was sent to the wrong USCIS office. But once it's accepted by the correct USCIS office, it took a week to be approved. No RFE requested.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you will need a visa stamp note that H1->F1 applicants often face greater scrutiny regarding ties to home country and non-immigrant intent.
- New Comment: Off topic, why you switching to F1?
- New Comment: Hi op I'm applying for I-539 with premium processing rn. Do you mind if I dm you?
- New Comment: After termination of the employment supporting your H-1A you have 60 days to put your affairs in order: leave the country or transition to another visa status. If you change to F-1 in-country (as opposed to consular) you will have to wait for their approval to start studying. Consider that Universities have their own admission calendar, and as an international student you cannot adjust your status until they issue you an I-20. That's all you need to time the end date of your work without risking being at limbo.
- New Comment: I went from H1b to F1 for a fully funded position, and had no issues at the interview. The VO only asked me about the program, and who's funding it. Let me know if you've additional questions!

Title of the post: Did not use F1 visa issued last year.

Body of the post: Last year, I was admitted to a PhD program and went through the motions of getting my F1 visa. Then I asked my department for a deferral, and was granted a deferral. In my infinite stupidity, I left my old passport in the living room and many pages including a few visas got torn out by my 4 year old cousin.

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I now need to reapply for a visa, and I am seriously concerned that the visa officer will deny my visa on the basis of having been issued a visa last year and not using it. What documents do I bring to the interview?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You are thinking too much. Apply again. You'll be fine, especially given that you were approved once earlier.

Basically, consular officers are aware that shit happens.

Bring the same set of documents you brought the last time.

- New Comment: Nah, they like it when you have previous visa's especially if you didn't use it. Shows good ties to where you currently live, and that you aren't just budding to go to the USA immediately

- New Comment: "Why did you go for a visa interview before asking for a deferral?" - VO may ask you this.

Title of the post: F1 Out-of-Status; Should I do F1 Reinstatement or Traveling Outside US & Reentra

Body of the post: Hello Everyone,

My F1 visa is somehow out of status. I got an internship offer in Dec. 2023 and sent my materials in time to my

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department and got replies from them saying 'Your internship request has been approved' and registering relevant credits. However, they forgot to issue approval in the system so I cannot submit my CPT application until the end of Jan in 2024.

I thought it was okay so I started my internship. Then my DSO contacted me saying this is illegal and I am out of my F1 visa status. She asked me either to apply for F1 reinstatement (I-539) or travel outside the US and reenter to activate my status.

My F1 visa has expired. Not sure which option works best for me.

1. I saw someone said F1 reinstatement cannot be approved because this might belong to unauthorized employment.
2. F1 reinstatement seems to take a very long time. What if I graduate prior to its approval? I will lose the eligibility of the OPT application.
3. If I decide to travel outside the US to reapply for the F1 visa, is it possible to get rejected because of this issue?

I am really scared and nervous these days. Hope anybody can give me some suggestions on best practices or insights in this issue. Really appreciate it. Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >1. I saw someone said F1 reinstatement cannot be approved because this might belong to unauthorized employment.

Correct. You cannot reinstate your status if termination was for unauthorized employment.

>2. F1 reinstatement seems to take a very long time. What if I graduate prior to its approval? I will lose the eligibility of

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the OPT application.

Then the petition will not be valid and won't be processed because you need to be eligible after approval. And yes, OPT would be lost.

>3. If I decide to travel outside the US to reapply for the F1 visa, is it possible to get rejected because of this issue?

Yes. You can be denied for previous employment violations.

There isn't a magic fix or a guarantee of returning to the US or getting this visa. It will depend on your visa interview.

- New Comment: How did you resolve this if you did?

- New Comment: In my understanding, you should hire one immigration attorney and you should also revise your case properly (to have minor details). Once you do this then contact your DSO (behalf on your attorney) to make this entry again because it's clearly their mistake and your career shouldn't be on stake.

Note: It's not a legal advise, for better clarification talk with licensed immigration attorney.

- New Comment: something like this happened to me but not exactly i chose to leave and come back because it's more sure than the reinstatement plus i got to see my family

Title of the post: STEM OPT APPLIED , laid off before EAD arrived and STEM date kicks in? .

Body of the post: Anyone knows how many days of unemployment days I will have until next role ? My initial opt would ends on 2/26/24 and 2/28/24 would be my opt stem starting day but laid off happened 02/09/2024

Edit?Thanks for sharing ? my case is little different cause the laid off happened just right before the end of initial opt .

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You have 90 days of unemployment for regular opt and then 60 days of unemployment for STEM opt. That is a total of 150 days in total for the 3 years of opt. So you can calculate how much days you have left based on that

- New Comment: OP, any update on your case - similar boat. Applied for stem opt extension on 6/5 and then got news of layoff that afternoon with termination date as 6/5. Haven't applied for premium yet and try for company to keep me on payroll for slightly longer (doubt they would). My OPT expires on 7/31 and stem application was pending when I got laid off.

Title of the post: How hard is it to buy/lease a car as an F1 PhD student?

Body of the post: I was looking to finding good deals for buying/leasing a new/slightly used car.

But everywhere I see they say its next to impossible to get a reasonable deal as a "temporary" non US citizen.

Is it really that hard? Based on my stipend, it looks like if I get a reasonable deal, I should be able to get a new car(budgeting around 750 a month for all car expenses).

PS: I've been doing an MS for the last 2 years, have a good understanding of how much living expenses cost, and I have a decent credit score. So that should not matter much I hope.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This is financial advice, a new car? It is not only the cost of the monthly payment, but you will also have to get comprehensive/collision insurance for a new car, have you looked up how much that is going to cost?

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: If you have a car, and there is no monthly payment you don't need a car. If your current car is a Toyota or Hyundai or Honda, take it to a mechanic, get it checked and use it till its last mile.

My understanding- leasing means you will return it after lease or buy it if you want. Regardless if you are making monthly payments you are financing the car with an interest rate on the loan (price of car) .

If you pay full price of car when you buy it or in installments , it's yours. Till then you don't own the car.

If you want to buy anyway.

Car dealers love to sell a car to student with 24% or higher interest rate. They will just take \$100 as down payment even if you are not working .

That's how I got a car for 27% interest rate with \$470 monthly payment. Luckily after 2 yrs, I paid off \$14k to avoid interest.

When you buy a new car and take it out of lot it's value depreciation by 20-30% . So no brand new car unless it's all electric.

They might ask for your credit report . So get a credit report copy and take it with you and shop around. Every time they check your score is going down. They can do a final check once you pick the dealer , car , payments etc.

End of the month, sales people has to meet their quotas, more chance to negotiate.

Pick a car year , model , color and call dealership with in 250 miles. You can ask dealerships to price match and get

Reddit Posts

wherever it is cheaper.

Do not tell them , how much is your budget or how much do you want to do as down payment. They will use it for their advantage and more over guilt shaming is a thing with dealerships in a friendly way.

If you are using credit cards, have a card with no interest rate, and use that for down payment and pay it before card charges interest. They will take upto \$10 k on credit card , if you negotiate (with credit card fee)

FINALLY buying car is an art of negotiation and a pitfall for extra payments you don't want as student.

- New Comment: It's very common for a F1 student to buy a car in the US after saving for two or so years.

Atleast in Oklahoma/Texas, people like to spend atleast 5k on a car as that allows for them to get cars that do not require upwards of a 1000 dollars on repair within six months of driving due to simply bad condition of the car.

But yeah people buy cars outright with cash

- New Comment: How much do you have? Just a few thousands can get you an old but decent car for moving there's no need for loans. If you insist on buying a new car, look for DCU as from what I know they are one of the very few credit unions that offer loans for F1 students.

- New Comment: Leasing isn't tough, you will need a co-signer - Honda / Toyota are your best bets. Work out the monthly payment and insurance first. I was 22 when I leased a car, the insurance was higher than the monthly payments ?

- New Comment: It is surely possible to buy a "new/slightly" used car, \$750 a month should cover it. There are some credit unions (fewer in comparison) that do give out loans for F1 students.

Reddit Posts

My 2 cents tho, Buy a cheap car for 3-4k, use it as long as you can, once you graduate and get a job, buy something else. Until then, invest your savings someplace. It will really help! This is what I did throughout my MS, I don't have a job yet, but I have my savings as a cushion, and trust me, that is the best decision I've made so far.

- New Comment: Depends on your credit score. I got two without any issues through my credit union and the interest rates were better than national averages in both cases (2.99% in 2019, 5.29% in 2023). I don't think most lenders even ask immigration status for auto loans.

- New Comment: It's not impossible, I've done that a couple months ago. Bank of America is one that will lend to internationals. Their interest is slightly higher but there's no penalty if you payoff your loan early

- New Comment: It's can be hard to do when you first arrive in the U.S. and have no credit history, but once you do, it's not hard at all.

- New Comment: I bought a used car as a 1st year grad student. Paid in cash to avoid any loan hassles. Worked without issues.

I used a dealership, but our university also had regular auctions where you could buy surplus university vehicles. Worth checking too!

- New Comment: The answer is that it depends on your credit score , nothing else .

Even as a PhD student you can have a credit score of 750+ as long as you do payments on time. With that score , you'll definitely get a good rate

- New Comment: Quite common, if from an average income background and if the PhD is fully funded. Get a 2nd hand. But you have to get the insurance bs too. In small towns it's amazing tbh. Everything is cheap here. But cities, idk.

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: Can an immigrant visa rejection affect student visa

Body of the post: I have my immigrant visa interview coming up few months before my student visa. Its a family sponsored visa and I am a dependent in the application but it is highly likely that it would get rejected because of age.

Would this rejection affect negatively when I apply for student after few months?? The immigrant visa application was done around 20 years ago, just that the interview has been scheduled only now because of the backlog. Is it better to not appear for the immigrant visa interview if the rejection is 100% or would it not have that big impact on getting f1 visa?

Thanks a lot in advance.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: F1 visa is a non-immigrant intent visa. Not sure whether there is a by default law - such as if you express your immigration intent, then can you get a F1 or not? Better seek advice from an immigration lawyer.
- New Comment: 20 years ago??
- New Comment: Who put up the petition and for whom?
- New Comment: any update?
- New Comment: Hey, any updates? I'm in the same situation.
- New Comment: Unfortunately, I think this immigrant visa application will negatively affect your student visa application. Having your entire family in the U.S., along with your recent attempt to immigrate through the immigrant visa application, will cause the F1 visa officer to suspect that you wouldn't depart the U.S. at the end of your studies. I don't think that withdrawing your immigrant visa application would help much either because the F1 visa officer will be able to see the petition filed in your name. Also, there's a question about petitions on the DS160 along with a question to list the family members you have in the U.S. If you are applying to attend a very high quality school (think Ivy League), it could raise your chances some.

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: Might get evicted. Would I be deported?

Body of the post: Hey! I was living in an apartment without a lease. The property managers found out and I might get evicted. Would this cause deportation?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No dude. But you'd need housing fast since there're a bunch of problem when you don't have a physical address.

- New Comment: How did you move into the apartment?

If you think this may lead to some criminal charges, it probably wouldn't trigger deportation but could complicate your ability to get visas in the future.

- New Comment: No.

- New Comment: Lol no, just prevent from getting charges, pay the ransom nd leave. If it was sublease without contract, say you are his/her friend

- New Comment: If eviction is on your record its tough to get find other leases.

No issues in deportation though

- New Comment: No. I have acquaintance who is a policeman and I did ask him the same question.

- New Comment: No

Title of the post: Can a Yemeni national get a F1 visa?

Body of the post: I?m a Yemeni national born and raised in the Dubai, UAE, Currently I hold a diploma in Aircraft Maintenance Engineering and I?m employed in a major airline.

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I want to pursue further education in the USA. My employer is ready to provide me a letter of employment and proof that I will be employed after education.

Further more, my parents own property in UAE and I have permanent residency in India.

What are my chances of getting a student visa?

Thank you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes. We had two this academic year.
- New Comment: The twist here is embassy officers are worried you do not return to UAE. If I were you, I'd give all and every document that might prove I am well off and chances of me returning are guaranteed. Show them you own property, show them your employer documents.. everything. Good luck.
- New Comment: With the current political situation, might be tough. But you never know
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: If there is an embassy close to u then yes!
- New Comment: What about do Canada first and then immigrate to the US
- New Comment: Convince the visa officer that your ?present intent? is to leave U.S. at the end of your studies and you should be fine.

<http://fam.state.gov/fam/09FAM/09FAM040205.html>

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: Why is Study Abroad not a thing for all schools?

Body of the post: For the longest time I thought F1 students could not participate in study abroad programs. Well, turns out, we actually can, atleast for 1 semester. I?m lowkey furious about it because the study abroad programs in my school are exclusive to honors students and I am one such honors students, but every time I asked about participating, they said I wasn?t eligible due to my visa restrictions.

I guess my question now is, is study abroad school dependent? If yes, does anyone know why that is? And if not, can I expect/hope for a change at my school if I bring this up to my dso and the people who run the study abroad program and show them the dhs website?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you are a F1 student in the US you are already abroad, or what am I missing?

- New Comment: >Well, turns out, we actually can, atleast for 1 semester.

It can be a full year per immigration rules.

>but every time I asked about participating, they said I wasn?t eligible due to my visa restrictions.

Sometimes this is true depending on the country or exchange program. The partner isn't ready or available to process a non-American applicant. Or your visa is invalid so travel overseas is complicated by the fact you would need a new visa. Or the country for study abroad is not friendly or easy for passport holders of your country to obtain a visa. Etc. But never because exclusively of your F-1 status.

Reddit Posts

>I guess my question now is, is study abroad school dependent?

Yes because you need school credit to maintain enrollment or need to give up your I-20 and obtain a new one after the program if you go with an independent program provider. Or your school needs separate study abroad courses you could enroll into while with a non-partnered provider.

>And if not, can I expect/hope for a change at my school if I bring this up to my dso and the people who run the study abroad program and show them the dhs website?

Maybr

- New Comment: Unlike International Student Service programs, which are mandated to at least do the basic things the same way, there's really no laws or regulations that tell schools how to run their study abroad programs, or that they even have to in the first place.

Just like one school may offer a major in mechanical engineering while another school doesn't, it's really up to the school to decide if they want to offer study abroad and how they want to go about doing it.

I'm not sure what kind of pushback you're getting about 'visa restrictions'. I guess this depends on where you're from and where you want to study abroad, but any F-1 student who studies abroad for the semester is covered in SEVIS. We still register you at the beginning of the semester, but we check a box to say you're studying abroad. It's no big deal. The only issue would be if your F-1 visa is already expired, or would expire during your time abroad.

- New Comment: cause sometimes it can be very expensive sure most students can't afford it and the school can't afford to over enough if the costs.

- New Comment: I went on a study abroad trip as an international student, the only thing was that it was a country that

Reddit Posts

allowed free entry to people with any kind of US visa?s

Title of the post: **STEM OPT extension denied for mismatch + questions about changing jobs while**

Body of the post: Hi all,

I have also been subjected to USCIS' new strictness about degree names and CIP codes mismatches for STEM extension. I am hoping that clarifying information that I submit can help overcome this issue, but I'm not sure anymore. Also, apologies to the moderators for the throwaway account, but my main account makes me a little too easily deanonymized.

****Context:****

I have received a STEM OPT denial through premium processing because:

"A review of your application and supporting documents submitted, as well as the... SEVIS, indicates that the degree program you completed in \[specialized MS program\] is not listed on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List.

...

Your diploma/transcript shows you were granted a Master of Science in \[...\] Your SEVIS record shows a CIP code of \[...\] which does not match the conferred degree. As your SEVIS record does not accurately reflect your program of study, and your degree is not on the DHS STEM Designated Program List, you are ineligible for employment authorization under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(3)(i)(C).

Your form I-765 is denied."

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My **OPT is still valid until Jan 14th**. I spoke to an immigration attorney who recommended I reapply for my STEM extension before my OPT ends instead of filing a motion to reopen/reconsider. I have requested additional documentation/justifications from the director of my program justifying how my degree matches the CIP code, and why it therefore qualifies for STEM extension. I am hoping this can avoid denial on the same grounds for the new application.

****Questions:****

I have some questions, primarily about a planned change in jobs soon after my STEM extension starts. I am due to start a **new job on Jan 29th**. I had hoped to receive my EAD (through Premium Processing) so that the job change process could have been easier (just informing my DSO and submitting the final I-983).

Given that my new application for STEM extension will still be pending when I start my new job, I wanted to make sure I avoid any further complications with USCIS.

1. Reading online, there are conflicting recommendations from different universities on changing jobs while STEM extension is pending. Some say it's risky and do not recommend it because USCIS can deny the application if the employer on SEVIS does not match the employer details in the submitted I-765 form. Some say it's straightforward, and I would just need to update my DSO within 10 days, and they will send an updated I-20 to USCIS directly.

****Is there anything I can do to minimize the risk of denial due to a job change while my STEM extension is pending?****

2. ****Is there any way I can request my DSO to provide me a STEM OPT I-20 with my new employer details for future, STEM OPT period dates included?**** My new organization is willing to fill out the I-983 form before my start date to facilitate this process. I am currently employed and will be resigning from that role prior to taking on my new employment (Jan 26th).

My main concern is that I start this job (Jan 29th) after my current OPT period expires (Jan 14th), and I will be submitting

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my STEM extension form around Jan 9th. So I am worried about issues with USCIS reviewing my STEM extension application and seeing that my listed employer had not employed me during my OPT period or had not employed me as of Jan 15th (start of STEM OPT period).

3. Given that my first application was denied, do I need to be concerned about any ****additional risks with resubmitting an I-765 application****? The letter does say, "this denial is without prejudice," but I don't know if that might pan out in reality if, for example, it lands up on the desk of the same adjudicating officer or similarly finicky officers :(

Has anybody experienced changing jobs while their STEM OPT extension was pending? How was the process for you?

Any hiccups I (or others like me) should be aware of?

Thanks in advance!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Just out of curiosity as I also applied for PP, how different are your CIP major and the actual degree name? I saw another thread mentioning they got denied without being issued an RFE and this kinda stresses me out.

- New Comment: Hello, curious if you got an update on this!

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Need help decision making!! Any guidance would help and be appreciated

Body of the post: I have a year of F1 STEM OPT left and I'm working with a non profit company that is soon running out of funds and they won't sponsor me. I'm trying so hard to get a job in my field who would sponsor (tech) but the market is so rough right now that even citizens are taking 6-8 months to find a job. I have a BS in computer engineering from a university here. I haven't been to India since like forever cuz I grew up here in the states so I don't really resonate with the land since I grew up here from like 6. My family lives here and I'm happy in a relationship with

Reddit Posts

someone here too. I just need a job that is willing to sponsor me so I can have a chance at the H1b. I have a year of experience until I got laid off due to restructuring of the company. After my stem extension ends, I could opt to get a masters in CS here but is that really the right way? Or would I really have to move back to India where idk if I'll fit? I'm stressing tf out and need some guidance if anyone has gone through this. I've been in the US for 15 years and it's pretty much home for me man.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Apply for masters and keep looking for jobs. Sadly there's no quick fix.

Whats your parents status here?

- New Comment: I'm really sorry to hear about your situation. If you're in tech, consider doing a Master's in ML or AI, it'll open up a lot of avenues both in research and industry, you can try getting into a research lab at a university. That's what my friend did, he worked at a research lab at CMU as a software engineer and they sponsored his H1B visa, it is also nice because universities are exempt from the H1B lottery. Good luck and hope everything works out!

- New Comment: Do the masters. It's the guaranteed way you can stay and have another shot. Plus you'll be 2 years older anyway, so why not have master degree and still be the same 2 years older. Good luck man

- New Comment: I'm in the same situation as you are except my family moved back to India for reasons unrelated to the visa. My plan is to do masters. My stem opt expires in feb 2025.

Title of the post: URGENT: New Interpretation on STEM OPT Eligibility

Body of the post: Long story short, 24 month STEM opt extension was denied and we discovered there is a nationwide denial after a certain date, under new interpretation of what is a 'STEM' degree. This source is from someone who has seen this nationwide now. But it's a very recent phenomenon so please excuse any alarmism.

Reddit Posts

Those who have a graduate degree that is not explicitly a ?science? or ?STEM? in title, are now at risk of being denied IF and only IF their application was pending at/after August.

For example, an MBA is not a ?major? but even if the track/concentration for your MBA is Management Sciences, it will be denied under this new interpretation.

They only want science ?majors?, despite most grad degrees not having a major as it is an undergraduate concept.

Bottom line: Be careful if you only have a STEM concentration.

Mods, please let me know if there is a better way to title this.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: First, no anonymous sources. They mean nothing. I also see no chatter about this in my DSO Circles or my F-1 immigration law circles.

Here is my understanding of the situation as I have seen this roll out over the last few months of posts here:

This isn't a new interpretation. This is a crackdown.

This is essentially a crackdown on DSOs who haven't documented majors correctly via CIP codes registered at their school.

A University has to report each and every degree it offers including the concentrations to the Department of Education,

Reddit Posts

along with the relevant CIP code.

The verification that a degree matches the STEM CIP Codes is overseen by the schools Educational Accreditation organization.

Some schools are not ensuring their STEM OPT degrees are in fact listed and registered as STEM OPT CIP Codes with the Department of Education.

There have been a few posts about this here in the last few weeks. Each time so far, it was because the degree was not actually registered as a CIP Code with the Department of Education.

My school has had a few denials in the past 2-3 because the degree name did not match the CIP Code. It took a quick letter from the Department explaining that CIP Code naming conventions are different than degree naming conventions, validating the STEM CIP, paperwork showing it was registered as STEM CIP, and a letter from our accreditation agency, and the application was approved

>For example, an MBA is not a ?major?

Correct. It is a degree. An MBA is a Master's Degree with a focus on Business.

>even if the track/concentration for your MBA is Management Sciences, it will be denied under this new interpretation.

It should not be. The concentration would be the major in this case.

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Ex: Master in Business Administration - Management Sciences.

Now if the school only registered a single CIP code to the MBA (52.0201 Business Administration) , and didn't have separate breakdowns of the degree for Management Sciences (52.1301) then this could be a problem. If, to use the undergraduate terms; the school treats the concentrations as minors not as majors... That a problem.

Simple example:

Anthropology (45.0201) is not a STEM degree... But Archeology(45.0301) is a STEM eligible degree.

If you get a PhD in Anthropology at a school, it could be in Cultural Anthropology (45.0204 non-stem eligible) or Linguistic Anthropology (30.4701 or 16.0102 or 45.0201 non-stem eligible) or Archeology (45.0301 STEM eligible) or even Medical/BioAnthropology (45.0203 non-stem eligible).

However, the Department may only awards a single PhD in Anthropology (45.0201 non-stem eligible) to every focus.

In which case, the Archeology student... Despite having on the surface a STEM eligible degree... Got screwed.

This could be the case for this MBA issue.

At my University are working on a business degree to get it certified as a STEM CIP degree because it isn't currently. Once it is, we can issue STEM OPT for that program, which is great!

So, I see no other chatter about this in other non-public groups. I have seen similar questions come up since October.

So far they have been related to CIP Code issues.

Reddit Posts

>Those who have a graduate degree that is not explicitly a "science" or "STEM" in title, are now at risk of being denied IF and only IF their application was pending at/after August.

Not a legal or even possible way to determine a STEM degree. See my example with Anthropology above.

>For example, an MBA is not a "major" but even if the track/concentration for your MBA is Management Sciences, it will be denied under this new interpretation.

See my Anthropology example again. Almost certainly a documentation issue on the school's side.

>They only want science "majors", despite most grad degrees not having a major as it is an undergraduate concept.

Bottom line: Be careful if you only have a STEM concentration.

This concept exists at the Graduate level. See my Anthropology example. You can get:

PhD Anthropology - Cultural.

PhD Anthropology - Linguistics

PhD Anthropology - Medical/Biological

PhD Anthropology - Archeology

Or just PhD Anthropology.

All the above are possible. But it depends on how your school's does their paperwork. A smart MBA program converts the entire MBA to one CIP code Management Sciences (52.1301).

Reddit Posts

However there are disadvantages to breaking up a single degree into multiple CIP Codes and many schools don't do it.

Hope this helps.

Title of the post: My F-1 is terminated. HELP!!!!

Body of the post: I was on an F-1 visa but recently got terminated. According to the DSO it was because I missed more than 14 consecutive calendar days. They told me to either leave the country or apply for reinstatement. I wish to continue to study in the US and do not want to have the terminated record with my SEVIS. so I want to do the reinstatement.

I was sick due to COVID and I encountered health issues with my lungs and chest congestions. Let's go back to when I went to see a doctor and have it on my med record. I received some prescriptions and advice at that time. it was a few months before this happened but it also led to missing classes later in November. (I had a doctor's note and missed class that day I went to see a doctor for this one). I encountered the same symptoms again but this time I was also a bit symptomatic COVID but no test for taken. (started around Oct 18) I didn't seek doctors this time, I rested home and did home remedies as the doctor has advised me before. I later tested positive for COVID-19 on November 23, and experienced symptoms which prevented me from attending class, such as shortness of breath and diarrhea. I managed my symptoms by taking nonprescription medications as well as vitamin supplements, based on prior experience of the first I tested positive. I didn't recover fully after two weeks (tested negative on November 2).

I later received an email from the DSO that my F-1 was terminated because I missed more than 14 consecutive calendar days (From Oct 18 - November 1 to be specific) (I only had class twice a week, Mon/Wed)

I was unaware of the requirement for a doctor's note to avoid termination (which is what the DSO asked for).

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Consequently, my F-1 record was terminated.

I've been emailing to the DSO back and forth for the reinstatement process. They require a personal statement of why this was beyond my control and etc.

Question is; what do I do now? If I explain what my situation was in the letter, would they still ask for doctor's notes? As we know, I don't have any because I didn't see a doctor in those two weeks, then what will I do? I'm extremely stressed. Please help if you have any advice or ideas. (FYI, I applied the F-1 visa here after B-2. Some people say I can leave the US and come back with the new SEVIS or I-20 I'm not sure but I think my case is different because I applied F-1 in the US, not my home country.)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: There is something missing in this story. Lack of attendance does not usually get a student terminated. I believe OP may not have registered for minimum number of credit hours as stipulated by the respective school's DSO.

- New Comment: Some schools have a policy where 14 school days of unexcused absences will have you withdrawn from courses. Is this possibly the reason why your SEVIS record was terminated? I haven't heard of a record being terminated only due to lack of attendance. I'm guessing you were withdrawn from classes, therefore in breach of regulation.

Keep working with the DSO on whatever paperwork they ask for. I have helped students file for reinstatement on much looser ground and no documentation, but everyone's case is different so it's best to do what your DSO advises.

- New Comment: "I was unaware of the requirement for a doctors note to avoid termination" like .. what?! that's basically what every school college university tells you even before starting school that you need to inform them etc that's the smelliest and fishy post i've seen on this subreddit

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- New Comment: How did they know you missed classes? Do they take attendance in class. I would also advise you to discuss this with your professors and ask them to help you. If they are fine with you missing classes, then DSO might reconsider

- New Comment: The USCIS is probably going to ask you about the doctor notes, medical records or some evidence which shows you are really sick.

I applied for reinstatement and it is taking long time 3-5-7-9 months maybe 1 year. If you have a valid visa just take a New SEVIS ID and new I-20 it is much easier.

If you have an explanation like that you can make this explanation to border control at the entry, not the USCIS.

Long time uncertainty is really tires people.

- New Comment: Once you leave from US and reapply new school. You can get back to school with your new I20.

- New Comment: Even in grad school in mid 2010 working from home could get released from the program as you did not show up to the physical work place. It was told this story and it took some months to fix but in this case it was USC so no visa issues.

So if you go to school or work then physically go. Unless you are medically excused by dr, go.

- New Comment: Did you get reinstated?

- New Comment: tbh missing schools consecutively for 14 days is a ground for disciplinary action. You'd have emailed your professors about this and discussed the option to take classes over zoom with them. Most professors'd be accommodating if you've doctors' notes. They care for their health too.

- New Comment: I had the same issue like you. I decided to return home and reapply for new visa with the same school. I brought all medical records to show US embassy that I had a chronic migraine and also explained what I have done to make myself healthier like confirm letter from doctor (hospital in my country) that I am normal and healthy now.

- New Comment: Some where in southeast Asia

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: What uni is this? Whats your program? This is so ridiculous. I've never heard this before.
 - New Comment: You have a short period of time to leave the country if you're not going to apply for reinstatement. I just don't remember how many days you have after being terminated. If you are planning on applying for reinstatement, yes, you need as many documents as you can have that prove you couldn't go to school because you were sick, if you don't have any doctors notes your case will be hard depending on the officer that gets your case assigned. Also, if you are going to apply do it ASAP don't wait a long time to apply (You have up to 5 months to apply for reinstatement)
 - New Comment: I believe that the status was terminated not for missing classes per se, but perhaps due to school policy, after certain amount of missed days of mandatory attendance classes, OP got kicked out of the class, and fell below minimum credits to maintain the status. As status is terminated, talking to professors will not magically reinstate it. OP has to follow the instructions from an international advisor. Unfortunately, I don't think they can magically reverse it?
 - New Comment: *** UPDATED ***
- The DSO determined to support my reinstatement application!!! Now, I only need to speak to the admission counselor to do the next steps. I'm literally the happiest person on earth right now. Thank you for all your comments.

Title of the post: International travel on F1-OPT

Body of the post: Hello everyone. I'm a recent college grad, currently on my approved F1-OPT with EAD card and an employer. I will be traveling internationally this December for vacation (for 3 weeks) by taking paid leave. I was wondering if I might get any trouble while re-entering US. The reason I am asking this is because my university DSO said - "You should be fine but you never know", which as you can tell is very vague. My employer's immigration department says since I'm on F1, university DSO would be my point of contact. I'll be carrying the following documents with me:

- EAD card
- OPT approved I-20 with travel endorsement signature not older than 6 months

Reddit Posts

- Unexpired passport with valid visa stamp
- Current employer offer letter
- Current employer pay stubs
- A letter by current employer confirming my OPT employment

Please let me know if I should carry more documents. Would love to know if someone was in a similar situation and how their experience was. Thank you for the help!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This should be fine! I have done it once during my OPT and they didnt ask many questions. Be sure to bring all relevant documents just in case, your list is comprehensive imo
- New Comment: Make sure you EAD is not expiring and should be okay. Again entry is never guaranteed, tho risk is low
- New Comment: Are the last two documents required if I haven't started working yet but I have a job offer?
- New Comment: Tips to get an employer there?
- New Comment: How did you request for a new offer letter? And a letter confirming OPT employment.
- New Comment: hi, did you return back. if so how was the immigration experience?

Title of the post: OPT STEM Denial

Body of the post: I'm reaching out to you for help with an urgent matter. I recently received a denial notice for my OPT STEM extension application.(university sent me an i-20 which was not updated) Here are some relevant dates for your reference:

Reddit Posts

OPT STEM filed: May 22, 2023

Expiration date for my first EAD card: June 27, 2023

Date that international issued I-20: May 1, 2023

Denial notice date: September 27, 2023

Here, please find my denial notice reason:

?Your Form I-765 application was receipted by USCIS on May 22, 2023 but the DSO has not entered a recommendation for OPT into your Student & Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) record. You have failed to submit Form I-765 within 60 days of the date the DSO entered the recommendation for OPT in your SEVIS record, you are ineligible for employment authorization under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(3)(C).

Based on the above, you have not met the eligibility requirements as outlined in 8 CFR 214.2(f)(11). Your Form I-765 is denied.

This decision is without prejudice to consideration of subsequent applications for employment authorization filed with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

This decision may not be appealed. However, if you disagree with this decision, or if you have additional evidence that shows this decision is incorrect, you may submit a motion to reopen or a motion to reconsider by completing a Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion. A motion to reopen must state the new facts to be considered and must be supported by affidavits or other new documentary evidence. A motion to reconsider must show that the decision was legally incorrect according to statute, regulation, and/or precedent decision.

The motion must be filed within 33 days from the date of this notice. You must send your completed Form I-290B and supporting documentation with the appropriate filing fee ?

Could you please assist me in understanding the reasons for the denial and finding a solution?

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >university sent me an i-20 which was not updated

Meaning the DSO didn't issue you a STEM OPT I-20?

If so, there is nothing else to do. You are beyond the application period for STEM OPT.

>Could you please assist me in understanding the reasons for the denial and finding a solution?

Yep... it looks like the DSO didn't enter STEM OPT into your I-20 record.

You can pursue legal action against your school, but STEM OPT. is done.

You didn't notice the lack of STEM OPT indication on page 2 of your application and the school didn't enter the STEM OPT request into SEVIS.

There won't be a CORRECTION from the government as there was no error on the part of the government. They will point out it is your application and your mistake of not checking for STEM OPT being requested.

>Could you please assist me in understanding the reasons for the denial and finding a solution?

1- DSO made a big mistake. Failed to enter your STEM OPT request.

2- You didn't check/notice.

Reddit Posts

3- Application was denied for lack of the DSO request.

4- You are outside the application window to submit again.

There is no solution for you in the way you are hoping/expecting.

You lost STEM OPT. You should consult with an attorney about seeking damages from your school in regards to lost wages and lost immigration opportunities due to this mistake/error by your DSO.

However unless you have another way to stay in the US (marriage, sponsorship, TN, new program of study, etc) you will be leaving and leaving soon.

You cannot work for you employer starting immediately. Attempting to rectify this with the US government will almost certainly be denied because there was no error on the part of the government in adjudication of your application. Additionally that process takes 6-18 months during which you cannot legally work for your employer and may/may not be able to legally stay in the US. Additionally it will not change the validity of your STEM OPT period so you wouldn't get back the time used while submitting a motion for reconsideration.

So, I would contact an attorney that knows immigration law and hopefully also knows administrative law or is a firm that does both. Because they will need to help you decide how much you can ask the school for in compensation and if the school doesn't want to negotiate on a settlement then a lawsuit against the DSO/School would be the next step.

Reddit Posts

VERY sorry this happened to you.

FYI, if you wanted another degree/higher level degree your settlement offer with the school could be a fully funded degree from them if they offer something you want. This is generally easier to get as it is cheaper for the school and they can do this without admitting fault. However talk to an attorney and get their advice.

- New Comment: So sorry you're going through this.

I had the same denial reason sent to me even though there is a STEM OPT requested on the I-20 I submitted.

I can see a DSO recommendation in my SEVP Portal too. Filed an I-290B. Is there any way there could be an error on our part or is it possible that USCIS missed the document?

My immigration lawyers and DSO do not believe there's any mistake on our part. Just stuck in a long wait.

- New Comment: Hello,

I am facing the same Situation. My STEM OPT denied on 27th September, 2023. Station my course is not STEM.

I come to know after that, in I20 my DSO put wrong major and CIP code for STEM.

Can someone please suggest me which attorney is best for this? What should I do in this situation?

- New Comment: Does anyone know a lawyer for this matter that can help?

- New Comment: I have having the exact same problem right now. Also STEM OPT. Can I know what steps you took?

I'm so sorry that those things happen? I hope your problem is solved at this moment.

- New Comment: Is there anyway that DSO talk to USCIS to resolve this issue?

Title of the post: Filing STEM OPT Extension while being hired through a staffing agency

Body of the post: Hi! I am currently a contract-to-hire employee through a staffing agency. I am on Post-Completion OPT and applying for a STEM OPT extension. My extension was denied by my university's DSO because "the name of the

Reddit Posts

employer that you are listing for your STEM OPT extension needs to be the same as the employer who is completing the I-983 training plan, whose E-verify number you are submitting on your I-765, who will supervise your day to day activities and listed as such in your request".

While revising these details on I983 and I765, it's challenging because I am hired through a staffing agency and placed on the client site. The staffing agency is only willing to fill out Section 3 of I983 and nothing more since they aren't the ones who supervise me daily. My company is hesitant to provide their E-verify and EIN on I765 because I'm not on their payroll. My supervisor already finish Sections 5 and 6 of the training plan. I'm wondering which company I should put as my employer. Both the company I work at and the staffing agency are E-verified. The DSO at my university refuses to provide guidance on that due to legal compliances. My current EAD expires at the end of July.

My questions are:

1. How is E-verify number, EIN, and NAICS code used in the process? Are they just used to make sure the company is enrolled in the E-verify program? Would my record (or any employees' record) come up with the E-verify number?

2.

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2016/07/questions-designated-school-officials-can-stem-opt-students-use-staffing-or-temporary-0> After reading this link, is having my company (client site) to provide EIN, E-verify, and NAICS the only choice because ?the agency cannot complete and sign I983??

Any help is appreciated!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: My friend was in this situation a couple of months ago. The staffing agency filled out the I983 for her

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and they were the ones to complete all "employer" sections. You should make sure you provide the staffing agency's e verify number and not the client's. Her agency did regular check in's with her so it counted as them overseeing the training.

- New Comment: Idk if this helps but I work for the same. This is what happened for me. Your employer will always be or rather Should be the staffing agency that's why your DSO is refusing. Which makes Sense for compliance cause trust me every time I leave the country and they do an E-verify check, my staffing agency shows up. And then I explain the client contractor relationship and they say I'm fine. For the training you Should have your work company fill that out cause they are the ones actually giving you the "training". Putting their EIN as your employer when you are not in fact their employee would be lying and could potentially get you in trouble despite it being probably accidental. Please feel free to correct me if I'm wrong but that's what I have been doing and it's worked out well so far. Came in and out of the country without issue and yeah. Best of luck with your job

- New Comment: You aren't allowed to work for a temp or staffing agency on STEM OPT.

- New Comment: Update: it got approved this past weekend. I didn't even receive an email lol. Feel free to DM me if you are in the same situation.

- New Comment: Hello, I am in the same boat, with opt expiring on 19th June. Can you please clarify the steps? Section 3 can be filled by Staffing agency. And in section 5: employer site name should be client company with official supervisor name as account manager of staffing company ?

- New Comment: dm me if you have F1 OPT extension Questions

- New Comment: You Can apply with E-Verify number of your staffing agency. Because your current employer is your staffing agency and the company you are working is Client company of your staffing agency. You do not need to worry about anything. And you just need to focus on getting hired in Client company whenever it happens just submit another I-983 form to your DSO.

- New Comment: Hey for reason I can't reply to your DM, but from my situation I learned that some staffing agencies

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are willing to support your STEM extension while some are not. Ask your current one if they are and if not, try to transfer to another agency that is. Hope everything works out for you.

- New Comment: Any updates on this situation? I'm also on the same situation as you? Were you able to figure a solution for this?

- New Comment: Any updates ? I'm in the same situation my OPT expires in 5 months from now and I'm glad I started looking into that now

- New Comment: I am in the same boat. I am on a 1099 contractor status working for a client but my employer is a staffing agency and pays me \$x/hr and its a bi-weekly payment. I will be filling my STEM extension soon and was wondering if anyone in the same boat? Does a 1099 matter or do you need to be on a W-2 to satisfy the STEM extension requirements? Just an FYI, my employer (staffing agency) is E-verified but in a different state than mine and my work is related to my STEM degree

- New Comment: Hello all. I am currently on my initial OPT which will expire in a month. Now my employer which is a staffing agency is not willing to extend my opt. Can anyone suggest what I should do? I couldn't manage a job. I was volunteering in this company. I will appreciate your help. Thank you.

- New Comment: Hey OP! DM'ed you. Want to know a little more about the staffing company you worked with.

Title of the post: [OPT] Did not report employment to SEVIS for 9 months.

Body of the post: I have been working on OPT for 9 months. I never received an email to create an account in the SEVP portal, and don't remember otherwise being told that I needed to report my employment to SEVIS. (My DSO was already aware of my employment information and start date before I began working, and did not ask for more information any time later.)

The DHS has a page listing reporting requirements for OPT students

Reddit Posts

(<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevp-portal-help/maintain-information/opt-student-reporting-requirements>), which I was aware about, but the page doesn't say you need to update your employment within 10 days.

So I never thought there was anything wrong with my SEVIS records.

However, now, 9 months later, while I'm trying to apply for STEM OPT, my DSO said that my SEVIS record does not have any employment. So, of course, I am panicking, and I found several Reddit threads in which people say you're supposed to have reported that information within 10 days (even though I can't find that in an official government website).

My DSO said that my SEVIS record has not been terminated "yet." What should I do and what will happen to me? She said she requested that my SEVP portal be reset and said that I should try to enter my employment information after I received an email from them. It's been 2 hours and I haven't received an email.

I asked my DSO whether she could enter my employment information herself, and I'm waiting to hear back. It's past business hours now.

Have I violated the conditions of my F-1 status, if my DSO knew my employment information before it started but did not update SEVIS? What are the consequences of this for my STEM OPT application and AOS application? (I am married to a US citizen and planning to apply for AOS soon).

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I am sorry to say this but you make it sound like it was your DSO's mistake to not have entered employment details. It is mainly your responsibility to follow-up with your DSO at the beginning of employment to procure the link and update employment details. Irrespective of 10 days time limit it has actually been 9 months without

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an employment update, which in itself is too long. At this point you just have to wait and follow your DSO's instructions and take it step by step. Even after you update your new sevis portal, it depends on the officer and the decision they make while adjudicating your case. Keep a copy of your employment offer letter and pay stubs to show that you were actually employed during this time. Stay calm. All the best!

- New Comment: They should be able to retroactively update it with employment dates but be prepared to bring all employment docs. Offer letter with start date, current EVL with employer and all pay stubs since you started. They can retroactively do it but need to be 100% it's not fraud

- New Comment: Had the same issue and my DSO solved with no problems. Mine was 7 months but very similar case

- New Comment: Usually DSO updates the SEVIS for the first time and provide you new I-20 with the employer information ,did DSO do that in your case ?

- New Comment: Update: my DSO has updated SEVIS, and wants to go ahead with the STEM OPT application. However, I'm not sure that's okay?

- New Comment: I had the same issue and my dso was able to update my sevis record. Didn't have any problem applying for a stem-opt afterwards. Your dso will be able to help you.

- New Comment: Note to anyone who sees this in future.

I had the same issue. Found out about this 9 months after starting work. Got really anxious.

Here was the problem in my case:

I only received post completion opt I20 with "requested" status on it and never received the email to create the SEVP portal.

Upon reaching out to my DSO, she mentioned it was never updated and was a prime example of download issues

Reddit Posts

between USCIS and SEVP portals. Additionally the SEVIS records indicated that in my case, the start of OPT authorization dates were never mentioned (a bug on their side) due to this the case never matured to "approved".

The DSO basically submitted a ticket on my behalf and the next day, I received the email to setup my SEVP account in my inbox. That's it, it's very simple, don't take any stress.

My DSO also assured to me that all my records were in good standing and I had absolutely nothing to worry about. I am awaiting my I20 with "approved" specifier and my employer's name.

- New Comment: It's always up to offer discretion but best you can do is ensure at time of filing se is is up to date etc if they rfe go from there

- New Comment: Nothing to worry first of all. It is the DSO's mistake to not have updated your data in SEVP.

I too never received any email from SEVP. I went through my university OPT page. It clearly says updating SEVP is OPTIONAL. Having said that you must update your university portal at regular intervals. I am sure you did that.

- New Comment: I don't get it. Did you work before receiving OPT or after receiving opt ?

- New Comment: Hi, Do you have any update on this matter?

Thank you,

Title of the post: F1-OPT no job?

Body of the post: So I'm in the US looking for a job at the moment post grad, and no offers on a F1-OPT non Stem. The H1b deadline to apply for 2024 is coming up and I'm hoping the next batch of interviews comes with an offer. Seems like as of rn I either go back or take up random contract jobs to fulfill my opt status before the 90 day grace period if I don't get anything but I might be wrong and the deadline for most companies are already past.

Reddit Posts

I was wondering if anyone was on the same boat or if anyone's been through this experience can offer me some help or tips. Kind of freaking out rn and the recession/mass layoffs seem pretty bad. Much appreciated!!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It's rough out here. Especially when you got bills to pay. Keep applying. I'm with a consultancy right now to slow the clock and possibly grab something, although they are lying so much on my resume. I've heard of other students working for cash under the table lately too. Got a friend making 3k per month moving furniture for a company. It is really do or die out here lately.

- New Comment: Hi! I'm in a similar situation. I'm on F-1 STEM OPT and have been looking for a job but have had no luck yet. I'm not interested in going the consultancy route since they tend to lie a lot on your resume. However, there is another option for people on STEM OPT (not OPT extension) wherein you can work as a volunteer for a non-profit organization and as long as you work at least 21 hours a week in a role that is closely related to your field, it would stop your unemployment days from getting accrued. I'm going the volunteering route since it seems to be the safer option. Although it is not ideal financially, you can continue looking for a paying job while you're working as a volunteer. Hope this helps!

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Update:

I got a job. If you miss the deadline certain employers will still accept you regardless of OPT timeline. It's most likely going to be complicated moving forward if I'm still with the company. Most likely I'll be on leave until I get an H1b or I'll be transferred to another location in the meanwhile.

Thank to all you help guys, was freaked out but it all should work out eventually.

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Title of the post: Self Employment during OPT

Body of the post: I completed my PhD this summer and applied for post-completion OPT in my grace period. My 90 days unemployment clock has just started (EAD approved recently). I am considering going the self-employment route but my guess is that if I am not getting a job, I probably won't be getting business either.

Everything I read on self-employment on OPT says that

(i) I need the proper business licenses and

(ii) I must be able to prove that I am actively engaged in the business.

(It also needs to be full-time in this case and of course it must be related to my degree as usual.)

Without clients, I can invest in improving my portfolio but there is not much I can do otherwise. Can anyone comment on how I can show I am "actively engaged in the business"? I am sure it wouldn't cause any problems in the short term but I heard lots of horror stories about people having all sorts of issues at the citizenship stage down the road about anything that might look sketchy. I just want to do everything by the book.

I would appreciate any suggestions!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Do items (i) and (ii) then keep a record of your time to the business and payment owed to you from the business for your work. Essentially bill your hours to your business in the form of IOUs.

Otherwise continue to document the hour worked and items worked on.

- New Comment: I'm doing the same thing right now. Of course, I'm not qualified to answer your question, but I will fill in my experience. As mentioned by the requirement for OPT, you have to work at least 20 hours for a full-time position,

Reddit Posts

in this case, self-employment for 20 hours a week, which depends on what type of work you're doing; know that you have an obligation to do paid or unpaid work up to 20 hours a week while keeping a log of your work time.

There are two routes based on my understanding, either you get an EIN as a sole proprietorship or create a single-member LLC to establish yourself and your business. It might be unnecessary to make an LLC for just a one-year commitment, but you never know what the future might hold for you if you have to establish legitimacy that you have been legally present in the United States.

Edit: it would also be great to find a client or two that can hire you for a weekly contractual job for up to/more than 20 hours a week. At least on their end and your end, both parties can provide evidence that you're working for the time of your OPT.

- New Comment: I'm planning to do the same thing. Let me get some information from an immigration lawyer and get back to you.

- New Comment: i dont think im qualified to answer, but id like to ask if u cant simply try to find clients and say that that's your work for now? every business needs to find clients as part of their operations

- New Comment: Did you end up following this path? How did it turn out regarding the OPT and also the STEM extension if so. What business materials did you have to submit for the OPT activation? I've found Stripe Atlas which should let me open an LLC quickly for 500\$, do you think that would work? I'm also planning on working at a cafe full-time simultaneously while I figure out a proper job.

Title of the post: I got my Visa after 41 days of AP (DS 5535 Extreme Vetting)

Body of the post: Finally, I got my visa issued. It was one of the most stressful and dreadful times of my life but I barely got through it. I would like to share my experience with this.

Reddit Posts

Since I am from Rangoon, Myanmar. We were not given the leisure to choose our own visa interview appointment. The embassy had been closed since December last year, but thankfully they opened on the June 2nd. I requested an appointment through email on May 25th 2022 and waited impatiently for an interview. The time passed by but my visa appointment was still not available. I mentally planned to defer to Spring 2023 and made plans with my school. But luckily, I got my appointment on July 30th. I was happy, thought everything was gonna go as plan. But life had a different plan. I finished my interview smoothly but I was put under 221(g) ? Extreme Vetting. It was SO stressful. Time passed by, I missed my first date of Fall semester. Day 41, I received a call from US embassy that I could come collect my passport with visa. My status changed to Issued. I will be going to school for Spring 2023 sadly.

My dad used to work in UAE for years. The main reason I think I got under Administrative Processing. Plus my visits to the UAE.

The process was stressful. Yes, but I was the one making it more painful for myself. I hope everyone knows that this is just a part of life. Please don't make it affect on your life like I did.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Congrats man! Better late than never! I am going through the same pain currently with my Visa being stuck in AP (with DS 5535) for about 35 days now. It's depressing but posts like yours give me some sort of hope!

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: It's very difficult to get an f-1 visa rn in MM. A lot of people went to US with a F-1 visa but didnt really attend the school. Eventually the embassy knew and the process becomes stricter. But can't really blame them for wanting a better life considering the circumstances in our country. But good luck to you!

- New Comment: Congrats again op! I'm glad you got it

- New Comment: Any updates on this ?

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: Missed STEM OPT validation deadline

Body of the post:

My deadline for the 12 month stem opt reporting was 6/26 and I saw the email reminder only after 27 days had passed. I immediately submitted my report to the DSO but just received an email from them saying the window had expired and they could not submit my validation report. I guess they were 1 day late.

I have an appointment with my DSO tomorrow but I'm not sure what to ask them since they already said they can't do anything about it as USCIS has not made it clear as to what happens.

I saw some previous posts that suggested trying to request dso to create sevis help desk ticket. Has that worked for anyone?

According to the uscis website, records get automatically terminated after 46 (31+15) days however this rule has been paused due to COVID. Does this mean if I don't get a termination notice in 15 days I might be okay?

This is what the official website reads

?

Note: This auto-terminate functionality is currently disabled but will be enabled in a future release. However, even though the auto-terminate is not on now, a government official can still terminate a record at any time.

?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Just a technical note. OPT and F-1 reporting are not with USCIS. USCIS is not the agency which enforces OPT/F-1 status rules. Your SEVIS record where F-1 updates are made and reported by your DSO (and by you if on OPT and using the SEVP Portal) is not with USCIS.

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Your SEVIS record and OPT reporting is all done to and through the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP).

SEVP is part of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), not part of USCIS. SEVP controls SEVIS, not USCIS.

Therefore, your reporting requirements, and missed reporting requirements, are with and through ICE and not USCIS.

The only interaction with USCIS related to OPT is the OPT application as only USCIS can issue an EAD. However, that OPT authorization, the reporting, and rules of OPT and F-1 status being enforced is done by ICE, not USCIS.

That's also why the OPT reporting portal is called the SEVP Portal (and not the "USCIS" Portal).

The only way USCIS would be looking at this information is if you submit a new application (or your employer does) for a new immigration benefit or status (such as H-1B). If in that process USCIS makes the determination that you've ever been in violation of status, they can deny you that new benefit or status for the application with them.

Your 6 month, 12 month, 18 month, and 24 month OPT reporting requirements with SEVP/ICE is something you either do or you don't. It's not something you can fix or ask someone else to fix for you if you miss that responsibility. It's not your DSO's responsibility to remind you of your responsibility. Your DSO can't fix it for you if you don't do it on time. SEVP puts a link in your SEVIS record within the reporting window that a DSO clicks to confirm your reporting when you report to the DSO. Once the reporting window closes, SEVP/ICE removes the link. And that's it. Reporting opportunity has closed.

What happens then? That's up to ICE (and USCIS if you ever submit any new type of application to them). So far, honestly, I've never seen anything happen. Does that mean ICE/USCIS will never care about it? Nope. It's a missed action DHS has said is required by you during F-1 OPT.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I missed my STEM OPT 12 month validation as well last year and my DSO said the same thing that the deadline for them to upload has passed. I'm still in status as of now. I don't think it's that big of an issue? as long as you've submitted it to the dso, it should be fine.

- New Comment: u/codetornado do you have any insights into this?

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Can F-1 students participate/purchase lotto for Mega Millions jackpot?

Body of the post: Question in title

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes anyone in the USA can gamble provided the activity is legal where they are present.

- New Comment: Yes

Title of the post: Should I list my drop out school in ds 160 ?

Body of the post: I am from India.

I was studying bachelor's at Indian Institute of Science Bangalore. Now I dropped out of it because I didn't like physics that much. This was back in 2013-2016.

After that I completed my bachelor's in computer science from Jadavpur University. So this happened between 2017-2021.

I have admission offer from Johns Hopkins, CS department.

Reddit Posts

Do I have to list my stint of physics at Indian institute of science in DS-160? How should I tackle this case ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: ONLY IF THE VISA OFFICER ASKS ABOUT IT :

Then tell them that the course did not match your expectation. Say you found out during those three years that your core interests were in implementing practical solutions to problems and applied sciences, so you decided to move to CS which had a perfect balance of math and application and you love it and tell them it was one of your best and mature decisions.

​

No need to expand unless asked, no need to be over the top. People in the US change majors all the time, so a reasonable visa officer will understand. DONT TELL THEM U DID IT FOR GETTING MONEY OR YOU WANT TO WORK IN GOOGLE or WHATEVER.

- New Comment: If you're confident enough that you can elaborate on why you dropped out of IIS Bangalore, than you can add it to your DS 160. Otherwise, you can only put Jadavpur University in your application. There is no harm in mentioning it.

- New Comment: List all schools, regardless of whether you finished or not.

- New Comment: Hi I just wanted to ask I had a previous F1 at Ohio State university for undergrad. I had to drop out and come back to India for health reasons. Never got a transcript also. I came back and finished my bachelors in Hyderabad. I got an admit into a masters degree now. Will there be a problem when applying for F1 again?

Title of the post: Current job market for international grads

Reddit Posts

Body of the post: So I'll be graduating soon and was wondering what you guys think of the current job market. Looks like companies are aggressively hiring and from what I'm seeing, intl students also are not having a tough time.

Is this true for everyone else as well?

How's everyone else's job search going?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Job placement on OPT is over 70% at my school. Another 20% continue onto another degree level. The rest return home.

For those on OPT 90%+ are employed or volunteering in their field 6 months after graduation.

That said, some volunteer for lack of options and desire to keep OPT active. Others volunteer because they want to get the experience.

That's said, in the snapshot I have, it looks good. Obviously STEM students are higher and non-Stem are lower.

- New Comment: Placement isn't that great at my school, but even the Americans don't really get jobs right away either.

- New Comment: What field?

- New Comment: Depends on the degree you have. I have been having a rough time applying stuff on OPT but maybe it's because I only have undergrad degree. I have applied over 150 job postings and got maybe 10-15% of them for interviews. Had one offer but didn't feel like the right opportunity and have been hitting a wall since. But don't let me discourage you tho!

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Title of the post: F-1 visa renewal for PhD with a prior history of 221(g)

Body of the post: I am an Indian citizen pursuing my PhD (in CS) in the US at Georgia Tech. When I first applied for my F-1 visa, I received the 221(g) form. I had to submit additional documentation that included my CV, list of publications and details regarding my prior as well as anticipated research in the US (among other things). My visa was approved about a month after my interview date and it had the "Clearance Received" annotation.

My F-1 recently expired on 5th July 2021. I am planning to get it renewed when I visit India in the next couple of months or so (from the Delhi consulate). Note that I am continuing in the same PhD program, there has been no change in my institution and I have maintained my F-1 status (good academic standing) throughout my tenure as an F-1 student for the last 4 years. Additionally, I think I am making good/expected progress towards my degree with an anticipated graduation in Spring 2022 (as stipulated in my current I-20 as well). I had some questions about the renewal process in my case:

(1) Does a prior 221(g) mean that I have to answer the DS-160 question on "Have you ever been refused a US visa?" with "Yes"?

(2) How likely is the case that I receive another 221(g) during my renewal as well?

(3) If I preemptively carry documentation similar to what I had to submit in response to the 221(g) last time (detailing my research portfolio, etc), will that help my case for the renewal this time?

(4) Are there any specific questions I should expect and be ready to answer for my interview this time?

(5) For folks in similar situation right now getting 221(g)s ? how long does the wait time look like? Coupled with the airline uncertainties due to the pandemic, I am a little worried about being stuck in India for a long period of time.

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(6) Are there any quarantine restrictions for entering the consulate for my interview? Information about this would help me appropriately space out the dates of my flight to India and the visa interview date.

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Any answers to the above would be super helpful! Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Expect delays as they will spend more time validating your record. However it shouldn't make you more likely for a denial. Do bring support of your ties to home country, financial support, academic progress, grades, and any publishing.

I say this because the 221 seems to be based on academic/professional questions.

- New Comment: Hey,

I am a 1st year phd student who joined phd after masters. My F1 visa is expired and I am thinking of going to India in summer and renewing it. What are the documents required for renewal Dropbox except the i20 and passport. What do folks usually show for funding ?

- New Comment: Was your renewal process successful?

- New Comment: Hey did you end up putting "Yes" in the "has your visa ever been refused" question?

Kind of in a similar situation and super confused.

- New Comment: Hey! Idk why am I coming across this post right now but I am trying to get my US visa done for my Ph.D. and I got previously handed 221g twice although those two times my visa got approved (once for B1/B2 and the

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second time for F1). I am pursuing aerospace so I assume that was the reason because after I provided them with the required documents, my visa was approved. This time when I started my application, I thought refusal meant a visa not given so I said 'no' in my answer and qualified for the interview waiver. Now I am scared that they would think I lied although I DIDN'T! I just got confused and thought it meant if I wasn't approved for a visa. Seeing this post would've helped. What do I do now?

Title of the post: Expired F1 Visa while in the US

Body of the post: I'm trying to apply for a credit card at my local bank. I have a valid I20 and EAD. However, my visa is expired, but the way I understand it, that doesn't matter.

I've tried to explain that to the people at the bank but they say I need a valid visa. They asked if I can show them proof that a valid visa is not required to stay in the US, then they might be able to help me. Where would I get that? I can't find anything on the uscis website.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >What if my F-1 student visa has expired? You can stay in the United States on an expired F-1 visa as long as you maintain your student status. However, if you are returning home or traveling to a country where automatic revalidation does not apply, you must have a valid visa to return to the United States.

<https://www.ice.gov/sevis/travel#:~:text=What%20if%20my%20F%2D1,return%20to%20the%20United%20States.>

>D/S on your Form I-94/admissions stamp means that you may remain in the United States so long as you maintain

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your nonimmigrant student status, which includes finishing your program by the program date listed on your Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Status."

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2016/06/f-1-students-remember-check-ds-your-form-i-94>

Download your I-94, bring your I-20, bring the passport with expired Visa, show them the D/S on your visa stamp.

Oh and bring the print out above with the web link to both government websites.

- New Comment: Sorry I have no advice but this is bizarre. I thought the OPT I-20 (your most up to date I-20) and your EAD card would be enough...is this a national bank?

Title of the post: F1 visa renewal on STEM OPT

Body of the post: Hi everyone, I'm on STEM-OPT and have to travel to my home country (India) for a family medical emergency (mother is diagnosed with blood cancer). My F1 visa expired last year and I need to renew it. I was wondering if anybody here has any experience with the renewal process in India. What is the current condition? I see a lot of posts about the unavailability of appointments and office closures. Any advice is appreciated. What will be the right time to travel? I'm trying to delay it as much as I can but has limits. It's a stressful situation. Please be kind in comments.

Thank you,

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: First of all, I hope that your mother recovers well.

From what I have heard, you don't need to appear at the embassy and the stamping could be done via Dropbox within 2-3 business days. Please check your eligibility for that.

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- New Comment: I'm sorry to hear about your situation and I'm sure you must be in a very stressful situation.

I was in a similar situation last fall. I went back to my home country (France) because of a family emergency with an expired f1 visa and on 1st year opt.

I was lucky with the timing of my appointment to renew my f1: after waiting for 3 months to get an appointment at the Paris embassy, i was able to get it approved just a few weeks before my opt expired. I don't know if that would be different in India.

A few things that i learned then, which might be useful to you:

- i was on extended leave at my current company during these 3 months so this period didn't count as unemployment for the USCIS. And I didn't hear about a time limit for how long you can work remotely from another country for a US employer. So if your employer approves that you work remotely from another country, you might have more flexibility.

- if you are in the first year of opt (not sure if this is applicable to you), it is more risky to travel before you apply for stem extension. You have to apply for stem extension while physically IN the US, no sooner than 3 months before the end of your first year. your visa application might be rejected or you might be denied entry to the US if your stem application is not pending and you are close to the end of you opt. However, I took this risk and was still able to come back to the US without any trouble.

- if you can, i suggest meeting with your international office asap and ask them all the questions that come you your mind about this.

Feel free to ask me any follow-up question :)

- New Comment: Hi! I'm in a very similar situation right now and trying to figure out if I can travel to India and get my F1 renewed to be able to come back. Were you able to get your F1 renewed? Thank you!

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Title of the post: Returning F1 student from India

Body of the post: Has any returning F1 student from India been able to travel directly into the US from India after the may 4th travel ban on India.

I am asking about F1 students who have already entered the US previously on F1 in the US, not the ones who will enter their first semester after Aug 1 2021.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: +1

- New Comment: Following

- New Comment: I emailed the embassy and they say that you can travel after July 1st since the resumption date for returning students is assumed to be 1st August and as per the current policy, one can travel 30 days before the resumption date.

- New Comment: \+1

- New Comment: Anyone successfully entered USA?

Title of the post: New F1 Visa for New I-20?

Body of the post: I will be returning to the US in September for my final year. I had taken a gap year and hence I lost my student status.

Therefore I had to reapply for a new I-20.

My F1-Visa is valid till 2022. So, initially I assumed that I will not have to apply for a new Visa.

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However, since I got a new I-20, I also have a new SEVIS ID.

This new SEVIS ID does not match the one on my visa (the visa has the SEVIS id of the old i-20)

Do I need to apply for a new F1-visa?

Any help would be appreciated.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No. You can enter on the old visa with the new I-20.

CBP has commented on this many times and I have many many students at different education levels who travel on our new I-20 with a visa that has a different SEVIS ID AND School Name.

- New Comment: I have entered on a I-20 whose Sevis ID is different from that on my Visa

- New Comment: Nobody who checks your visa at the border cares about the "five month rule." They don't care. How many hours have those of us who advise about F-1 topics have to repeat ourselves over and over on this?

Valid I-20. Valid (unexpired) F-1 visa sticker. Valid travel signature on the I-20 if returning as a continuing student on the same SEVIS record (or on OPT).

They only care that the F-1 visa hasn't expired. DOS should have to pay anyone who advises F-1 students a thousand dollars each for the time spent advising against their counterproductive information on this.

It is frustrating for everyone, including students, that one department of the U.S. government provides conflicting information to what actually happens at the border with a different department.

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- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Filing for OPT online?!

Body of the post: Has anyone else seen the recent addition of the I-765 on the online USCIS filing system?

Apparently this was added 2 days ago with no announcement or information from USCIS. It specifically states that it can be used for C3B or C3C applicants (F-1 OPT or STEM OPT).

There has been increased chatter about this online. Has anyone used it yet? Does anyone have insight from any official government sources?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I caution you. The government is bad at change. If it were me, I'd do it the old way until we get confirmation that the new way works.

- New Comment: Yes, they did this before years ago (allowing online I-765 application for OPT), and it was so bad they stopped it to go back to paper. Lots of Requests for Evidence, rejected applications, lost documents and the like.

Unless you're anxious to be the experiment for USCIS and other students, you might want to see more information and evidence that it works before using it.

I'm not sure about the assumption that it will be faster. The person looking at your application is already reviewing electronically scanned versions of the documents sent to them by the lockbox.

If you're from a school that provides a lot of information and assistance with the application process, keep in mind they have no more information on this from USCIS than you do at this point. They can see a paper application and give you

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advice on what they can see there. Not necessarily true with an online version.

- New Comment: I know right! This is crazy. Worse than hearing it from a student, which is always jarring for big updates, I literally learned about this by scrolling through Reddit on Wednesday night.

Me to my students: Don't get immigration advice from friends or the internet!

Me: * receives critical immigration update from Reddit *

But I definitely agree. It sounds like biometrics may be involved for all online filings too, which is unimaginable. I understand why USCIS would do it now though, since the entire US has been complaining about them for 18 straight months and they probably are desperate to try anything for some peace.

Anyway, will definitely be advising my students NOT to try this for now! The one time it might be worth it is a student who realizes on their last day of eligibility that they forgot to file/their app was lost/whatever and now magically has a chance for same-day filing.

- New Comment: We are not recommending it because there have been ZERO announcements made on this. So, for now, stick to the paper application.

- New Comment: Man if the us govt actually improved the infrastructure online, they save so much money, and we'll be able to get opt approvals much faster

- New Comment: Can you post the link

Title of the post: OPT Application: Missing previous I-20s

Body of the post: Hello, I am about to apply for OPT since I'll be graduating this semester. But I see that one of the requirements is to have all previous I-20s and I missed some of them. I have contacted my school about this. But what if my school said they don't have them? Is this going to decrease my chance for my OPT to get accepted?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: From my understanding, you don't need to submit ALL previous I-20s but just the one with the OPT recommendation. I recently was approved for my OPT and I only sent out the latest one. Also, you can file a police report, and you should be able to get a copy from your previous school. It's weird that your school doesn't have the copy... Welp.

- New Comment: You should be fine, I'm not sure why schools still say to include all previous I-20s, I think it's an old practice. You really only need the OPT-endorsed I-20, and technically copies of your CPT I-20s as they now ask for proof of CPT if you've done it, and that's just the easiest proof to provide.

- New Comment: It would be very strange for a school to say they don't have them because just like students have a responsibility to keep their documents schools are also obliged to archive documentation.

- New Comment:

https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/lex3gn/how_do_i_find_my_previous_sevis_number/?utm_medium=android_app&utm_source=share

there're some useful info in this post

Title of the post: International student stimulus check

Body of the post: I came to the US in Sept of 2013 as an F-1 student and have remained here since legally under F-1 visa. I received \$1200 stimulus direct deposit back in April. I used my university service to file for tax and they have filed my taxes as resident for tax purposes for 2018 and 2019. I also passed the presence test according to the IRS website. I checked all the resources and they all said resident for tax purposes are eligible to receive the stimulus money. But I'm not sure 100% if it's legal for me to do so since I'm only a student in the US. Should I return the money to the IRS? Is it too late now to return the money?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You. Are. Resident. For. Tax. Purposes. Donate it to charity if you feel bad.
- New Comment: I think as long as you're a resident alien for tax purposes when you file your tax return, then you're eligible for the stimulus check. I doubt they check if you're on F-1 and you passed the substantial presence test anyway, so its yours to keep.
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Visa Appointment Time Megathread

Body of the post: After discussion from the users here, we will have a mega thread up with information from other users about their visa appointments.

All posts in this thread must be one of two categories:

****A. reporting their current approved application in the following format:****

*Country

Embassy/Consulate Location

Date of appointment

(All other information below the information above)*

****B. Requesting information on their country:****

Find your countries top-level post or if it has not been made Post one (1) Top-level comment with your Countries name and Visa Appointment Wait Times Fall 2020. *Ex: "Poland Visa Appointment Wait Times Fall 2020"*

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Only one (1) Top-level comment for each country will be allowed. Multiple top-level posts will be deleted. Using this format will allow other users to:

1. Find their country easily
2. Allow search engines to find these posts more easily
3. Adding the date will prevent those in the future from finding old information.

This Thread is automatically sorted by new. So you will always see the most recent posts first.

Remember, visa appointment times are available both on the Embassy or Consulate's website as well as at [The Department of State's Visa Appointment Wait Time search page](<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/wait-times.html>) These times are mostly accurate with the Embassy/Consulate pages being the most up to date and the state Department's Page giving you the general trend for a country with it getting updated less regularly.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I recently got my VISA in India.

India/ New Delhi/ Oct 4th and 5th

- New Comment: *Australia*

Sydney

Emergency appointment 19th November 2020

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Third country national application, originally from India was doing masters in Brisbane , Going for a PhD in the US.

- New Comment: I've been trying to schedule an interview for the past 2 weeks (Mumbai, India), unable to find slots at 9AM, as well as future slots in order to expedite the process to an emergency appointment. My class start date is around 60 days away, what are my options here?

Also, how late am I? :/

- New Comment: Has anyone been able to get any visa appointment at the Mumbai Consulate recently?

- New Comment: India/

Kolkata/

18th and 19th October/

Status: APPROVED

- New Comment: So my visa appointment for F-1 is happening soon. The school has sent me an F-1 to enter in Spring 2021. However, the school is still in all online mode with minimal face to face components. Though, for my PhD program, some of the students in my cohorts are going to lab to work on their rotation at reduced hours.

The school still hasn't released anything regarding opening plan for Spring 2021, and no one in the program or the international student office has replied back to me regarding verification for face to face components.

My appointment is very soon so my question is, should i just go to the embassy on appointment time like i would normally? If so, how likely that i will get rejected for the visa because of no written evidence from the school or the DSO to confirm that i wouldn't be doing all online work for my rotation?

- New Comment: Any updates from China? I am receiving conflicting information

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- New Comment: Any information from Brazil?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Can someone tell me how long is it okay to wait until it's too late to apply for a visa? (expedited appointments). Say that I've got my start date around January 20th, and it's 25th November today, how long until I run out of all chances to make it for the Spring semester?

- New Comment: Does anyone know when would the regular spots be opened for the interviews. I just came across a tweet by the embassy mentioning that February and March appointments would be cancelled and new appointments would be refreshed!

And has anyone got a REGULAR appointment, 9am trick or not...Did anyone get through the interviews ???

- New Comment: I have been trying from last 20 days but same message that no slots are available to backnchoose another date.

Today, one alert that First available appointment is on December 8 but calendar shown Feb to March. What to do any idea?

Called Visa support Delhi, they don't have any idea.

- New Comment: Got my application approved today

India

Chennai/Dec 14th and 15th

Booked a regular appt which was supposed to be on late February, so requested an emergency appointment and got the interview.

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Title of the post: People traveling on F1 visa from India: DONT book Lufthansa or Air France

Body of the post: I was just denied boarding as they are not allowing to let you travel if you have a F1 visa and transiting before reaching US.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The rules of the agreement signed by the travel ministry of india disallow anyone other than US citizens, us green card holders, EU citizens and EU student visas from boarding those flights. Read the terms and conditions before you book any flight.
- New Comment: did they stop you from boarding in India or during the transit in EU?
- New Comment: United Airlines works. Daughter just landed in Newark from Delhi on F1 visa.
- New Comment: Thanks for the information!
- New Comment: were you able to fly to the US? do let us know
- New Comment: But are you allowed to travel to the States with the F1 visa though regardless of whether you're a citizen or not? And does your university need to be hybrid for you to be allowed entry?
- New Comment: it shouldn't be the case with air india. you're right about lufthansa though. even klm and qatar aren't allowed to fly f1 visa holders from india to usa. usa citizens only
- New Comment: Flew Air India direct from Delhi to Chicago as a continuing F1 student on August 11th. Didn't face any problems
- New Comment: Adding British Airways to this list. Also heard about Qatar. I travelled United and had no problems
- New Comment: were you required to submit a COVID negative test report? if possible, can you let me know what all extra documents were required apart from what we are required to carry in normal circumstances? (I'll be traveling from Delhi to SF)

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- New Comment: what was the reason for it? they are not us passport control to do that if you have a valid visa unless there are some serious issues. Were your classes online-only? Are Indian nationals not allowed to enter Schengen airports due to corona?

- New Comment: Hey OP! Were you planning to leave the CDG airport before reaching the US? or you just had a layover at CDG?

Title of the post: When are your visa appointments?

Body of the post: Embassies have been open for a few days now. I was wondering when you guys had appointments, and if some of you have already been to your interview? We can keep track of how it went, because I think we're all worried that incoming students might still be barred.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Philippines. The earliest date I booked is on September 1.

- New Comment: Ghana

- New Comment: Thank you guys for replying! It's nice to see where y'all are from. I am in Belgium and my appointment is July 23rd.

- New Comment: July 21st. Initial F-1 student. Warsaw, Poland. Wish me luck guys, cause I have bad feelings about it :P

- New Comment: From Brazil here and appointment scheduled to September 4th. I requested a expedite appointment on Friday and I am still waiting on their response.

- New Comment: So far 4

Very active people and respectful

- New Comment: Are you all going to be able to get there before the semester start date guys? I'm having hard time

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understanding how much of a delay I can have. The school told me until 30days after the semester begins it's fine (I will have a support letter from the department). But I'm so scared of being sent back from the border :(

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I'm yet to book an appointment even though the embassy in my country is closed

Title of the post: Can I enter US if my school is all online? Already have F-1 Visa and I-20

Body of the post: I have a valid F-1 visa from attending summer school a while back. My school gave me an I-20 without any indication of whether or not classes will be in person or online.

Will I be able to get through immigration? Are they going to ask me if my school will be entirely online? (Flight is end of July)

I left my country to do a 14 day quarantine and before I left the school was still in hybrid mode :(

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Although you have your paper work in order, they might give you a hard time. What country are you from?

- New Comment: I have the same question (from Canada with I-20). Does anyone have advice?

- New Comment: I **believe** it won't be a problem. When I entered a few days ago, no one asked me anything about online or in-person courses. My I-20 also doesn't have a statement like that. It was business as usual except for a health check. I hope it works out the same way for you.

- New Comment: Posting new ICE guidance for u/highyeldcorgi You should be all good!

<https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/bcmFall2020guidance.pdf>

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- New Comment: u/HighYieldCorgi any updates? hoping for good news!

Title of the post: Do we still need a new I-20??

Body of the post: Since ICE rescinded their guidelines on students visas, do we still need a new I-20 to enter the country?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: In my opinion it's not required (but would help). I asked director of my PhD program for official document of my enrollment, which state that my classes are face2face. I hope it's enough for the interview

- New Comment: Try asking your registrar about this. I received a new I-20 via email with comments stating that classes will be done hybrid style. Apparently immigration accepts printed out I-20s, from my understanding.

- New Comment: Yes, if you program is fully online the consulate will no process the F Visa if you did no have it before (basically if you are a initial student)

- New Comment: Ask your DSO, but the answer is most likely "Yes".

The I-20 shows important information for the immigration officers like the start date and end date of your program, and remember that there is a number of days that count towards the date when you can enter the country for the first time as a student. (I think it was 30 days)

A valid I-20 proves that you are in lawful status as a student. You can even have your visa expired while in the US, but if your I-20 is good, then you are ok.

Ask your DSO about this and ask for their emergency phone number in case you have any issue during immigration.

Title of the post: F1 Visa Expired

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Body of the post: So as of right now my visa is expired and I am graduating this Fall, should I go back to my home country and apply for a renewal or too high of a chance for it to get denied? Any suggestions/advice would really help here, and please feel free to ask for additional context regarding my situation!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Why would wanna renew your visa if you're already in the US and only have 1 year left? My advice would be to not leave the United States until you graduate. Then if you decide to get a masters you can leave after graduation and get a new f1.

Good luck

- New Comment: With a valid I-20 you don't have to renew your F-1 visa as long as you stay in the US!

- New Comment: I was 6 months from finishing my program and I went back to my country to renew my visa, and had no issue at all.

- New Comment: As long as your I-20 is not expired, you can stay in America, but if you go back you'll need to renew or extend your visa again.

- New Comment: File asylum

Title of the post: Wrong visa expiration date

Body of the post: Hey,

I am starting my bachelor degree in september 2024 and will end it in june 2028, so got a f-1 visa. Even though all my documents (i-20, dsc-160, everything) state that my graduation is on june 11th 2028, my visa just arrived and it says the expiration date is april 2026. At the time I will still be a sophomore student, so it doesn't make sense. Also, that didn't happen with my friends. I will e-mail the consulate on monday, but I am getting anxious regarding to this. It is a high cost

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for me going to the consulate in another town, and I'm a low income student on a full ride scholarship. Have this ever happen to anyone? What should I expect from this?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Duration of visa depends on your country of origin and varies across countries. There is nothing called a "wrong visa expiration date". Some country citizens get it for as low as 6 months while some country citizens get it for as long as 5 years. It may also be shortened for various administrative or security reasons by US immigration authorities. As long as your visa remains valid, you can still enter the US. You'll have to renew it to re-enter the country if you exit the US after it has been expired. I doubt you'll get any response from your local consulate. Do note that you can still stay in the US on an expired visa if your SEVIS record is active.
- New Comment: You only need the visa for entering, so, basically, if you leave the country post the 2026 expiration date, you will need to get it renewed before re-entering.
- New Comment: Your status inside the US is based on your I-20 not visa stamp. The visa is only for entering the US.
- New Comment: If you're still at the same school in 2026, you can renew your visa at home country without an interview. That'll save a lot of time. Sometimes some students get a short F-1 visa duration because of the sensitive nature of their major, which is reflected on the i-20.
- New Comment: Don't worry. The worst thing that can happen is that you have to stay in the USA when your visa expires or go back to your home country to renew it when it expires. Your visa is the key that opens the USA gate and only for that, what keeps you legal is your I-20. I know a lot of students here who are still studying but with expired visas, and it is totally okay.

Title of the post: What are my options after OPT?

Body of the post: Hi, I'm currently on a OPT with my employer and my EAD expires this July 12, 2024 and I need to apply for a STEM OPT but my employer told me that they're not gonna sign my i983 lately last week without any notice

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which sucks.

I'm out of options to find a job within a day or to change an employer and then apply for I20 recommendation form from my university. What can I do now to stay here legally? I'm thinking of a PhD but idk how to even apply for them without any teaching or research experience.

Edit: I only used my 1 year OPT but not the additional 2 year extension so I think I have also wasted 2 more years and may not use my STEM OPT with another degree.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No options I'm afraid except to take up a new study program if you wish to stay back in the US.

Also, your STEM OPT application needs to go in BEFORE your EAD expires. I think you can't stay past 12th July (+60 days I believe). You would have to leave the country.

- New Comment: Regarding your edit, yes your current STEM OPT is lost. But afaik when you get a higher degree, your OPT resets. Same goes for the STEM extension if the higher degree is a STEM degree.

Choose wisely if you decide to pursue a PhD for immigration purposes (without any underlying passion on the subject) as it is 1) difficult, 2) time-consuming, and 3) does not necessarily improve your employability unless you actively network ahead of time.

- New Comment: A PhD is a commitment. It's not a fallback option. Don't underestimate the pressure and conditions of PhD programs.

Your PI will turn you into a workhorse and you have to publish a lot to survive.

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A research experience alone isn't enough as some undergrads have started publishing or co-authoring research papers.

- New Comment: Hey

I am also in the same boat as you

My employer signed my I-983 but refused to give e-verify number, coz of some shit

Now I'm enrolling to day 1 CPT university

And I have been thinking since last year to go for a PhD in my field of mechanical engineering

Message me if you need any help

- New Comment: Go for day 1 CPT universities. You can work and be here legally and you never know you might get selected for H1b if you employer files

- New Comment: You still have 60 days of time to find a new job. Also, DSO is the primary person to talk to. Do that ASAP

Title of the post: Re-enter the US with approved OPT but without the physical EAD card

Body of the post: After graduation I got a job that starts July 22nd. My OPT is still processing but will be approved very soon since I applied on March 25th. My flight is July 17th and I am afraid that if it gets approved before I travel, I will have a hard time entering the US without the physical copy of the EAD card. In theory, when OPT is approved, you need the physical copy of the EAD card when traveling on OPT (I have valid I-20, valid F-1 visa, job offer, and could provide printed receipt of OPT application). If I wait for the card, I would have to postpone my start-date since they would send it to my school and then to my country which would take at least 13 days total and I am afraid the company will rescind my job offer. Do officers always ask to see the physical copy of the EAD card when entering once the OPT application is approved?

I am considering changing the flight to fly sooner since when the OPT is still pending, you can enter with the documents I have with no problem.

Reddit Posts

Will I be denied entry in the US if my OPT is approved and I do not have the physical copy of the EAD card with the documents that I have which are F-1 visa, I-20, Job offer letter, and printed Approval OPT notice.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Why did you leave the U.S. before OPT EAD is approved?
- New Comment: Officers at the airport mostly ask for the EAD card if OPT is approved because you graduated from school and they need proof showing that you are eligible to stay and work. Unfortunately, all the documents that you said you could show to the officer are of secondary importance at that time. At least, that's what happened in my experience. That's why it is not recommended to travel after graduation unless you've an EAD card in your hand.

I'd suggest traveling back to the US asap before OPT is approved and sort things out with your employer to either extend the joining date or expedite your EAD approval by premium processing.

- New Comment: Someone posted here recently that they were in the same situation as yours. They even didn't have the page on their I20 where the school endorses OPT and travel. They went through secondary inspection at the border and let them.

Having said this, you are in a very risky spot. I suggest to let your ISSO know and come back to the US immediately. It depends on the officer to let you in or not.

Or, ask someone to mail your EAD card to you.

Wishing you the best.

- New Comment: Yes, you will be denied 100%. You have to have the EAD card in hand. Ask someone to mail it to you.
- New Comment: I don't know if this helps at all. I have mailed EAD card for someone to India and it reached from

Reddit Posts

Texas to India in 3 days

- New Comment: When applying for OPT, your I-20 has an updated end date that reflects your program end date. Assuming your program end date was not in July 2024, your I-20 has technically expired pending your OPT approval. Once your OPT gets approved, you report on the SEVIS portal regarding your training start date, which effectively smarks the start of a training program on that I-20. Unfortunately, this means you NEED to have an approved OPT application along with a valid EAD card in your hand when entering the United States (very high chances of them asking about the same during CBP inspection). Without these approvals, you're basically showing intent to end your program and hence your stay in the US as a student.

Secondly, post approval of the OPT application, it takes approximately 2 weeks for the card to reach your mailing address. Again, assuming you have someone to pick up this card, you may ask them to send you an international priority mail (typically reaches in 1-2 day) and then travel back to the states.

You may seek further opinion from an immigration lawyer regarding this to be 100% certain.

- New Comment: Do premium processing and let your roommate mail it over to you.

- New Comment: Look at this thread, it might help you:
[https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/1dqmiq0/big_opt_trouble_heeeeelp](https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/1dqmiq0/big_opt_trouble_heeeeelp)

- New Comment: >I will have a hard time entering the US without the physical copy of the EAD card.

Denial is a very real situation here.

>In theory, when OPT is approved, you need the physical copy of the EAD card when traveling on OPT (I have valid I-20, valid F-1 visa, job offer, and could provide printed receipt of OPT application).

Reddit Posts

Its not "in theory" it is a requirement.

>If I wait for the card, I would have to postpone my start-date since they would send it to my school and then to my country which would take at least 13 days total and I am afraid the company will rescind my job offer.

This is the risk you take when you travel without the EAD Card.

>Do officers always ask to see the physical copy of the EAD card when entering once the OPT application is approved?

Always. As stated, it is an obligation to have it.

> am considering changing the flight to fly sooner since when the OPT is still pending, you can enter with the documents I have with no problem.

Yea... But they can also deny you for not actually having F-1 status as your status ended and the OPT extension is not approved.

>Will I be denied entry in the US if my OPT is approved and I do not have the physical copy of the EAD card with the documents that I have which are F-1 visa, I-20, Job offer letter, and printed Approval OPT notice.

Guaranteed denial? No. Significantly more likely? Yes. A CBP officer can always give you a I-515a and temporarily admit you to the US, but you then need to return and show you have status legally to be in the US. (EAD card in this example)

- New Comment: So there are 2 scenarios here if you plan to re enter US while F1 OPT pending and I can say this as

Reddit Posts

few of my friends have re-entered US with their pending acknowledgment receipt from USCIS.

1. You've all the requisite docs mentioned, and an acknowledgement receipt of F1 OPT still pending. In this case, CBP officer may let you in if you can convince him on the go. You could say - "since my application is still pending, here's the receipt and I expect to get my card in few weeks" if he asks for EAD physical card. The risk factor here is, it depends on whim of the officer but certainly doable.

2. The officer explicitly asks for your EAD card and you don't have it. You may try to convince him but he doesn't heed to your request and denies entry.

Recommended is to have physical possession of EAD card and then travel.

- New Comment: I'd recommend you move your flight to an earlier date. Also, you can't be too sure when your opt will be approved. If it isn't approved before the proposed start date for your new job, you'll have to change the start date as you cannot work without an opt card.

Another option will be to get someone who's traveling to your country to help with the card (this is what I did). When I got to the point of entry in ATL, the officer asked only for my passport. Wish you luck with whatever decision you make!

- New Comment: I had opt approved and EAD card with me but they didn't ask for EAD card, so you might be lucky.

- New Comment: They did not ask my EAD card just checked first page of the I-20

- New Comment: I am in a similar situation. Called my DSO and two other advisors, and all of them told me that if I had my job offer letter, I-20, valid visa and OPT approval notice, that there shouldn't be any grounds to deny me. (But it's always to the discretion of the CBP officer)

Sure it's recommended to have the physical EAD with you, but that's just a means to prove that you can legally work in the US.

Reddit Posts

I also called the airport i'm travelling to and spoke to a CBP officer. He told me they don't need an EAD and could check it on their system if need be.

(May vary from airport to airport!)

Secondary inspection is a possibility, but as long as you can prove that you were approved for OPT, you should be fine.

I recommend having your school's number on you, in case they need to confirm with international student office that you were indeed approved.

If it makes you feel better, here's what my DSO told me: "there's always a chance to get denied entry as a non american citizen, not matter what you're coming in for. The more documents you bring to prove that you're entering legally, the smaller the chance of that happening"

There's always a risk, obviously having your EAD card with you helps. It's up to you to decide if it's worth it.

Title of the post: SEVIS Terminated for Unauthorized work, it was not my fault, what should I do?

Body of the post: hey guys,

I am International student. Yesterday I got to know from my international advisor that my SEVIS and I-20 has been terminated. I am double majoring in Computer Science and business and I got an internship last year at a bank, and I have been working since then on it on CPT. My advisor asked me to update CPT in every 3 months and I did so.

In the bank my contract is of a full academic yearly and it was supposed to end on 31st May 2024 but due to my course load as it was final week that time, and due to my other load I completely forgot and was confused, and thought my last day of my contract is June end. In bank, I'm on part-time CPT and I am only working on Thursdays, last month I worked for 3 days with 15 hours in total. My advisor said it was unauthorized work and now I have to go back to out of USA

Reddit Posts

within 15 days from 2nd of July, and re-enter with new SEVIS and I-20, all my previous course work will be same, but I will be treated as a new student. My CPT will be available again after 1 year and all.

Because of this issue I am really scared and stressed. What should I do? what will be the further process? will I be able to come back to complete my studies?

Please share your experience as well.

regards

vini

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: How did the bank even let you work in June once your contract is supposed to end at May 31? If they extended your contract, you should share the same with your advisor.
- New Comment: You have no other option other than leaving the US and reenter with a new I20. Reinstatement is not available for unauthorized work.
- New Comment: share and talk EVERYTHING with your advisor, working while studying is being on thin ice all the time.
- New Comment: So basically you forgot. This is not really "not my fault"... So reinstatement isn't an option. If you have a valid visa, just re-enter. There is no other way.
- New Comment: >will I be able to come back to complete my studies?

Reddit Posts

yes as long as your visa is valid

- New Comment: Apply to a Day 1 CPT university ASAPPP (you could use the help of admission consultants) and reenter the country with the new i20. I'm assuming you have a valid visa so you should be able to reenter with just the new i20. You have a grace period of 21 days, not 15. Please ask your DSO for more time to plan your departure because you definitely get more than 15 days. All the best!!!!

- New Comment: Did you tell him that you worked or how

Did he find out?

Title of the post: F-1 visa interview tomorrow

Body of the post: Guys, I have a question: do you need to hand over all the documents to the officer at once or only those that he asks for? Can you also give me some advice on how to answer questions, what questions did you have and should I answer very briefly?

THANK YOU in advance

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Only hand over the i20 and your passport.

Don't hand over stuff without being asked for it.

QnA you can check on YouTube.

- New Comment: It's only the I20, Passport and the SEVIS receipt. In fact, when you wait in the line, they'll ask you to keep everything inside except for these three. Do not hand over any other documents to the officer unless they ask for itz which they almost never do.

- New Comment: My only suggestion is to look rich during the interview and be confident.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: All the best. I had mine yesterday and it was a success.
- New Comment: Sometimes you got nothing to do and got a AP, sometimes you just passed. More related to your nationality and major. Science and tech majors are likely to received check while others are fine
- New Comment: All the best!!!
- New Comment: How did it go

Title of the post: Gov job in STEM OPT

Body of the post: Hi guys,

I am in the second year of my STEM OPT, working with an E-Verify private company with a very low salary and not many benefits. I recently got a job offer from a city agency, which is a nice government job. I never knew that some city agencies are not E-Verified. How could a government agency not be E-Verified? I was so shocked! I am really interested in joining the job because it has a lot of benefits and less work pressure. Am I not eligible to work for them?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If they are not e verified then maybe ask them if they can get E-verify done? If not then unfortunately you can't work with them
- New Comment: This is very common. The State of Wisconsin isn't E-verified either, and (at least until 5 years ago) they would not and did not plan on registering for E-verify.

The strange thing is they will and do hire people on OPT, but it's up to the employee to figure out what to do when their first year OPT is up. I know at least 3 people who ended up applying for EB-NIW on their own and was approved (the fact that they work for the government probably helped?). Anyway, they all still work for the state now.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: They can easily become e-verified. I'm surprised they aren't. If they don't, then you cannot work for them. If you'll need h1b in the future, you should check if they do that.

- New Comment: How do I know if a job has e-verify?

Title of the post: Visa issued

Body of the post: Hi my visa got issued yesterday and my flight is on this friday. I got a mail from embassy saying i can collect my passport on 20th but it wasn't the general (donot reply mail) what should i do in this case?

Ps:

I mailed the embassy regarding my situation and the reply i got was you can collect your passport on june 20th since embassy is closed on june 19, from the VAC

Ps:got my visa today itself lmao

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Change your flight?

- New Comment: What else can you do? You literally cannot even get past check-in at the airport without your visa. If your flight is in the evening/night, collect it in the morning or reschedule your flight. No other options.

- New Comment: If you have your flight in the evening/night you can collect it and be on time. But it can be a little tense.

If the flight is early, no other option than to reschedule it.

- New Comment: Is this your first time entering the US on an F1? If so, when is your program start date per the I-20?

- New Comment: [deleted]

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: I clock out 1 minute late.

Body of the post: I'm currently on an internship and I clock in and out using ADP. Today is the last day of the workweek and I forgot to clock out at exactly 5:00pm so now it shows that i've worked for 40 hours and 1 minute. I think I can still ask my manager to adjust it for me for it to go back to exactly 40 hours. But I just want to know if it is okay to leave my work hours to be 40 hours and 1 minute and my manager doesn't have to do anything? Is my i-20 gonna be terminated or am I gonna get a warning or something if those hours get approved? I get paid every 2 weeks and this is week 1 of this pay period, can i do 39 hours and 59 minute on week 2 to make it exact 80 hours 2 weeks?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Straight to jail!

- New Comment: If your I-20 says you're working full time (20h+ per week), it does not matter how many hours you work.

- New Comment: 1 min won't be an issue.

But just for your peace of mind, you can ask your manager to edit the time.

- New Comment: let your supervisor know and they can edit the hours for the paycheck

- New Comment: Bruh wtf? FBI is looking for you .

On a serious note, I used to log 46 hours every week during my summer internship. It was at a big tech. Everyone was chill. Got extra money and nothing happened.

- New Comment: As long as you are authorized to work full time, there is no regulatory limit on the amount of hours you can work with that employer. If you work more than 40 hours, you are entitled to overtime.

- New Comment: No. It won't be a problem. I don't think W-2s that are sent to the government have work hours

Reddit Posts

mentioned. You should be fine.

- New Comment: Nothing typically happens in such cases. But if you want, you can ask your manager to alter the time.

Just make sure not to publicize this, and go around asking your University's overseas office unless specifically asked.

See, they generally ignore such minor transgressions, but they are required by law to inform the USCIS about this, and can get in trouble if they don't report a violation that they know about.

- New Comment: Deportation!!!

Title of the post: Entering US as tourist with new I-20?

Body of the post: I am a Canadian who last month wrapped up OPT following my undergrad F1 and now have been issued a new I-20/F1 transfer for my grad school I am attending in the Fall.

I have plans to go to the US this weekend just as a tourist on vacation for a week and then return to Canada. Will I be able to enter using my new I-20 even though I'm just going as a tourist?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Ehh I don't think you can use new I-20 cause you can't enter earlier than 30 days before your program start date. I could be wrong tho

- New Comment: Am I wrong or Canadians citizens do not need a VISA to enter the US for tourism?

- New Comment: Yes, if you are a transfer student with a transfer pending I-20 and a valid travel signature you can enter and depart the U.S. as you please.

- New Comment: [removed]

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: OPT CASE DECISION IS TAKING LONGER

Body of the post: Hi, are there any F1 students here that's also waiting for their EAD case decision? It's been 2 months since I processed mine, and my OPT starts on June 5th. When are you guys starting the OPT? I'm a bit stressed out because an employer wants to talk about my visa to proceed with hiring me, and I will explain to them that I'm still waiting for my EAD case decision and card to arrive.

How are you guys coping up while waiting?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Have you paid for premium processing?
- New Comment: My progress has said "Your case is taking longer than expected to process." for 3 weeks now and i'm so stressed? I applied over 3 months ago and I need it for June and genuinely can't afford premium processing ughhhhh this is so frustrating
- New Comment: You should get a decision soon! It's just a default status set by USCIS once the initial timer they allot you runs out. I got an approval like 2-3 weeks after reaching this status.

I went through this. Apparently a bunch of my friends did too so it's common.

- New Comment: Premium Processing
- New Comment: Anybody got approval without PP. Apply March?
- New Comment: I am having the same issues. The wait is frustrating.
- New Comment: How much estimated time is it showing ??

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I paid the premium processing but now it says 4 weeks left instead of the previous decision time of 2 weeks
- New Comment: What i have understood is that if your opt takes longer than your start date they move your start date. Also im worried because I filed mine march 27th
- New Comment: I paid for premium processing on 14th March and got approval in 3 days (weekend included), my card has been delivered as well
- New Comment: I applied on March 11th and the A number was assigned on May 16th. On May 17th, the decision got released.

Title of the post: Traveling home

Body of the post: Hello Everyone !

I am an international student in USA.Visiting my home after one and half year this month.

I have a question.. i heard Us is deporting many international students at port of entry while getting reentry. Giving various reasons like you don?t have financial proofs (however they already paid fee for three semesters)

And many others!

My case is my father did applied for my immigration last year and i talked to my lawyer and college dso about it they are saying you will be fine coming back here as you have valid visa and everything up to date. Do anyone have something related to it ? Or do you know any good or bad cases while getting re entry?

Suggestions will be appreciated

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Make sure your school signs your I-20. Student visa is a single intend visa and if you have a pending I-130 shows immigration intend. So it really depends on the officer but there is a risk.
- New Comment: make sure you get your travel signature and are in legal status acc to your SEVIS. carry transcripts,

Reddit Posts

proof of enrolment etc just in case.

- New Comment: They can deny your reentry any time for any arbitrary reason. Until you move to a different visa you will always have to take a risk for traveling.

- New Comment: People will say alot of shit do not trust. Neither can you trace back who said this. Hearsay is one cunty shit about human beings. If you believe you havent done anything wrong just believe in yourself have all the documents. You are absolutely good to go. I went back home thrice when I was a student. Had no issues. Dont worry I hope you have a great holiday back home.

- New Comment: I went back home at least 20 times while on F1, never had any issues, even forgot the i-20 a few times and nothing major happened

- New Comment: Where are you hearing this?

- New Comment: Bring an updated i-20 ! And save ticket proof of leaving and entering just in case ! And answer the questions asked. I knew a kid that messed up during that part and got sent back ?. They asked him about what are you gonna do once you enter the us. He came back like a month early before school start plus his English wasn't so good. So he answered that he wasn't doing anything just travelling and living and such.

Title of the post: F1 VISA SLOT OPENING

Body of the post: Hey all!

Since mass f1 visa slots in India will be opening soon,

Are you guys going to book it yourself? Seeing how fast the slots are filling up its little scary, one must be awake in the middle of the night and no clue as to which day?!?

So I figured giving my login password to an agent and getting him to book it for me and one guy agreed to do it for 2k

Reddit Posts

But people are warning me about scams where the agents take money and lock your profiles and blackmail for huge amounts of cash!

Is this true?

So what should we do?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Don't give the credentials to an agent. Once they open, the slots stay(I am talking about the mass opening in May).

Buy the visa slots extension instead. Its cheap but worth every penny

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: It is true, these scams are common nowadays, wait for bulk openings it's unlikely you won't get a slot.

- New Comment: Don't do it!

- New Comment: There are several telegram groups updating news regarding slots and extensions available to show any open slots not 100% accurate but they give high chance use them and book it yourself.

Book whatever slot is available on the screen don't waste time searching for better time and place, you can later slowly reschedule it, but rescheduling works only if you got the slot first so get what's available.

- New Comment: With an agent is likely that your IP address would get flagged so do not use an agent

- New Comment: Avoid using agents at all costs. Much safer and efficient to use slot checking tools and book yourself.

Do give www.visaslotfinder.com a try to get the most actionable insights about slot openings.

- New Comment: Does anyone know the approximate date when the slots will open up in May. For now whenever I look it says no slots available and for Mumbai it says the next slot is in July 2025.

Please let me know thanks

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: *8861560591

- New Comment: Hey! Was there mass opening of slots in May? And did you buy the checkusvisaslots extension?

Title of the post: Laid off while STEM OPT application still under processing

Body of the post: Hi all,

I am on F1 visa status, currently in the F1-OPT period. My OPT authorization is set to expire on the 2nd week of May 2024, and I have applied for STEM-OPT extension as the nature of my work falls within the STEM field.

Unfortunately, I received news on 18th April that my employment is being terminated due to company-wide layoffs. I have been working at this company for 10 months now. Regrettably, my STEM OPT application is still pending approval. My application was received on April 8th, 2024. I have been monitoring my application status, and on April 22nd the status changed to "processing case decision". I have heard that the case decision processing takes around 3-4 months this year. My last day of employment is scheduled for 2nd week of June 2024. I am concerned about how this situation might impact my STEM-OPT application.

I had 3 questions -

(1) What will happen to my STEM OPT application if USCIS is still processing it after my last day (i.e. what if my employer states that I am no longer an employee when USCIS tries to verify my employment after my last day)?

(2) I have 30 days of unemployment left from my OPT period. During STEM OPT, you are eligible for an additional 60 days of unemployment. I have heard that these 60 days are valid from when you submit the STEM OPT application and you don't need to have finished processing to receive those additional days. Is this true?

Reddit Posts

(3) Can I apply for expedited processing of STEM OPT application after I have submitted a normal STEM OPT application? This is what I found on the USCIS website -

<https://preview.redd.it/vf9p87nms3wc1.png?width=1418&format=png&auto=webp&s=e3d370354d23693877d3d877acf4ac656e43a7cb>

It is a very challenging situation for me. I would greatly appreciate any helpful advice anybody has regarding these questions.

Thanks in advance!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: you had applied for stem opt when you were employed so theoretically you should be fine. they might issue an RFE
- New Comment: Same boat! Let me know what happens op
- New Comment: Same boat. Tell me what happens.
- New Comment: If you are still on payroll apply for premium processing.
- New Comment: Same situation.
- New Comment: You get 150 days to start stem opt from the last date of your opt. Probably use that to get a job and then apply for stem opt again? This is assuming that stem opt gets denied or withdrawn
- New Comment: This is tough. Hang in there
- New Comment: Anyone know what to do in such case? My stem opt application is in progress but I'm laid off.

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: Is it true that if we get F-1 reject in India, we cannot reapply for ~350 days ?

Body of the post: I have heard that applicants who are rejected once cannot reapply for next semester as they won't be able to book an appointment for around 350 days ? As this is somewhat new , Anyone who got rejected for fall 2023 and applied for spring 2024?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Not correct, I got rejected and reapplied within 2 months and got approved for the same semester.
- New Comment: Not true at all!. You can apply as early as the next available appointment but it's advised to take your time and reevaluate your overall approach, documents, prepare etc.
- New Comment: Not true but the chances of you being denied after getting rejected increase significantly.
- New Comment: Yes even I've heard about this somewhere. Would like to know more on this
- New Comment: Following ..

Title of the post: Is EAD Needed for a Remote Internship for a U.S.-based company (team is in the U.S.)

Body of the post: I'm a graduating senior and have a remote internship offer that starts early this summer. I applied for OPT a few days ago (non-premium) and after looking at the average non-premium OPT processing times, I'm not sure I'll get my EAD before the start date. Companies generally want you to finish onboarding/I-9 and have your EAD well before your start date right, otherwise they'd get nervous that the intern won't be eligible to start working and they'll go with someone on their waitlist?

My question is, since I won't be residing in the U.S. during this internship, do I still need an EAD to legally do this internship? I have work authorization in the country I'll be residing in since I'm a citizen of that country.

Reddit Posts

My other question relates to completing I-9 and the onboarding process. Do I need an EAD to complete I-9/Onboarding?
Am I not able to provide my foreign passport as a document for List B and my U.S. drivers license as a document for List C? Can I skip providing my EAD for I-9 verification?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: America doesn't care who you work for as long as you're not inside the country.
- New Comment: So you're gonna move to your home country after graduation right? If so, you don't even need OPT to work. You'll be outsourced worker of the company
- New Comment: Only when you are IN the US. So no, as long as you are outside the country, you're good
- New Comment: America cares only if you utilize American soil to earn money
- New Comment: Legally the company can hire you without work authorization as you are outside the US. The issue is that setting something like that requires jumping through some hoops for the company. The company isn't going to go through that for an intern.
- New Comment: you'll get it before graduation or just a few days after.

Title of the post: OPT Denied

Body of the post: I got my OPT Denied because i mixed up the codes, instead of writing (C) (3) (B) y wrote (3) (C) (B).

What are my options besides filing the I-290B? Can i call someone???

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >What are my options besides filing the I-290B?

Reddit Posts

You likely do not qualify for the I-290B. For the 290B you have to choose Reconsider or Reopen.

A motion to reconsider is a request for USCIS to review the unfavorable decision, but now with a *new legal argument* that states it was made incorrectly.

In your case, there was no error on USCIS. There is no new legal argument here. You filled the form incorrectly.

A motion to reopen is a motion sent to USCIS to reopen your case after an unfavorable decision. With a motion to reopen, you can present new evidence proving your eligibility for acceptance at the time you originally submitted your application.

Again, there is no new evidence, you filled out a form incorrectly.

>Can i call someone???

No.

Your options:

You can reapply if it is still within your application window. That window is 90 days before your end date and 60 days after.

- New Comment: You can try again. I also got my opt denied because a small mistake and I got approved the second time. Unfortunately you need to pay and do the whole process again

- New Comment: Did you file paper I-765? I think if you file it online there is a dropdown for the code.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: If you are still within the 60 day period post graduation - I believe you can apply for OPT again.
- New Comment: When did you apply? You say it's past 60 days after graduation?
- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: F1 visa holder received funding for a personal project, what are the implications la

Body of the post: Hi everyone, I pitched a business idea to work on a project I've always wanted to start. The amount is about \$50k (from a department within my university). I won't be performing any work on the US soil and will use the money to work 3 months over the summer with a team of mine back in my country of origin. Since all of that money is going to be used for wages and expenses abroad, is this considered unauthorized employment?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This question is beyond Reddit's pay grade. Consult with a lawyer.
- New Comment: I'm on a similar boat. Get a lawyer to be safe!
- New Comment: It depends on modality of funds transfer. Are they directly giving you? If you are receiving funds directly then you should consult lawyer.

Did you establish a company in country of origin and have contract between university and company is better route. May be longer path.

Title of the post: accepting offer before cpt application

Body of the post: This friday, I finally got an offer as a research intern at a tech company via phone call; I am a computer engineering major, so the intern position fits my major, which is crucial for CPT (I think?). However, they told me they would send an official offer through email by Monday, but I have till Wednesday to sign the offer. How long does

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the CPT process take? And could I accept the offer before the CPT comes out if it doesn't come out by Wednesday?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The CPT application just updates your I-20. My uni does it in 10 days usually.

They ask for the offer letter before approving the CPT request. So you normally accept an offer before you apply for CPT (since you need information about the employer and start and end dates).

- New Comment: <https://www.purdue.edu/ippu/iss/student/f1/employment/cpt.html>

From the website, it says 2-3 for response and 5 days for CPT processing.. so like 7-10 days?

- New Comment: I don't think the date you sign it matters, it's the date you start working.

So you can sign today, have your CPT approved which includes your start and end date, and then start working when it's the date.

The thing that can cause problems is you accepting an offer and did not report it/ report it too late and does not have an I-20 with the right CPT on it. Otherwise you are fine!

- New Comment: I go to Purdue btw, no idea if CPT dates matter by school

Title of the post: Prudential revocation of F1 while inside the US

Body of the post: I was recently arrested in the US for an OWI on one of those electric scooters (thankfully no property or persons damaged). After doing research online I reached out to the US embassy in my home country (Northern Europe) to confirm the status of my F1 visa. After a bit back and forth they informed me that DHS had revoked my visa and that I should come in to the embassy to talk with them. Since my I-20 and SEVIS was still valid I didn't want to leave the US to go to the embassy in case they would deny me a new F1 stamp, and that would mess up my degree. I've looked all over the internet for similar experiences without much luck. I have some great internship opportunities in my

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home country this coming summer which I would like to accept, but the possibility of a visa denial is hanging over my head. From my understanding I would be denied under 221(g) and I will be referred to doctors to be evaluated for alcohol abuse. I've already done assessments like that in the US and they came out negative for any substance abuse, therefore I am not worried about passing the evaluation for the visa application. I'm also already looking for immigration lawyers to handle it, but I wanted reddit's opinion too.

I was charged with a Class A misdemeanor (high BAC) and Class C (OWI first offense, no endangerment). My lawyers were only able to get it down to a Class C, which I now have on my criminal record after pleading guilty.

The only question I have is if anybody knows if being denied when reapplying with this on my record is common, even when I have finished a good amount of my degree at a good university with a good GPA. The school is also willing to write a recommendation letter that I could bring to the interview if I decide to reapply.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I wouldn't leave the USA until you finish your degree. Wishing you all the best.

- New Comment: From my experience, you will probably have a very hard time getting another F-1 visa. I do not recommend leaving the US.

This [June 7, 2007 DOS

cable](https://www.nafsa.org/sites/default/files/ektron/uploadedFiles/dos_guidance_on_processing.pdf) provided guidance to posts on how consular officers should handle cases where an applicant's criminal record shows an arrest or conviction for drunk driving or other alcohol-related offense.

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The cable clarified that a panel physician evaluation is required before making an alcohol-based ineligibility finding under INA Section 212(a)(1)(A)(iii); neither alcohol abuse nor (DWI) drunk driving are sufficient grounds alone for such a determination.

A consular officer must refer cases to a panel physician if:

- * The applicant has a single drunk driving arrest or conviction within the last three calendar years;
- * The applicant has two or more drunk driving arrests or convictions in any time period; or
- * If there is any other evidence to suggest the applicant has an alcohol problem.

Note: Subsequent FAM updates altered the original cable's requirements as follows:

1. A single alcohol related arrest or conviction within the last **five** years;
2. Two or more alcohol related arrests or convictions within the last **ten years**; or
3. If there is any other evidence to suggest an alcohol problem.

The cable and subsequent FAM guidance provide that to establish ineligibility under INA Section 212(a)(1)(A)(iii), the panel physician's finding must include:

1. Diagnosis of mental disorder (alcohol abuse); **and**
2. There is evidence of current or past harmful behavior associated with the mental disorder that has posed or is likely to pose a threat to the property, safety, or welfare of the alien or others in the future.

Individuals who need advice regarding the impact of a DUI on visa eligibility or maintenance of nonimmigrant status should be referred to an experienced attorney.

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- New Comment: I am a DSO with 15 years of experience. Unfortunately, I have never seen a student be granted a new visa after a DUI/OWI charge. In the level of offenses a F1 students can commit while in the United States this is seen as one of the highest.
- New Comment: Asking for a friend: His F1 visa is revoked followed by a arrest but case got dismissed on first hearing and came out without any conviction. He never had any criminal records on his name. Now, he wanted to go back to my his home country and get visa stamp. He is on F1 OPT and about to apply STEM OPT. What are the chances of getting a new visa?
- New Comment: I was able to get the F1 visa back for someone charged with but eventually dismissed of a drug charge. Upon arrest he got the notification of the visa revocation and left the US because he was scared. He didn't have to leave but he did but I got him back to complete his degree. Since you pled guilty, I wouldn't risk it if you can stay to finish the degree. Then when you are eligible for h1b, travel.
- New Comment: 100% deny, stay in the US if you want to finish your degree and I hope you learned your lesson

Title of the post: Tax Question Megathread 2023 Tax Submissions

Body of the post: **All Tax Questions must be posted here. All other tax posts will be removed**

[Please see last year's (2022 tax season) post for more information](https://old.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/1075bca/tax_question_megathread_2022_tax_submissions)

[Please see 2021 tax year's post here](https://old.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/rn0huq/tax_question_megathread_2021_tax_submissions)

[Please see 2020 tax year's post here](https://old.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/ljb2hk/tax_question_megathread)

>Do I need to pay my 2024 taxes?

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No, tax filing now is for the calendar year 2023 and begins January 2024, and ends April 15, 2024. Most student will file in February/March after receiving all their tax documents.

>I did not work in 2023, do I need to file taxes?

[You should have filed the 8843 even if you had no income.](<http://blog.sprintax.com/tax-form-8843-filing-instructions>)

"There are 3 things that every US international student and J-1 visa holder needs to know about American tax:

*Every US international student and J-1 visa holder has a tax filing requirement.

*It doesn't matter if you have earned income. You must still file your documents before the deadline.

*The IRS takes this stuff seriously! In other words, if you don't comply with your tax obligations, you may encounter complications when applying for US visas in the future. "

>Do I have to pay/file/submit taxes?

Yes, all F-1 visa holders regardless of employment or not need to file their taxes.

If you worked in 2023 you received tax documents from your employer (likely a [W2](<https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-form-w-2>) or a 1099 of some sort). You will need that form(s). You also need to file a [form 8843](<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8843.pdf>). If this is you continue on to the next question.

If you did not work then you need to file a [form 8843](<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8843.pdf>) That is all that you must do if you otherwise did not work or receive taxable payments.

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>What tax programs/software can I use?

Many, but not all tax software can file taxes for you. However, most are not set up with Non-residents in mind. As such, see the next question.

>Can I use Turbo tax, HR Block, Tax Slayer, or another program to file my taxes?

Yes, but you need to find out if you are a "Resident for Tax Purposes" or a "Non-Resident For Tax Purposes". You can find the questionnaire [here](<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/determining-alien-tax-status>)

Alternatively, you can go to [Sprintax.com](<https://www.sprintax.com>) sign up for their program and use the tax determination questionnaire at the beginning of their software. You do not need to pay to use this portion of their software.

If you are deemed a non-resident for tax purposes and you like Sprintax's software you can continue to use it for your taxes and pay them for convenience. If you want another option there is [Glacier tax Prep](<https://www.glaciertax.com>)

Both of these companies specialize in Non-Resident Taxes. You can also just complete the 1040NR

If you are deemed a resident for tax purposes you can use any other tax software designed for an American. Such as turbo tax, Tax Slayer, etc.

>Is the tax rate for residents and non-residents on F1 vastly different? When I enter the same details as a resident on tax estimator sites like turbo tax and hr block I get much higher refund estimate then what I get from sprintax.

The tax rate isn't different. But tax obligations are different. Both Turbo Tax and HR block are generally NOT for

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non-residents. They almost exclusively process resident taxes and all estimates are based off of tax residency. So as a non-resident for tax purposes, you will never get a valid estimate there. Non-residents pay fewer taxes and are eligible for fewer refunds as a result. So the number you enter will be with fewer taxes and they then Turbo Tax and HR block add the greater discount. Also, there is NO difference between programs or software in what taxes you get. The tax rate is the same for everyone. So no program will give you a benefit as the tax laws are the same. However, they can be programmed to not ask the correct question to obtain your tax filing status.

>I was deemed a "Resident for Tax Purposes" am I now eligible for permanent resident benefits?

Your **TAX status** is separate from your immigration status.

Your **TAX status** is informed by your immigration status.

Your **TAX status** has no impact on your immigration status.

That's why it says, "Resident for tax purposes". You are not an actual resident of the US and your immigration status has **not** changed. You are just now given more flexibility with your taxes and qualify for some additional tax benefits you didn't otherwise qualify for before. That said, you also have more tax liability now compared to before.

It is 100% separate from your immigration status and does not, can not, and has not granted you any sort of permanent residency in any way shape, or form.

>I got a 1098-T, can I use it?

You can only use a 1098-T if you are a Resident for Tax Purposes. Otherwise, it does not apply to you.

>I received a W2 and/or 1042-s and/or 1099, what do I do with these?

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These documents are used for filing your taxes. If you worked or received taxable income/benefits you will receive any combination of these. If you did not, work or receive taxable benefits you would have none of them.

>I have Dependents on F2

You need to file your taxes based on the above and file an 8843 for each dependent.

>My spouse on their own F1 needs to file

Have them follow the procedure above and file their own taxes separately.

>I arrived in the US in December 2023. My friend arrived in January 2024. I heard that if you were present in the U.S. in F/J status for any portion of the previous calendar year (the year for which you are filing), you need to file Form 8843. Do I need to file form 8843 for the 2023 tax year since he arrived US in Dec, 2023?

Correct. You have an I-94 with any date in 2023, you file. Not employed in 2022? Then just the 8843 form.

>My friend got a refund and I had to pay

That happens, there are many reasons it could happen. Taxes are VERY individual. It is possible your friend also filed using the incorrect status Resident vs. Non-Resident etc. You also could have filed wrong. If you are concerned, then use the software linked above to get an answer. If you are still confused after that contact the software provider for support.

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>How do I use tax form 1099-A/M/J/L/Misc

You can use the tax software above to file your taxes or follow the instructions on the 1040-NR for non-residents or 1040/1040-EA for Residents

>When do I get my refund?

If you are eligible for a refund you must submit your application as a non-resident via the mail to the IRS on/before April 15 and will receive the refund in July-October. If you elect to have it be a direct deposit, please list your valid US bank account. If you want a check, give them a mailing address where you will be later this Fall.

Residents and Non-Residents who can file electronically can receive the refund in a few business days depending on how you filed your taxes. Via the mail, it takes several weeks. If you elect to have it be a direct deposit, please list your valid US bank account. If you want a check, give them a mailing address where you will be later this summer.

I don't know where I will be in the Fall/Summer or I am leaving the U.S. this Spring/Summer! Ask a friend you trust to use their mailing address.

>Can I file my non-resident taxes online?

Yes, but e-filing can be limited by the tax filing services.

>I do not have a Social Security Number (SSN) Can I file taxes?

Yes, but if you are not filing only the 8843 then you need an ITIN or an SSN.

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You can get an ITIN using Spritnax (for an additional fee) or via a private company using the [Acceptance Agent Program](<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/acceptance-agent-program>) (for a fee) or you can schedule an appointment with the IRS at one of the [IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers](<https://www.irs.gov/help/tac-locations-where-in-person-document-verification-is-provided>) to both submit your taxes and the ITIN request form in person at one of their offices for free. You will need to call, schedule an appointment and bring all completed documents to the office for the submission of the ITIN request and submitting your other tax forms. If you use one of the software above as a non-resident then you can print and bring the documents from that software to their office.

>How does one pay for taxes on the medical ratio refund? But if you don't pay for insurance ex it is covered by a fellowship/scholarship then how do you account for it on your tax return?

I assume you mean the 1095 forms.

****Form 1095-A: ?****

Healthcare coverage purchased through Health Insurance Marketplace ? ?ObamaCare?? or the Affordable Care Act

* *Generally not applicable to international students & scholars? unless you have a special tax treaty*

* Can be used on a ?resident? tax return, in limited circumstances?

****Form 1095-B: ?****

Healthcare coverage provided through an insurance provider or self-insured employer?

You do not need 1095-B for your non-resident return?

****Form 1095-C: ?****

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Healthcare provided through an employer (generally more than 50 employees)?

You do not need 1095-C for your non-resident return

Additional Helpful Resources

Get your past tax filing transcripts which include your tax information and which returns the IRS has from you.

<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript>

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Guys, I am an F1 student. I started filing taxes using Sprintax and was one click away from submission. I noticed that I am getting a full federal tax return but my state(IL) is giving just a \$28 refund out of the \$452 paid.

Is this the norm? Do we not receive a full refund for state taxes?

- New Comment: Im an F1 student, last year (for 2022) I made around \$5000 and filing through sprinttax showed me that I owe around \$200 to the feds and \$80 to state.

For 2023, I made around \$10,000 W2 and \$2000 with 1042-S (not even income, just what was shown on the 1042-S) and filing through sprinttax showed me that i owed around \$1000 to feds and \$500 to state, i feel like something is very off given with how many F1 students talk about getting returns when they make around the amount i made. (Extra fyi my biweekly paycheck doesnt seemed to be taxed, hourly rate x hours worked was always my pay, dont know if that plays a factor to this owing)

Whats the first thing you would recommend to investigate? (A person from payroll has also suspected some faulty data

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entry and will look into it in the next coming days)

- New Comment: Hi,

I arrived in the US in August 2018. I was on F-1 visa until July 2023. I switched to H-1B on July 2023 and am still on H-1B now.

My question is, for the substantial presence test, how does the calculation take place:

1. Is it five years exempt 2018,2019,2020,2021,2022. And therefore would make me resident alien for the full year of 2023?

OR

2. Is it exempt until July 2023, and on H-1B for 172 days in the year 2023, hence did not meet substantial presence test. And therefore non resident alien for full year of 2023?

OR

3. Same as 2, but resident alien for only part year?

Also, how does [first year choice](<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/tax-residency-status-first-year-choice>) come into this?

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Does [dual status](<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/taxation-of-dual-status-individuals>) apply?

Note: I did not leave the country at any point. Only changed visa type in July 2023 from F-1 to H-1B

- New Comment: Hello! I filed using Sprintax for the 2022 tax year and still haven't received an approval notice or anything from IRS. I've been checking the 'Where's my refund?' website and my status hasn't changed from 'Return Received'.

My address has changed since I filed my taxes and it was also the first time ever filing under that SSN if it makes a difference. I'd previously filed under an ITIN in the past and received my refund quickly.

- New Comment: I have a very specific question regarding the German/ US tax treaty exemption. As far as I understood it income is not taxable as long as it does not exceed 9000 dollars. In 2023 I made more than that, but now trying to file for my taxes Sprintax suggest this treaty to me. So I was wondering does this still apply and I just get taxed on the amount that goes over the 9000 dollars?

Google search does not help me, so i really hope someone had a similar situation. Thank you!

- New Comment: Hello everyone, I don't know if I should freak out: I've been an F1 student since 2019 and was not informed from my DSO or anyone that I was required to pay taxes. I was not earning any income aside from a scholarship that satisfied half of my housing costs. I got my OPT and started working in 2023 and will be filing my taxes this year. I was directed to use SprinTax to help with my taxes. However, from what I've been reading it's not so reliable. So my two questions are:

1. Should I be concerned that I had not done my taxes whilst I was in school from 2019 - 2022?
2. Are there any other outlets willing to assist with my taxes aside from SprinTax?

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I'm very new to all this and want to make sure I'm doing everything correctly. Thank you for your assistance!

- New Comment: A friend not on reddit wants to know: I am on F1 stem opt, and for a period of two months (dec 2023 and jan 2024), I was employed by a consultancy. They gave me i983, and mentioned a pay biweekly. In Feb, I joined another healthcare company and received final evaluation on i983 from this consultancy. Now, during these 2 months, I never received any pay or any training stuff to complete. I am now reaching out to the consultancy for w2, which they are denying saying I wasn't under payroll. What are my options here?

- New Comment: Hello! I know that f1 students are exempt from meeting the substantial presence test for the first five calendar years. Just double checking that if I'm on an f1 for the second time (masters), does this 5 year exemption re-apply? For context, I did undergrad in NYC from 2015-2019. I stayed for a year of OPT then left in Sept 2020. For my 2020 tax return, I filed as a US resident for tax purposes. After my visa expired I returned home and stopped filing bc I had left the US. Then in Aug 2022 I returned to NYC to pursue my masters. So last year, I filed as a nonresident alien for tax year 2022 through sprintax (form 8843). However, I'm filing now through sprintax again and they're saying I need to file as a US resident and need to file through turbo tax. So I went on turbo tax, almost got to the end to file as a resident, but am now told I need to file as nonresident alien and they're saying to go back to sprintax. Now I'm hella confused lol. In Sprintax, I input all my dates of entry into the US from my first f1 visa in undergrad (2015) to now.. would that be why the software thinks I'm a resident? Should I not have input all those dates into sprintax and only put in the dates coming into the US from my new f1 visa/2022? Please help! The more I read everything the more I'm confusing myself. I just booked an appointment with H&R block.

- New Comment: Last year, I earned around \$4,000 and Got a full tax refund of \$100. But This time Springtax is estimating that I have to \$900 on my part-time income of \$12,000. Is it considered normal, Or Am I doing anything wrong?

- New Comment: Hi! Would the IRS send any type of confirmation after I file my tax return? I submitted mine by mail last year, but nothing happened afterwards (since my "income" from the scholarship is very small, so I didn't need to pay any tax). I want to make sure that's normal before I submit my tax return this year. Thank you!

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- New Comment: I used sprintax and it says I owe \$500 for a scholarship of \$5000 I received. I thought I come less than \$12000 wasn't taxed? Am I missing something?

- New Comment: DO I NEED TO PAY SELF-EMPLOYMENT TAX FOR INTERNING AS 1099 ON CPT?

I am an international student in the US on an F1 visa. I have a summer internship (15 weeks long, on CPT status) lined up for this year, and I would like to have an idea of how much tax I would be paying on that internship salary.

I will be an intern on a 1099 contractor status. I understand I have to pay the federal tax. I will be interning in Texas which does not have state income tax.

As a nonresident alien, I am not sure if I have to pay the self-employment tax (~15%), which is basically Social Security and Medicare tax (right?). I have been in the US for only 7 months and hence exempted from paying FICA taxes.

Any insights from someone who has been on 1099 during their CPT would be appreciated.

Thanks!

- New Comment: I have to file NY, NJ and MI taxes. I filed my federal taxes using glacier tax prep which generated a 1040NR. As a non-resident alien, for state taxes, do we also have to use special non-resident alien tax softwares like sprintax for state taxes, or do softwares like TurboTax work for state taxes?

- New Comment: Can someone please help on what to do if you're filling as a resident for the first time? Should I just use my W-2 on TurboTax?

- New Comment: Hello,

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I am an F1 visa nonresident alien, currently a Ph.D. student in my 3rd year of the program, and also 3rd year in America.

In 2024 March, I will start doing a paid part-time OPT. I have started the process of OPT. The company is based in the UK, and the job is remote - meaning I will be working from the US for this part-time job.

The company would not provide me with any tax forms like W2 etc, and each month I will raise an invoice for my stipend.

Has anyone been in a similar position? How did you file taxes? Any suggestion on how to account for taxes when I raise the invoice?

I searched online, and I did not find an answer other than to find a CPA to file your taxes.

- New Comment: I am on a non-immigrant student visa (F1). However, this year I satisfy the "substantial presence test", as I entered the US in Fall 2018.

My bank has sent me a form w-8ben to fill, however, now that I became "resident alien for tax purposes", I am not sure what to do with this form. Is there any other form I should fill instead? There is W-9 form that some people told me I should fill, but there is a question of "Are you a US person (citizen or resident)?" I am very scared of saying yes to this question because it could mean falsely claiming US citizenship, although I am a resident alien for tax purposes.

Any help is appreciated.

- New Comment: How likely is it that I owe \$500 in federal taxes when my only income was from on-campus student jobs? I've only ever seen people getting small refunds when working student jobs.

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- New Comment: Hi, I am starting an internship in the summer and had a few doubts while filling the form

1. Effective date of F1 start? What should this date be? The day i landed in the US/ The day 30days prior to the start of the program

2. In my address, should I fill the address in which I am going to be staying during the internship or the address im currently at

I have one more doubt but that requires an image, if anyone can dm me, i can send the image

- New Comment: Hey Everyone,

My friends are on f1 visa for the past few years in the united states. They have been filing tax through turbotax and have been filing 1040 instead of 1040NR. One of my friends is even claiming the return of 1000\$ from 1098t which is only supposed to be done by the residents. They just realized that they were not supposed to do that. Is there any way that they can correct this mistake. By paying fine if necessary. Will they get in trouble when they apply for renewal of visa or maybe H1B. Please help.

- New Comment: Hi, I was wondering if F1 students are eligible for the Federal Housing Tax credit program (through the IRS) apartments. In the application for the apartment it doesn't mention anything about citizenship and I asked the apartment and they said it doesn't require citizenship and eligibility based on income. This is different from Section 8 which is clearly only for citizens but I just want to confirm before signing a lease. Thank you!

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hi I am an international PhD student in the States on F1 visa.

I came here in summer of 2018 and I have been here since to finish my PhD. I started my OPT on January of this year.

When I tried to file my taxes on sprint tax for last year, it said that I qualify to be a resident for tax purposes and to go to TurboTax to file my taxes. I just wanted to make sure if I qualify to be considered a resident for tax purposes?

Also my taxes are quite low this year. Usually I pay

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600-700\$ more.

On the IRS website it's kind of confusing what and what doesn't qualify for substantial presence test. They also have an exception for students. Please let me know what you think is the right thing to do in this scenario?

- New Comment: I am a student on F-1 visa and earned income through my internship in Indiana and on-campus job in Michigan over 2023. I know Glacier is best for federal tax filing and Sprint tax is probably best for state filing. However I'm wondering if I can use software such as FreetaxUSA for filing my state taxes alone and Glacier for my federal taxes?

- New Comment: How can an F1 student save on taxes; anything which can be used to set off the taxes that can be paid?

- New Comment: Recent Graduate and filing taxes by mail. Received W2 from my internship last summer and it's 2 pages. Copy 2, B and C are all on one page. Should I take a copy of the page and then tear the copy 2 and copy b and attach them individually with the respective tax forms? Also, do I need to staple all forms together? (separate for state and federal of course) Advice on this would be greatly appreciated. Have filled all other forms and just waiting to know about this!

- New Comment: Hey everyone. I am currently on an F1 visa and like every year I am using Sprintax to prepare form 8843 (Exempt Individuals) as I don't and have never had an income. However, this time, I got a message from Sprintax saying I am now a resident for tax purposes and should use TurboTax.

I then try using TurboTax but it's asking me for a SSN, and I don't have one since I have never worked on my visa. What should I do?

- New Comment: Hey guys, I have a question. Are F1 students taxed on any US income or is it an income above a particular number? And if yes, what is the percentage, 10%?

I did my taxes with both Springtax and Glacier Tax Prep and on both I owe \$1274.

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The tax table it shows me is this:

Wages on 2023: \$16500

Federal taxes withheld: \$299

Exemption country treaty: \$2000

Total taxable income: \$1274 I think

Total taxes I owe: \$1247

Anyone who can confirm this is right? Thank you!

- New Comment: Hello everyone, I already filed my federal and state tax return on Sprintax and asked my employer for my fica tax refund. My employer said they will refund my fica tax and send me a new W-2. Does that mean I have to file my tax return again? This is my first time filing tax so I don't know about any of this. Thank you!

- New Comment: Hi, I came to USA on 26th dec 2023. I have no income. I understand that I still need to file a form 8843. I only started to attend school in 2024. What do I answer for question 9 and 10?

Enter the name, address, and telephone number of the academic institution you attended during 2023.

- New Comment: Does Sprintax automatically file 8843?? I got income last year, and a W2. I followed all steps on Sprintax but it never prompted me to file a 8843 separately.

Should I proceed or is there something off??

- New Comment: Hey everyone! So I have lived in UAE almost my whole life growing up and came to the US in 2021 as an F1 visa holder/undergraduate. However, I am an Indian citizen/ NRI.

The Sprintax questionnaire asks for my country of residence to possibly claim tax treaty benefits. So do I enter UAE or India as my country of residence? For some extra info, I don't have a resident visa for UAE anymore and I travel back to meet my parents on a tourist visa.

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Any advice would be appreciated, I am really struggling with this question. ?

- New Comment: Are we allowed to deduct *all* of the state tax paid in the same year as itemized deductions for the federal tax? Sprintax always deduct only the part that was already withheld by my school but I just realized (or I thought, I'm not sure) if you figure out your state tax first, you can deduct the total amount you owe as well. Is this right for us nonresident aliens?

- New Comment: I have been in the US since 2021 on F1 visa and been paying my taxes as a non-resident alien. I am currently working on my F1 OPT. I got married in 2023 and my partner was a student on F1 visa and we wanted to file taxes together as that would help us save money. After talking to a tax consultant we realized that we would not be able to file together or claim tax deduction on tuition fee as non-resident aliens. However, the tax consultant mentioned that we could file taxes as residents and in that case can do a combined filing. I mentioned that we would not pass the substantial presence test, but they said we could still file as residents. Additionally, as I am on F1 student visa I have not paid any social security or social security tax.

Right now, we are confused if we should file combined as residents. Is there any other way apart from the substantial presence test to qualify as residents for tax filing purposes? And in the case we do it, wouldn't we be liable to pay the social security and medicare taxes? Looking to see if anyone has been through a similar scenario and any other thoughts that could help us

- New Comment: **Finance Question: Is Interest from Savings Account Always Tax-Free on F1?**

I am planning my investment options as I start my OPT.

1. Is the interest earned from HYSA fully tax-free?
2. If so, is it also the case for interest earned from fixed-income investments like government T-bills?
3. If not, is keeping your money in HYSA the best risk-free (so apart from stocks etc) investment option for F1 students?

Reddit Posts

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P.S. - This might not be the most appropriate thread for these questions, but my post was auto-removed because of the keyword "tax" and I was asked to post here.

- New Comment: I used FIFO to calculate basis for 2022 crypto capital gains.

If I used a different basis calculation for 2023, such as Average Cost, would I have to amend the 2022 return? Would I have to file some additional paperwork?

- New Comment: Hello

I am a F1 student who is allowed to work off campus under the EAD card that is presented by the USCIS due to the ?economic hardship? happening in my home country, am I also exempt from the FICA? Note - The jobs I am working on are not related to my field of study & I did not meet the 5 years of substantial presence test requirement. Thank you!

- New Comment: I just filed returns for 2019 and 2020. I had a small w2 from 2020 for 1000\$ in addition to 1099 income from my subcontractor business. I accidentally mailed my 2020 return without attaching my w2 to the return. The income from the w2 is reported on the return correctly. I just forgot to staple the w2 form. With the deadline so close, is there anything I can do to prevent the IRS from rejecting this return, thus pushing me past the 3-year deadline and missing out on my refund for 2020? It's quite a bit of money, so I'm freaking out.

- New Comment: Hello,

I am an F1 student who is on OPT and for the first 6 months of OPT I worked on 2 contract-based jobs. I have a form from 1 of the employers, but I am missing a form from another employer. (Both forms are 1099-MISC). From the second contract job (that I have not received a form for) I am not sure they have filed anything. What should my next step be? I have already contacted the employer, but what can I do here since the deadline is near?

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- New Comment: I had a payroll reversal recently - wrong payment and I gave the money back. Do I need to claim this paycheck on my tax return?? The total paycheck is \$150 so I don't owe any taxes (under taxing threshold).

But the form 1099 NEC for this paycheck was issued to me in January. Payroll reversal in April. Do I still have to attach that 1099 NEC in my tax return?

- New Comment: Doing some last minute work here and I am SO lost.

I'm an F1/OPT Student. I was filing through Sprintax, but was immediately told that I needed to file as a "Resident for Tax Purposes." I know why, but I am confused on what to do now. Sprintax redirected me to TurboTax, but then the questions TurboTax ask seem to be inapplicable to me (as a non US citizen). It also at no point asks about my passport information or anything to indicate that I'm here on a visa. That can't be right?

Any one got a clue?

- New Comment: Hi everyone, I am a currently a grad student in the US. Before starting my graduate studies, I finished a 4-year college, so I have been in the US for 6 years. I have been paying FICA taxes since last year due to the 5 calendar year rule. I was told by a friend that I am still exempt from FICA taxes under Domestic Student FICA Exemption since I am a full-time student. I was wondering if this is true and if I am eligible for a refund. Any advice would be appreciated. Thank you!

- New Comment: H&R block filed my tax wrong

I am on F1 visa doing my OPT this year. I came to the U.S in 2021 for masters program and graduated in 2023. I filed my tax with H&R block and they did my tax as a resident when I told them multiple times that I am NON-Resident and do not qualify as resident. However they asked multiple tax experts in that office and still counted my days (183 days in that tax year). I am planning to apply for GC soon and worried that this will lead to further questioning during the process.

What should I do? I feel like since it's not my fault it is going to be okay but still worried.

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Also, is it possible to ammend my tax filing from 2022 to add 1098-e and get return because I did not know international students could get return from student loan interest?

- New Comment: Hi! I'm an F-1 student and my college is in Indiana. I did not work in Indiana in 2023 (or ever) and I worked in South Carolina in the summer for an internship. Am I supposed to file taxes for both states? Or just South Carolina because I earned income in South Carolina?

- New Comment: I am on F1, I did voluntary work in my first year of OPT but I didn't get anything paid . So I didn't file my taxes for the year 2023. I have missed the deadline,

1. do I have to still file for taxes ? If so what can I do now ?
2. If I didn't do how will it get effected in future ? Please let me know

- New Comment: Hello! I am currently on OPT, applying for STEM OPT. I have first arrived in the US on my current F1 visa in August 2019 for my college education. After graduating in 2023, I started working under my OPT, and now I have recently obtained a new job with a different employer a month ago. My new employer sent me a form for FICA tax exemption for NRA under F1 visa status in order for me to claim exemption from FICA taxes, if I'm eligible for that. From my understanding, for the first 5 calendar years in the US we are exempt from paying the social security and Medicare taxes. Since I arrived first in August 2019 and have been present in the US for most of the time (excluding short vacations/winter break), would August 2024 count as the date I would finally start being subject to FICA taxes and when the 5 calendar years end or would that have started already now in 2024?

- New Comment: Hi everyone! I am a current F-1 student working on OPT, and my employer mistakenly withheld my FICA (social security + medicare) taxes from my paycheck. My employer was unable to give me a refund, so I filed Form 843 and 8316 as outlined here: <https://oiss.yale.edu/employment-taxes/us-taxes/social-security-and-medicare-tax-refund>

Reddit Posts

I also filed my taxes this past year with a 1040-NR but today, I received a letter from the IRS stating that "You must claim the excess FICA withheld by filing a Form 1040-X, Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return." When I try to look this up online, I see no websites or topics discussing this, and was wondering if anyone has experienced this before? If so, what did you end up submitting alongside the 1040-X and were you ultimately successful in getting your FICA taxes back?

- New Comment: Guys, I mailed my Federal Tax forms on March 28th through USPS. Thats right - 52 days ago! AND ITS STILL ON ITS WAY! On the other hand, my state tax forms were filed, and I even got the returns as a cheque in the mail.

So I've looked into what can happen and apparently it is the date of mailing that is considered. I have the receipts saved from that day safely. I've reached out to the post office and they said they cant really do anything once its been mailed. Any advice on what I can do about this? Thanks!

- New Comment: Are international students who were on a fellowship required to get a sailing permit from the IRS before departing the US? Have your schools ever brought this up (mine haven't ??)?

- New Comment: I haven't got my tax returns yet. I should be getting around a thousand bucks. I checked online and it says there might be an error in my ITR but I have checked the docs and I didn't see any error. I haven't got any IRS notice as well. anyways, the website says to call IRS n get it resolved. I'm in India right now and wanted to know should I do it ASAP or can it be done over I'm back in the States?

And I do have all my docs for immigration but it's just that my offer letter has my old joining date. Because I'd my start date changed which is same as my EAD start date. But the offer letters start date is 2 weeks before my EAD date. My company didn't give me a new offer letter with the new start date. Is that something to be concerned about?

- New Comment: I'm F1 visa student doing an internship in Texas but I go to a school in Louisiana. Do I have to pay Louisiana income tax for my internship in TX?

- New Comment: I filed my tax last April. When can I expect my refund? I check IRS website where it says its usually

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4weeks after the submission. It has been 4 weeks and I have not received it yet. I also tried the "where's my refund" option from their site and it says that my file was not found. I graduated recently so I'm not residing in the US anymore. I worry that I won't get my refund.

- New Comment: I mailed in my 1040 NR back in april. It still has not been marked as received by the IRS. I mailed it from

Abroad and I know it has been received. Is anyone in the same spot?

- New Comment: Hi, I am on F1-Visa and entered the USA in July 2019. I continue to be on F1-Visa but it'll be 5 years that I am here in July 2024.

When do i become responsible to pay FICA tax? Jan 1st 2024 or July 19th 2024 (the day i entered the USA)?

Sorry if it's generic, my employer believes i continue to be exempt as long as i am on F1-Visa and I don't think that's correct.

- New Comment: Hi.

I just graduated in May 2024 from college as an F-1 student, and I've been in the US waiting since April for my post-completion OPT application to be approved. It's still pending and my 90 day unemployment period ends in October (the start date in my application was July 16th).

I just realized that I didn't file my Form 8843 (or any tax documents) to the IRS for 2022 and 2023. Could this be the reason that I haven't been approved yet? Would filing them now change anything? I'm kinda stressing out because I'm almost out of time to get OPT approval and I'm worried this is related? I didn't have any income in the US whatsoever yet. Thanks for your help.

- New Comment: # Tax form to expect at year end when being hired on 1099 contract

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I have recently joined a startup on a 1099 contract. I'm currently on F1-OPT. I am certain that I should be filling a W-8BEN form to report my tax information to the employer. But the startup uses Gusto payroll system and Gusto classifies me as an international contractor (so that I can fill out a W-8BEN) and takes my home country address rather than my US address. More importantly I am being told that at the end of tax year I won't be receiving a 1099. Has anyone gone through this situation of being on F1-OPT and working on a 1099 contract? If so how was your process ? What forms did you fill after on boarding and what tax forms did you expect from your employer at the end of tax year.

I know this question is not well formed, but stress prooo maxxx!!!

- New Comment: Hi! Could you please help me out on my post? I'd love to hear your insight and I saw you don't like PMs

- New Comment: Hi everyone, I have two strange situations happening: first, my university paid my stipend for the first 5 months and they didn't deduct any taxes. They sent me form 1098-T and my stipend is listed as Grants And Scholarships. There is no option on Sprintex to upload this 1098-T form. How do I pay taxes on my stipend?

Note: I filled out information in Glacier at the beginning of the semester but there was no discount. For the stipends paid this year I had to update the information in Glacier - it's the same information - and now there is a federal tax deduction. Second, I was on the J visa and was Non-resident for taxes purposes for 2 years. At the beginning of 2023 the company started to deduct FICA taxes, they told me that after 2 years of exemption it is necessary to pay FICA taxes. Using Sprintex, the software pointed out that I can get a refund for the FICA taxes paid. Is this software reliable? If the system indicates that I did not need to pay FICA taxes, even after 2 years of exemption, can I believe it and ask for a refund?

Can anyone help me with these questions? Thanks!

- New Comment: Hi , i am international grad student on F1 visa. I came to US in august , i work on campus and got my W2 and also 1098 T from university. My question is can we get a tax refund on 1098T, if I already filed for a refund, will

Reddit Posts

there be any consequences for it?

- New Comment: Hello all,

I'm currently working on my OPT. During 2023, I received a fellowship from my university. The structure of the fellowship was that the lab I was doing a research project in, paid for 4 credits of my tuition since the research project counted towards the degree. I did not receive the money in my account. It was directly paid to the university by my professor. Should I disclose this on my IT returns? And when I graduated, I received \$1000 as a direct deposit from my university as an award - Outstanding graduate student. Should I show this on my Tax returns? Is this taxable?

- New Comment: I am a on OPT since May 2022 and been in the States since January 2018 for my Bachelor's degree. As far as I understand, FICA taxes exemption is only valid for the first five calender years of being in the States. Therefore, I asked my employer to start deducting FICA taxes for 2023 but that didn't take effec until later in the year so I technically owe the IRS the taxes that were not deducted. Yesterday, I was looking trough the IRS website and found that there is an exemption called "Closer Connection Exception" that allows me to extend the exemption as long as I prove that I have closer connection to my home country compared to the states. I am thinking of going this route and if actually the IRS accepts my paperwork I should get refunded instead. Anyone have any experience with this? Can I do this by my own or should I consult a professional to make sure that I am doing it right?

TLDR: Need to use the "Closer Connection Exception" for my tax return this year to avoid paying FICA taxes and possibly getting refunded. Any directions/guidance/past experiences would be much appreciated.

- New Comment: I filed for FICA tax refund in Apr 2023 but when I called IRS, they couldn?t find any status of my refund. Should I file another claim this year?

- New Comment: Hi all. I'm an F1 on OPT. I was exempted from FICA in 2021, but was supposed to start paying FICA from 2022 onwards. However, my company and I missed it and only rectified it for Dec 2023.

I tried contacting my Payroll and theyre insisting that I resolve this with IRS myself without providing further help.

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I tried calling CPAs, Tax Lawyers and the IRS and they all seem to either unwilling to take my case or wasn't quite helpful.

I'm quite at a loss on how to proceed. Any help would be appreciated

- New Comment: Hi, Medicare and social security taxes were deducted from my paycheck. Can I just file regularly and expect a refund for these taxes or should I contact my employer or contact the IRS somehow . What's the best way to go about this? Thank you

- New Comment: I was still under F1-OPT last year and the company that I worked for still had my social security and medicare taxes withheld from paycheck for 2021. I've tried mailing documents to the government, following the instructions on gov website. However, it's been past 6 months past the deadline and I haven't heard anything back from them.

What do I need to do? Is it possible to file this case in my tax return this year? Someone help!

- New Comment: Hypothetically speaking, if you work so few hours that you make under the threshold, and aren't required to submit tax returns, does this eliminate the risk of unauthorized work being caught through tax returns?

Also, has anyone ever heard of someone working illegally as a student but still managing to adjust their status through a work visa?

- New Comment: Do I need to file tax for my dependents? They don't have ITIN yet and its been more than a year.

They have also exercised marketplace health insurance which provided premium tax credits. I have received tax form 1095 for then today.

If i don't have ITIN for them, do i need to file? Or what should i do?

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Previously I have filed my tax as single as I couldn't provide any TIN/SSN for dependent and lost a good amount of tax rebate.

(posted a seperate thread and it got removed. So posting here in comments)

- New Comment: Can I get in a trouble? So, I had my CPT working for some company last year. Everything was approved, but I think I made a mistake by informing my DSO that I am working for a company directly whilst I was working for them through employment agency (later I got admitted as full-time employee). Will I get in trouble when I will do taxes this year because of that?

- New Comment: Filing tax as Resident Alien for tax purpose on TurboTax. It asks about foreign accounts and amount in it. Are we not allow to have saving that our parents save for us since we were kids in our country? Do we get tax that too? ?

- New Comment: I am an international freshman, and got a 1099-MISC in mailbox today. Apparently I got \$50 from TD referral credit which are taxable. Do I even show this on my tax return? And what forms should I file? Just the Form 8843, or also 1040-NR? I am anxious about making a mistake and getting penalized by IRS. I don't even have an ITIN or SSN, so how should I go about filing a tax return?

- New Comment: Tax Filing mess up (Indian tax)

Hi guys,

I have filed my tax incorrectly for the AY (23-24). The exact issue was I missed even the Dec 31st deadline to file my tax and ended up finally filing it with a fine.

Now my question is how big of an issue is this going to cause me in the Visa process, I'll be leaving this year, so the

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incorrect filing will literally be my only tax record.

Thanks :)

- New Comment: Hello

I am on F1 OPT and exempt from FICA taxes, my wife did not receive any income last year and she is a student with F1 visa as well. Can I file for taxes as non-resident exempt from FICA plus married filing jointly (asking for her ITIN and her filing 8843)?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Tax credit?

I graduated in May of 2023 and started a job in August. I am working on filling my taxes and found out that you can ask for your Medicare and Social Security withholdings back. I am thinking of reaching out to my employer and asking about it. However, I am currently in the process of asking for my STEM extension. I wanted to check and ask if anyone has done this before, and if they have had any issues with their visa because of it. Obviously I know I am not doing anything wrong, and there should be no issue with this. But, when it comes to my visa, I would rather be safe than sorry. I would hate for my extension to be rejected because I asked for this.

Any advice? Has anyone done this?

- New Comment: when you physically file your needed documents for tax, do you guys track it to make sure it reaches IRS? I filed the form 8843 last year since I didn't earn any income but I didn't track it and now I realized there's no proof that I actually filed it since IRS doesn't really email a receipt as far as I know. How do you track this when you physically file documents?? or at least any proof that you filed them

- New Comment: Hi all,

Reddit Posts

I work for [Thriftax.com](http://thriftax.com) and ****I'm a nonresident**** ****tax professional.**** I'll be happy to answer questions (try to reply under my post so I get notified).

Other than that feel free to use [Thriftax.com](http://thriftax.com) with coupon code EarlyBird10 for 10% off.

Cheers!

- New Comment: Much appreciated!

- New Comment: Hi everyone, sorry if such questions aren't allowed here. I could use some help in determining if I'm a resident or non-resident alien for taxes this year given my OPT confusion.

I just want to ensure I don't incorrectly submit my tax returns to IRS.

Here's a brief overview of my situation:

****Background:****

- I'm a non-US citizen who entered the United States on an F-1 visa on August 20, 2018, with no prior visits to the US

- Over the past 5 years, I've consistently filed taxes as a non-resident using Form 1040-NR while studying on F-1 and then working on OPT/STEM OPT

- I remained in the US without leaving for the past five years, from August 2018 to November 2023

- My OPT started in November 2020, and STEM OPT started in November 2021 (therefore EAD valid until Nov 2023)

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- In November 2023, I finally departed the US as my STEM OPT was about to end (also wanted to leave due to personal reasons). I don't plan on trying to return to the US for the next 4-5 years at least.

****Current Situation:****

Having worked from January to November 2023, I'll need to file both state and federal tax returns this year.

But I'm uncertain whether I should now file my tax returns as a resident or still as a non-resident.

****Calculations I made based on IRS website:****

- Date of entry into the United States: 08/20/2018
- Student F-1 visa status, exempt individual for 5 calendar years (2018 through 2022)
- To assess my substantial presence test (183 days), counting days began on 01/01/2023
- Number of nonexempt days in United States during 2023: 365 days

I left the US on 11/5/2023, which means:

- No. of days (2023) days in United States $(308) \times 1 = 308$ days
- Prior year (2022) days in United States $(0) \times 1/3 = 0$ days

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- Year before that (2021) days in United States $(0) \times 1/6 = 0$ days

- Total = 308 days

****Conclusion:****

Based on this calculation, I met the substantial presence test on 07-02-2023 (the 183rd day of 2023). My residency starting date under IRC § 7701(b) is 01/01/2023.

- Is my calculation regarding the substantial presence test correct?

- Do I now need to file Form 1040 instead of 1040-NR, given that I no longer qualify as a non-resident for tax purposes?

Any guidance would be greatly appreciated.

- New Comment: Substantial presence test: FICA Tax Exemption

I have a question on the substantial presence test. I am not sure how to do this?

The website says that if you want to know if you have substantial presence for year x, you have to count the days you've been in the US in year x, add a third of the days in year (x-1), and 1/6 of the year (x-2).

If you've been here in year x for 31 days and the total of all the calculations above is at least 183 then you pass that test.

I am not quite sure if I interpreted this correctly. Can someone please confirm?

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Also, what happens if your W2 didn't apply these taxes and you're backed up?

When I asked my employer that I'm tax exempt for a particular year they updated my W2, told me they wouldn't carry it over, and then they did.

I didn't notice until 2 years and now I have to pay 2 years worth of FICA Tax. What is the best way to navigate this situation.

IRS won't give me an appointment and directs me to the website everytime I speak to an agent. They tell me they'll forward my call then hang up?

I'm definitely going in person to get an appointment anyway.

Has anyone been in this situation before?

I feel like the system lets you mess up if you make an innocent mistake then catches up to you and burdens you later.

Help please!

- New Comment: Hi everyone, this is my 3rd year filing taxes in the US and I think I messed up. I filed using Springtax the past 2 years but hated using the system so I filed using FreeTaxUSA this year. I checked my school's immigration/F-1 website and also other Reddit posts and saw that some people used FreeTaxUSA and last I checked, it says the IRS has accepted my returns.

I realized afterwards that what I filed with FreeTaxUSA wasn't a 1040-NR and now I'm freaking out. I can't "unfile" but all advice online says to amend it. I don't think I can fix this through amendment if I filed a totally different form altogether?

Reddit Posts

I'm gonna call the IRS first thing in the morning but has anyone else dealt with a similar situation? Thanks in advance!

- New Comment: I'm a non resident for tax purposes but I did a backdoor Roth IRA conversion and Sprintax says they won't be able to help with tax filing. Does anyone know any other software i could use? Thanks!

- New Comment: Hi,

We are in the US on F visa for 8 years now and' I just learned that my child can obtain ITIN for me to claim him as mg dependent.

Someone has any tips on how to fill the w-7 form?

What should I check in the reason? D? Or G?

Thanks.

- New Comment: I am in a bit of a pickle.

As an international student in the US, I have been filing taxes as a non-resident alien over the past 5 years. However, since 2023 was my 6th year, I am now a resident alien for tax purposes for the 2023 tax year.

Having discovered this, I was going to personally file as a resident alien. HOWEVER, my employer has not been deducting social security and medicare taxes for the past year. Despite being aware of my specific status in the US, I somehow slipped through their system. I contact my employer during January to rectify this issue, as my research indicates the only way to rectify this would be through the employer. I was willing to pay the entire tax for prior year (my share). However, they were adamant that they don't issue amended W2-Cs unless the blame is entirely on them.

It has been very hard to get guidance regarding this since this case is very niche and I have not been getting a good response by calling local CPAs. The one CPA I got a hold of told me to file taxes as a non-resident alien this year (even though that would be incorrect), since he said there I no clear way to fix this and the employer would have to pay too much to re-run 4 quarters of payroll.

Contrary to the CPA's advice, I want to file as a resident alien, as that is my true status - I do not want to lie. However, I am concerned the zero social security and medicare wages on my W2 will send red signals to IRS and it might come back to my employer and potential repercussions to me. I might be overthinking this, but would really appreciate your

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help.

I filled in my W2 and other info into Turbotax, and it is showing me a tax bill of \$300, which clearly doesn't cover the SS and Medicare that should have been deducted.

Before anyone refers me to Form 8919, that is for independent contractors. Thanks in advance for your help!

- New Comment: Hello everyone!

I'm on STEM OPT and am starting to file my taxes but have passed the STP test and am now a resident for tax purposes.

Has anyone else filed as a resident before using TurboTax? I'm just worried I'll miss something out besides just my W-2 and am not sure how to go about the process so any help will be greatly appreciated!! Thank you

- New Comment: Hey all,

So I just filed my tax return on Turbo Tax. However, I soon realized that I could not do this because I am not a resident alien. I have been looking up online on how to fix this issue, and it seems like the best way is to fill out the 1040 NR with Sprintax, fill out the 1040x form, print out these forms and the original form (the one I fill out with Turbo Tax), and mail them to IRS.

Is that correct? If so, should I just mail it to any IRS in my city? Or is there a better way of doing it? I am applying for OPT soon, and I hope this won't hurt my eligibility to obtain OPT :(

Any insights will be appreciated! Thank you!

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hello, I'm an F-1 student studying in the US and I have a scholarship that only covers 50% of only my tuition, and doesn't cover room costs / textbooks or anything. I'm using Sprintax to return my taxes for the first time, but do I need to report my scholarship??

- New Comment: Hello everyone!

I'm on STEM OPT and am starting to file my taxes but have passed the STP test and am now a resident for tax purposes.

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Has anyone else filed as a resident before using TurboTax? I'm just worried I'll miss something out besides just my W-2 and am not sure how to go about the process so any help will be greatly appreciated!! Thank you

- New Comment: Hi everyone, I am currently on an F-1 student on OPT. This is my third time filing taxes, but the first time where a part of my income I received as a freelancer/1099-NEC contractor.

I've just learned that the 15.3% self-employment tax is essentially social security and medicare taxes. However, I am still FICA exempt because I am within the first 5 years of my F-1 visa. Does this mean that the self-employment tax can be waived or reduced somehow? I'm using Sprintax to file online and there is no place to note this information.

I am not sure what to do as I'm not familiar with filing taxes as self-employed. Anyone have any advice or maybe a recommendation for what filing service I should use to address this?

Title of the post: Staying in US vs UK

Body of the post: I'm a graduate student in US (Pakistan, F1, IT) and working as a TA at a for profit institute. My university has expressed interest in sponsoring my H1B if I teach there on my OPT. Before coming to US, I worked as a high school teacher. I already have a masters in math and bachelors in engineering.

I have an offer for teaching in UK at a Pakistani coaching center. £11 per hour, 45 hours per week, 5 year sponsorship but the guy wants me to pay for all visa expense and employer expense as well. Its terrible pay and teaching doesn't pay that well in long run anyway. However, I'll be able to work right away (instead of waiting for OPT, H1B or lottery) and will get ILR in 5 years.

I'm using this masters to transition into IT. I have a year to upskill myself so I get a job. The uncertainty of finding relevant job, sponsorship for H1B then greencard, not being able to work for another year are all downsides of staying in US. Upside is higher pay in long run and a career.

Need help deciding.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I would say USA. Much higher earning potential in the long run, and you now have some network/connections after studying there. Either way you'll be in a good spot, so hope things work out!
- New Comment: If you are working for a university in the US then you should be eligible for a cap-exempt H1B, which would mean you don't have to go thru the lottery.
- New Comment: US any given day over UK if your goal is to grab cash.
- New Comment: I don't understand why you're saying you can't work for another year. OPT is work authorization so the whole point is to work.
- New Comment: I'd say stay in US! If you have completed a year at your school, you can start working on CPT but only use it for 11-ish months because you lose OPT if you work on CPT for a year. Then apply for OPT and transition!
- New Comment: Check to see if your major qualify for STEM OPT. That's additional 2 years on top of the regular OPT.

I would say if the school is willing to sponsor H1b, ask when and if they will also sponsor for the Green Card.

Title of the post: F1 to B2 after graduation

Body of the post: Hoping to get some clarity on my situation. I graduated in Dec and applied for OPT. However, I haven't been able to secure a job and plan to leave the US in March/ April (60 days + some unemployment days). I am hoping to return to the US for a wedding in June but my 10-year B2 visa expired in 2022. What would be the best course of action to be able to get my new visa and attend the wedding. Should I be wary of denials when transitioning from F1 to B2?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I am curious, do you just want to give up so soon searching for a job. I was in the same boat -

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graduated in august didn't have a job that time, my opt was starting in October , but i got a volunteer opportunity i am still doing. I studied CS , and thought that instead of looking for CS jobs and the market is bad , why not look for another job thats easy to -get and i got a teaching job, i mean you can also be self employed and keep yourself here legally

- New Comment: Look for similar/related jobs. Market is bad right now. Go to smaller companies they might give you a chance.

- New Comment: You should be fine. You didn't overstay & you obeyed the rules of your F1 visa. The Visa Officer needs to be sure (with the evidence provided & past behaviour) that you will return to your home country. You have demonstrated this by returning home once your previous visa (F1) expired. Good luck & enjoy the wedding.

- New Comment: Don't give up. Oodles of time.

- New Comment: I studied regulatory affairs, but after lots of research under the school code I found out I could apply for pharm tech positions to stop the clock and earn some money. I suggest you look for something similar related to your degree. Good luck and don't give up

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: RFE for F1 OPT

Body of the post: I filed for my F1 OPT in October 2023 and recently got a response from USCIS with RFE that needs to include additional documentation to establish that I have maintained lawful and valid F-1 nonimmigrant status while enrolled as an F-1 Student.

This evidence must include but is not limited to:

1. A statement from the Designated School Official (DSO) and the Registrar attesting to your physical presence in the classroom;

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2. A full description of your course of study/academic program, including all graduation requirements such as the number of credits or classroom hours and your college's definition of "full course of study" for your degree level;
3. Copies of your course syllabi for all classes and coursework in which you earned credit towards your degree. Provide delivery method (in person/lecture, lab, virtual, online, tele-learning, broadcast, satellite, etc.) of the course if not listed on the syllabus;
4. Proof of tuition payments made by you for the duration of your enrollment;
5. Submit a copy of your most recent bank statements to include all deposits and withdrawals.

I don't understand why I got this request from USCIS. I had submitted all the required documents with signed OPT within 5 days of receiving it (should be within 30 days of I-20 issuance), along with correct photos. I have no idea what's the reason behind it. My DSO has asked me to reach out to like 5 different University departments to request all the documents and write a cover letter stating that you have collected necessary evidence and list the items attached in response to the RFE notice.

I had no idea that this was even possible and such a request could be sent out by USCIS and I wasn't prepared for the additional headache, specially in this job market. I'll appreciate credible advice on how to go about this issue.

****UPDATE:****

I'm updating this post since I have received too many DMs.

I got all the above mentioned documents from my school, apart from the bank statement. I was constantly in touch with my DSO and the ISSS Office to gather the documents ASAP. From my experience, the ISSS Office at my school was kind of clueless about this process so I had to take the initiative to gather everything I needed quickly. The only document that was tricky to get was the DSO and Registrar letter attesting to my physical presence. I could only get a letter of enrollment from the Registrar, and it worked. It stated that I was a full-time on-campus student.

Reddit Posts

****Timeline:**** Filed for my OPT on Oct 17, 2023. I got the RFE on Nov 16, 2023, and they provided a deadline of Feb 12, 2024. I would strongly recommend checking the USCIS website as frequently as possible, they post all communication there. I did not receive any email notification about this, and I received their mail well over a week later. I contacted my DSO and ISSS Office right away and was able to gather all the documents within 10 days. I also wrote a cover letter (Googled the format) that contained a clear response and a list of all the documents that I was submitting.

I got the approval from USCIS in two days of submitting all the documents and received the EAD card one week from approval.

Lastly, I just want to say that if you receive an RFE, don't panic. They just need some more information from you. Most of these documents will be provided to you by your school. So try to work with your DSO, and if you're unsure about what document is being asked for or where to obtain it, don't hesitate to ask them or your Advisor. But yeah, most importantly, be on top of this process and keep checking the USCIS website for any communication until you have the EAD card in your hands.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I believe you can prove points # 2 to 5. For the first point try to get some proofs that you travelled to school for classes. Or maybe ask your professor if not DSO to write that you attended his classes.

I think its common to get this RFE and the only way to get rid of this is to give proofs as much as possible

- New Comment: Regarding 5th document, most recent bank statement means, how many months of bank's statement we need to submit ?

- New Comment: How did you solve the bank statement part? I am currently in the same situation, my parents never transfer any funds because my cousin is citizen help pay for it:(

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- New Comment: Did you submit the documents online? I don't have an option to submit RFE documents online

- New Comment: u/SpiritHead1587 I got the exact same RFE like this. Regarding 2 point

did you provide a letter from college or is it fine if we make our own letter about full course description and provide a college website document.

Also for Point. 3, If delivery method is not listed in the syllabus, can we write on our own a document about the format of subjects or should i get it from my college.

Please help with these questions, Awaiting your response

- New Comment: Hello I received a similar RFE, can I DM you?

- New Comment: Which university are u in?

- New Comment: I got the exact same RFE like this , I am waiting for my school to send me all the documents, DSo said it's very common.

Title of the post: Arriving 5 days after the start of classes- returning Grad Student

Body of the post: Hi Everyone!

I need to make a decision and I'm uncertain about how to proceed. So, I'm sharing my dilemma here with the hope that you might be able to provide some advice.

To provide some context, I'm from Iran and I'm currently pursuing a PhD in the US. I began my studies in Spring 2023 and returned home a few days ago to spend August with my family. While here, I checked flight ticket prices for my

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return journey. To my surprise, I stumbled upon a significant discrepancy of \$2000 in prices, contingent on whether I choose a date before or after September 7th.

The problem is that the official start of classes is September 5th. Thankfully, I've already engaged in discussions with my professors, who generously agreed to allow me to attend the initial class session virtually. This approach would permit me to return on September 10th, resulting in substantial savings without missing any classes. However, I am apprehensive about the potential for complications during the entry process.

In light of these circumstances, do you foresee any potential objections from CBP officers? Have you encountered or come across similar experiences? Given the significant financial implications of the \$2000 price difference, I would sincerely value any insights you could share.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: As a program director, I give students in this situation a late start letter, saying they will still be able to be in classes and be on their TA/RA. I have heard about students being denied entry coming in late without one, but I don't have hard data.

- New Comment: As a returning student you should be fine.

If you are initial it can be a problem.

Obtaining a letter from your DSO or your professor/academic Director would be helpful.

- New Comment: You'll be fine

- New Comment: My roommate back in college (an F1 grad student) came back 1 week after the classes started. There was no issue with the CBP. However, he didn't have a TA/RA (he was a master's student)

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- New Comment: Hey! You will have no problems. Many PhD students on RA take vacation during the semester and come back.
- New Comment: I came after 20days
- New Comment: Dont even mention it when you are traveling. Youll be fine
- New Comment: Me and a few of my bathcmates came 20-30 days late in January, no questions asked.

Have an excuse ready for worst case scenario

- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: Op did u get into any trouble?

Title of the post: F1 renewal experience on STEM OPT in Hyderabad, India

Body of the post: Hi Everyone

I posted here about a month ago asking for advice regarding renewing my F1 visa stamp while on STEM OPT. I looked through posts on this sub extensively to read about other?s experiences and it was very helpful for me so I thought I would share my more recent experience.

When I realized I needed to renew my visa stamp on **July 2nd,** I immediately filled out DS-160 form (<https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>) and Visa application form (<https://portal.ustraveldocs.com/applicanthome>), and made the application payment. I received my payment receipt and was able to see available appointment dates at different locations.

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I qualified for the drop-box/interview waiver appointment. The U.S visa application website will tell you if you are eligible for interview waiver appointment based on the questions you answer.

Initially, I got an appointment for July 19th at the Chennai VAC, but I was looking for an earlier appointment date because I afraid I would lose my job. I decided to hire an agent to help me with my visa appointment. Promptly, he was able to get me a drop-box appointment at the Hyderabad VAC for **July 10th**.

****July 10th**** \- The Hyderabad VAC is easy to find and if you tell any auto driver/Ola cab driver Hitech City metro station, they will take you to the right location. The VAC office is located on the second floor of the metro station. There is a printing shop/photo studio near the lift in case you need something last minute.

Once you take the lift to the VAC you will see several counters and people waiting in line. You can drop your documents at the counter. There are officers on the floor guiding people and you can ask them if you need any help. My appointment was at 10:00am and I arrived at 9:00am. At around 9:15am, they started calling individuals with appointment at 10:00a.m to come forward and stand in line. I showed my appointment letter and was let into the line. I was in line for 20 minutes before it was my turn.

Based on what I read, I wanted to be overly cautious and I arrived with the following documents:

\- Copy of i20

\- Passport

\- 2 VISA compliant pictures

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\- Appointment confirmation letter

\- DS-160

\- Employment verification letter

\- Most recent Paystub

\- Copy of EAD card

\- SEVIS fee payment receipt

\- Visa application fee receipt

When it was my turn, I showed my appointment confirmation letter and submitted the following documents: **copy of** **i20**, passport and 2 VISA compliant pictures. No other documents were asked. They will stamp and return your appointment letter once they collect the documents. This took approx. 5-10mins.

July 11th ? On the visa application-tracking website (<https://ceac.state.gov/CEACStatTracker/Status.aspx?App=NIV>)(<https://ceac.state.gov/CEACStatTracker/Status.aspx?App=NIV>)) my status was updated to **received**

July 13th ? Status changed to **Approved**

July 18th ? Status changed to **Issued**

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****July 19th**** ****_**** I received an email stating my passport was ready for ****pick up****

I picked up my passport at the same location ? Hyderabad VAC. The email I received had very little detail regarding collecting my passport. It just stated document delivery will be at Hitech City metro station and after doing some research, I took the following documents:

\- Original Adhar card

\- Copy of Adhar card

\- Stamped visa appointment confirmation letter

Passport pick-up is from 10:00a.m to 4:00p.m. While I was waiting in line, the officer asked everyone to add your passport number, signature and date on the Xerox version of Adhar card.

****July 20th**** \- collected passport with Visa stamp for 5 years even though my STEM OPT is valid only for couple more months.

I hope this helps!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hi I have a question, did your visa expire and then you made an appointment? Or did you make an appointment just a few days before it expired?

- New Comment: What do you mean you needed to renew it on July 2nd?

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- New Comment: What was the program end date on you I20?

- New Comment: So if you have a Chennai VAC appointment, can you still drop off at any other location? I read on my appointment confirmation that you can.

- New Comment: Hey I have an upcoming appointment this December! I am on stem extension!

Do they not accept the ead card and verification of employment?

Would it be a problem if they don't take that?

- New Comment: Hi do you have to be there in person if you qualify for interview waiver appointment? When you drop in your documents?do they ask for individual passport holder to be present?

- New Comment: Dropbox: F1 visa renewal at Hyderabad (2023)

VAC appointment - Nov 22

Application received - Nov 24

Approved - Nov 30

Issued - Dec 4

Pickup email - Dec 5

I received 221g for the first F1 appointment in 2019. Hence, was worried about interview and 221g this time. Lucky to have got approved in 10 days via dropbox. Few others in my research field: 221g with two/three months of administrative processing before approval during 2022-23.

Tip: Visa pickup queue lines were too long - took about two hours. Visit early or very late to save time.

- New Comment: Thanks for sharing. Did you make a new SEVIS payment or take a copy of your program's first SEVIS fee receipt?

Title of the post: Is it okay for F1 Students to make money online?

Body of the post: As you guys know, F1 students are only allowed to work on their Campus for certain hours. But is

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there any other way that we can make money legally?

I know some people does youtube videos, but i am not sure if they are earning money from those videos.

If you have any tips or answers that can help me , please share it in comment section. Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Passive income is allowed, like from stock dividends, saving interests, or investments. Any form of active income is not allowed, this includes day trading, Youtube or TikTok, ...

And also note that working, even when you are not being paid, is also illegal, there is exception for charity or volunteer work but please be very careful when taking those jobs.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Make \$1 for every youtube video you WATCH on your phone ([WATCH NOW])(<https://youtu.be/fVtmuAhr-E4?si=PCcALwoo4JcVn98v>))

Title of the post: OPT health insurance recommendation?

Body of the post: Hi,

I will be graduating this May, and my job starts around August so I will be out of insurance for 3 months.

Any recommendations guys?

Also any general advice on OPT health insurances

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Not recommendations just information. Here are some cheap gap fill insurance for OPT.

<https://www.isoa.org/>

<https://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/opt/>

<http://www.compassstudenthealthinsurance.com/>

<http://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/>

<https://www.now-health.com/en/>

- New Comment: Hey

So what did you end up taking?

- New Comment: I got ISO Insurance

its like 100\$ for 3 months

- New Comment: If you have SSN, which means you worked at the university at least once and are therefore eligible for MediCal.

- New Comment: Check with your school, some schools give insurances until August. Also, I would check with your job. Some jobs do not start any benefits until you are 2-3months employed. Based on that you can decide what type of insurance you want to get.

- New Comment: i got this one <https://www.gbg.com/>

it was shitty (didnt fully cover flu shots and i also took a covid rapid test that it refused to cover despite the federal mandate) but it got job the done

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- New Comment: Don't get it save the money. Fuck this system.

Title of the post: F1 visa renewal while on STEM OPT

Body of the post: Hi everyone. So, just wanted to see if anyone went back to their home country recently while on STEM OPT and renewed their visa? My sister is getting married in May of this year and would love to be there. The issue is that I am scared to go back because i have to renew my visa to re-enter. Anyone had a good experience?

Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I went home after 4 years, after my STEM OPT EAD was approved. This was in October 2022 and I used the interview waiver (used the Dropbox). I was scared since I have been on F1 in the US for more than 10 years at this point (i.e, more burden to prove a non-immigrant intent) and did my Ph.D in one of the TAL areas. I still took the risk since I had to meet my family whatsoever.

Surprisingly I got the visa approved in 5 days, and stamped for a full 5 years even though I had only about 2.5 years at max for OPT. I had spoken to multiple friends who went back to get F1 restamped during the visa-waiver period, and everyone I knew was called back for interview, and some even got 221g's. I was mentally prepared for an interview call and further processing. I had told my family about the risks and that there may be a chance I would stay back for 3-4 months. So it was an utter surprise for everyone when the visa was issued in no time.

In no way does this mean there are no risks. Please use your caution and judgement to make the final call.

- New Comment: Unless you've been arrested or committed OPT fraud, there's no issue, but make sure to leave enough time for the whole process. Don't expect to be all done and dusted within a week.

- New Comment: I did this recently and although my visa was eventually approved (it took an extra 1-2 weeks longer

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than normal), I was taken to secondary processing when entering the US again which has never happened before. Might be random but it really scared me and I am not leaving again until my OPT ends or my status changes. I also know people who have not been able to return because they applied for their visas and unexpectedly got a 221g processing notice, which can be random and could take up to a year to process. Of course if this happens you cannot return to the US during that time and you may jeopardize your job, living space, etc. Technically you are able to do this and many people have done so without a problem, but I don't recommend it unless you can accept the risk of not being able to come back.

- New Comment: I went in my first OPT year. To renew my visa I attached my EAD card and the latest pay stub to prove that I have a OPT job, and wrote in the letter that I would like to return to the US and apply for STEM OPT extension as I am learning a lot on the job blah blah. Went without a hitch.

Only problem was that my visa was only extended until end of the first OPT year, i.e. for less than a month in my case. I am on the STEM extension now and will have to do the entire exercise again when visiting family next time.

- New Comment: I had to fly home due to a family thing. Renewed my visa under the interview waiver program, everything worked out thankfully. Give yourself extra time in case your renewal application gets denied.

- New Comment: How about my situation: I am currently on OPT (ends July 13), have a new admission to further my studies (August 2024) and a visa renewal interview in Dominican Republic (April) what are my chances? Does the 30day rule of entry to the US before your program start date apply to me as well?

- New Comment: You will have to convince the visa officer about your "non-immigrant" intent. Since you are already in the workforce it might not be that easy to prove that unless you have solid compelling reasons to return once STEM-OPT is over.

- New Comment: !remindme

- New Comment: How was your experience after all? I'm on OPT but my employer is kinda sus... but I will make sure

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pay stubs are correct.

Title of the post: Question for people who managed to get sponsored after OPT

Body of the post: When you guys applied for the job and they asked you if you needed sponsorship now or in the future, did you say that you didn't need or that you needed in the future? And at what time did you ask about sponsorship?

After a couple of weeks, months? Thanks in advance for answers!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I told I need sponsorship during the interview process itself to avoid dishonesty
- New Comment: I'd say you require sponsorship right at the application stage. No point in interviewing with a company that doesn't support H1Bs and such, just a waste of time on both parties? end.
- New Comment: I started off as a contractor and was flipped to FTE by the client after 2 years, by then I had built a good rapport with the team and the manager who agreed to file for sponsorship.
- New Comment: If you lie on your job application they can fire you for cause. This can invalidate any contract you had with the employer.

If a company is asking it is because most jobs/positions are not eligible for sponsorship.

If you State you do not need sponsorship, do not be surprised if you ask later and the company says no.

If you want sponsorship, be honest in answering the question. You may lose out on some jobs that are not or cannot be sponsored but you also won't waste time in those companies with no sponsorship opportunity.

- New Comment: If you plan to job hop to a different company within the 3 years of opt, you don't really need sponsorship from them right?

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Title of the post: F1 Visa renewal -> 221(g) -> Approval with interview

Body of the post: Hi everyone, I'm sharing my experience in case it helps anyone.

I'm currently in the middle of my Bachelor's degree and I applied for an F-1 visa renewal because mine expires in 6 months and I did not want it to expire. I was eligible for a dropbox so here's my timeline

9th Dec -> Dropped off documents via Dropbox in Mumbai, India consulate.

13th Dec -> Status updated to refusal on the application.

16th Dec -> Received my passport and a white 221(g) slip saying I need to appear for an interview but no date was given. Sent an email to the consulate email asking when should I interview.

17th Dec -> Public response received to the email saying anyone with 221(g) refusal with an interview request can come in anytime between 10:30am-11 am any weekday. It is necessary for you to receive this email or have it written on the slip to avail this option.

Dec 19th -> Went into the Mumbai consulate for the interview. I did not have a printout of the email received so security at the beginning cross-checked with the embassy if I did receive the email or not. They confirmed I did since it was tied to my passport. The process of cross-checking took extra 20-25 minutes though. Interviewer approved. The status also changed to approve

Dec 20th -> Application Status changed to Issued

Dec 22nd -> Passport received with the new visa

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\----- Interview conversation with the VO -----

Since I am a 221g case, they wanted my fingerprints first and then went to the interview line. Isn't valid for all 221(g) cases though.

Me: Good morning officer, how are you doing?

VO: Great. Pass me your passport, the 221(g) slip and I-20

Me: *Passes the documents*

VO: So you go to Drexel university?

Me: Yes officer.

VO: Don't you like Philadelphia?

Me: No I really like it, it's the city of brotherly love.

VO: *Looks at the screen* So your major is Business Analytics?

Me: No officer it's xxx, I changed my major in my freshmen year

VO: You have a visa which is valid up until your graduation date why do you want to renew it?

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Me: I plan on taking OPT and I want to frequently visit my family so I want to renew my visa.

VO: When is your graduation date?

Me: Told

VO: *Still unsure why I want to renew* Give me 2 minutes *Goes in the back to cross-check with someone else*

VO: Comes back and says I have cancelled your current visa and approved the new one. You should be getting it in a week.

Me: Thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Why was your Dropbox application refused? Is there any resource you have in India to whom detailed questions can be asked?

- New Comment: if my letter does state to come to the embassy at an exact date and time and i?m still getting public responses from the website what can i do to schedule a date.

i am very worried and concerned.

same situation at the moment

Title of the post: What are some common reasons to reject a F1 visa renewal

Body of the post: Hey all,

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I am a PhD student in computer science, and I am about to finish my 1st semester. Before this, I had a Master's from a different school, and then I worked for 3 years on OPT and STEM OPT, before starting my PhD studies. I F1 visa expired in June 2022, and I am planning to go back to India to get it renewed in May 2023.

My question is, what are some common reasons for the Visa officer to reject my visa extension? I don't think I have broken any rules to the best of my knowledge (except for when I submitted my 12 month evaluation late to my DSO). Also, how likely is it for F1 visa renewal rejections, compared to first time visa application rejections?

Please note - I am asking about F1 visa extensions, not about first time F1 visa application.

Thanks a bunch!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can be rejected for three reasons.

1. Lack of ties to home country.
2. Lack of financial documents/incomplete financial documents.
3. Otherwise banned from F-1 status.
4. Blacklisted for security reasons.

- New Comment: I was a visa officer for nine years. Because an F1 visa is valid for 5 years for most nationalities, if you are renewing one, the Visa Officer will immediately wonder why it is taking you so long to finish your degree. The original F1 was approved based on the assumption that you would be completing only one program and your finances were evaluated with that in mind. At renewal, a visa officer will want to know that you are still able to pay for your education. Also, they will want to verify that your true intentions are to study, rather than just use an F1 visa to do CPT or OPT.

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- New Comment: Hey, did you end up going through with it? What did you decide?

- New Comment: u/Codetorando and u/GRRRAWorld do you have any insights into this?

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: One thing to keep in mind. Your visa may undergo administrative processing or security clearance which may take up to 6 months depending on the backlog. My advice is to check the technology alert list ? if your research topic in the list, you will most likely be subjected to administrative processing. Try to avoid bringing up any related research in the technology alert list during the interview, if possible.

Title of the post: F1 status terminated for address update error. Please help!!

Body of the post: I arrived in the USA on 26th August 2022 and joined my program on 29th August 2022. On 31st August 2022, I updated my local American address in the ISSO portal of the university. But because of some formatting issue and lack of guidelines regarding filing the form, it wasn't verified, for which I received an email from the ISSO on the same day. As soon as I started getting my bills, I tried updating my address and got success on 2nd October 2022.

Following this, on 4th October 2022, I got an e-mail from the ISSO stating that my F1 status was terminated on 21st September 2022 and I should explore the options available for its restoration. This mail was 14 days after the F1 termination. The only mail that I had received was regarding my invalid address as told above.

Following all of this, I booked an appointment with an immigration advisor. The advisor conveniently said, "We are sorry as you (Akriti) were mistakenly overlooked by the ISSO- UTD from any reminder email regarding the deadline of 21st September 2022?, owing to which I had to face F1 visa termination. They have provided with me with options to file a petition for reinstatement or to travel out of US and return with a new I-20 and SEVIS number.

I need reddit help to figure out the best way possible. Should i apply for I-539 or travel and return? Travelling out will

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have financial implications but 539 route can take a lot of time before getting a reinstatement, and that too is not sure. Also, as it was an overlook by University, how liable am I in this whole case as I was trying to update the documents on a regular basis but they got approved only on 2nd October 2022.

Please help!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Let me explain what happened because there is a lot of misunderstanding in this thread.

Schools have 30 days from the start of the academic term to register students. If we cannot do that, a student's record will automatically be terminated.

One of the things we must do is enter a student's address into SEVIS. Without an address, registration isn't possible.

Based on the given dates, it looks like this in fact was part of the issue. The address given was not acceptable for SEVIS. OP then took over a month to correct the issue. By then it was beyond the 30-day reporting deadline.

So the issue from the school was poor communication, but otherwise it was due to slow response of OP to get a valid address submitted. Again, better communication could have prevented this, but it is an obligation that OP had to fulfill.

Going to the question at hand, it is almost always better to travel and reenter. If not, you cannot leave until the I-539 is adjudicated. That can be 12-18 months currently AND if denied then OP could have more significant consequences.

The only time I advise I-539 is when a student has an expired visa or is from a country with difficulties in travel (Iran for example).

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Answering your question about how was this overlooked by the University and how are you liable?

Your immigration status is YOUR immigration status. Technically a DSO designation is supporting the government and the school. Not the student. It is about maintaining immigration regulations. If a student fails to maintain those regulations it is the students responsibility not the schools. Functionally schools are much more supportive because I, why would we not? So often a International student coordinator/advisor/counselor is also a DSO. This gives them institutional obligations to support students, but it does not create immigration requirements to support students.

So, there could be a request from the school for financial support for the I-539 payment or supporting travel due to their lack of follow up, alerts, acknowledgement, warnings, etc. But that would only be based on institutional policy and would not be impacted by immigration regulations.

Also, OP I wouldn't call a submission August 31 and then another October 2nd "update documents on a regular basis". If you submitted additional times and only had Success on the 2nd then it would be different, but your description sounds like two attempts.

Fyi: Your schools International Student office has a, "how are we doing survey". You can submit a complaint there. You can also submit your complaint to the director of the office and your university Ombudsman. Request financial support for travel and reentry (ex:school pays the new SEVIS fee) or pays the I-539 fee.

Every school eventually makes a mistake. We typically have one at this level every 18 months. With thousands of students it will eventually happen even with good planning. What separates schools is their response to these errors. We have a budget to help correct these types of errors. We cannot pay for travel, but will generally cover administrative fees.

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Hope this helps with background, context, and some ideas going forward.

Edit: Spelling

- New Comment: Get back in status and then change your school ASAP. Finding competent DSOs is a tough situation
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: Lawyer up immediately
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: Travel to Canada and back and reinstate your status
- New Comment: New school and New sevis with old visa can I re-enter US?

Hi I m in trouble please provide me valuable details, I went to United States in August 2023 nd I have taken tranfer from one University to other University, then

After staying 1 month in United States i got some health issues so I came to India..i differ my intake to spring but my DSO mailed me that my SEVIS Terminated

They will be providing New i20 with new sevis,

It will be problem at port of entry? Because my SEVIS nd school is different from Visa.

Please help me.

Title of the post: Can I work multiple company at the same time during OPT?

Body of the post: I work as a part time job with OPT. I am going to work another job at the same time. Is it okay ? just register the company information on USCIS page, right?

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: During the 12 month OPT you can work multiple jobs as long as each one is in your field of study and you report each one.

Note: OPT employment is not reported to USCIS. It is reported the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) which is part of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Your enrollment status (when in classes), your address changes, your CPT, your OPT employment, all of that as an F-1 student is reported to ICE and not to USCIS. USCIS is only involved in issuing the EAD for OPT as only USCIS can issue an EAD. Otherwise, USCIS is not involved in your F-1 status or reporting.

- New Comment: Legally you should be allowed to work in any number of companies as long as the work you do in both companies is related to your degree.

But most companies won't like it due to a conflict of interest. So if you can prove to your first company that there is no conflict of interest then I don't see why not. But apart from that, I don't think you should legally have an issue

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Dont forget to work for min of 20 hours/week for each employer ?

- New Comment: You can work part-time for OPT and still keep a valid status?

- New Comment: You surely can so long as you report everything to USCIS or your international advisor

Title of the post: F1 visa "refused", program starting in 20 days.

Body of the post: hi all, i am posting here because my F-1 student visa was refused and im extremely stressed.

The status of my visa application, as shown on the CEAC website, says "refused" since 4th August.

Reddit Posts

I am a class F-1 applicant, with an I-20 provided by the university I have gained admission to, and I have held 2 prior US visas.

I qualified for an interview waiver, and submitted all relevant documents at the dropbox on the 26th of July, 2022. No issues with my documents were reported to me at the time of this as well, and no communication has been received since. The US travel docs portal now says my passport is being processed for delivery, aka its being sent back to me without a visa.

Has this happened to anyone else? I have received zero instructions and i am freaking out.

EDIT: i received my passport with a white slip (221g) and had to go to the consulate and get my fingerprints verified. I got my visa within 3 days of doing this. some people get asked for an interview as well. big thanks to those who commented!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I see you just had to get your finger prints done. When was the last time you had a visa prior to this application? Were you under 14 years when you got that visa?

- New Comment: Hey, it will either be an interview or fingerprints issue, keep some hope. The status should change to administrative processing.

- New Comment: I'm in the same boat where the status changed to "refused". I just got my passport back with a white note asking to come in for an interview (which can be any working day 10:30 AM, so no need for an appointment). You should get yours back too, asking for an interview, or fingerprints or additional documents.

- New Comment: Hey so it ended up just being finger prints for you? I also tried to get interview waiver but was changed

Reddit Posts

to refused 221g. But I never received any slip and just got an email for personal interview. You said "some people get asked for an interview as well", so do you know more details? I don't see any reason why I would be denied, so I hope it's just an interview and then approval right after!

Title of the post: Options to remain in the US during academic suspension

Body of the post: Hi, I'm an international student currently being suspended for one semester due to underperformance in the previous two semesters. It's a difficult time for me to leave the US since my parents are abroad as well, and returning to my home country comes at an extremely high cost. I have asked the international program office and academic advisor at my university for options. OPT doesn't seem to be a viable option, since I'm majoring in computer engineering, and looking for an internship with my status is pretty much impossible. And enrolling in community college is also not a great option, because I just finished my junior year and there aren't many courses left for me to take except engineering courses. Are there any viable options for me to stay for this semester? I also possess a valid R B1/B2 visa. Do I have any options for remaining here for half a year? If I just stay here for one semester, will I be in any trouble?

Thanks

Jasper

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you're suspended from school, your F-1 status stay will end very quickly upon suspension unless you very quickly get admitted to another U.S. school and quickly transfer your SEVIS record there. Otherwise, your current school will have to terminate your SEVIS record and I-20. You can't maintain F-1 student status stay in the U.S. when you're no longer academically eligible to be a student at the I-20 school. There is then no on-campus work authorization, no CPT, and no OPT. There is no F-1 stay in the U.S.

Reddit Posts

Your only option to stay in the U.S. in F-1 student status is to transfer your SEVIS record to another school before your SEVIS record is terminated. And then you would have to be a student there. The suspending school has a government deadline to terminate your SEVIS record within 21 days of the time notification of suspension is sent to you. That ends your F-1 status stay in the U.S. There is no grace period beyond that.

If you have a B-2 visa, you could leave the U.S. and apply to enter again as a tourist. But to return to study again you would need to leave the U.S. yet again. Then get a new SEVIS record and I-20. Then return to the U.S. again to restart F-1 status.

- New Comment: Don't know about the visa side of things but if you're not looking for internships because of your grades that's unnecessary. A lot of companies don't check gpa and having a CS degree already qualifies you for a lot. Go for small local companies. You will need a CPT though. Talk to your DSO about that.

Title of the post: Fraud IT Consultant Company, Any advice?

Body of the post: I am a recent graduate on OPT. During my search for a job I was contacted by this IT consultant company. The job offer was that I would work as an unpaid intern, training to learn a new skillset for about 6 weeks, then they would update my resume with all the new skills that I learned and send it out to their clients afterwards. If for some reason I left the company I would have to pay for the training which was about \$10,000. This seemed like an okay deal because I didn't intend on quitting and it sounded good for my OPT because they said they would also sponsor my H1B visa.

After the training was done and they wanted to begin marketing me to their clients they produced a completely fake resume. This resume had nothing on it from me except my actual name. They gave me 7+ years of false experience and listed multiple companies that I 'worked at' when I never even heard of these places.

This felt very unethical and deceitful to me so I did not want to move forward with it. The time I spent as an unpaid intern

Reddit Posts

for this company I could have spent looking for an actual job. I am also wondering about the \$10,000 training fee that they said that I would have to pay. If I knew from the beginning that they would have falsified a resume I would never have agreed to it. Additionally how would this affect my OPT? when I leave this company I would have 50 days to find an actual job right?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This is why researching is critical before making such a move especially with something as delicate as OPT. I was approached by the same type of companies. I conducted a thorough internet research on these companies and found out they had faked several people resumes. The other red flag was when they started asking me for personal informations before an offer was even made. One of them even went as far as asking me social security related information. Obviously I'm not one to give out my info to just about whoever is asking for it. Normally companies don't do this unless they've made you a formal offer letter and you're filling the I-9. Many students on OPT generally fall for these traps as they're desperate to stop their unemployment clock.

If anyone on OPT is trying to stop their unemployment clock from ticking, the safest thing to do is to either volunteer under a professor in their department as a research assistant at their university or look for a non-profit that offers a position in their field. The IRS even has a database to search and verify non profits by simply typing their name and address. Here is the link: <https://apps.irs.gov/app/eos/>

- New Comment: Since you signed the contract, you essentially agreed to pay the \$10,000 if you back out. If you do that, they may sue you to get their money so it's best for you to consult a lawyer before you make any move. The unpaid training still counts as employment on initial OPT, so you would still have full 90 days of unemployment left to use.

- New Comment: I did something like this. Read your contract. There might be a clause where if they don't successfully place you they release you from the \$10k obligation. If there is, you can just tank the interviews they give you while trying to find an actual job. This way you don't accrue OPT unemployment.

Reddit Posts

If you really just want to leave right away, the 10k might not be legally enforceable. My company did not pursue many who just left. But they will be difficult to work with if you need anything from them in the future for immigration purposes.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: This is my experience. I was working as an intern at my university during OPT and ended up signing offers from multiple consultancies like this. All the consultancies said that they'll train me and made me sign a contract that says if I leave before I find a job with them they will sue me for any amount they want. I didn't undergo their training but they did all the same things like increased my experience in resume and all that. I decided not to use that resume and when I used to get interview calls I used to purposefully tank them. Eventually I ghosted them and I didn't hear back from them at all except during H1B visa time always spamming me saying if I require a visa. I blocked them and haven't heard from them since. I'm saying this because contracts like this are very hard to execute since there's no guarantee when you'll get a job and if they take you to court their own scams will be exposed. They have very little to benefit from suing you. You could essentially keep tanking interviews and ghost them eventually but don't quote me on it. And this is not legal advice. Though I never used consultancies to stop my opt days I was working for my university. Again this is my experience.

- New Comment: Please consult an attorney, both employment and immigration. It would startle me if this predatory contract as you described it is enforceable. Meeting with Employment lawyer is the first step, before notifying your employer that you know you may have rights. You want to be safe.

You may also be eligible for immigration relief such as a T visa, depending on the circumstances, so it would be wise to also sit down with an immigration attorney, as well.

- New Comment: The amount of fraud and scamming is insane for my experience, you need to do a lot of research about company you apply.

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: Looking to book f1 visa slots. OFC and VI.

Body of the post: I'm from India and looking to book f1 visa slots. Can anyone please help me out on how to find the slots. My account has been frozen for 72 hours since I tried multiple times to book. Idk when to check the slots and what's the guarantee that I'll get the slot at a random login time which will also exhaust one login out of three per day.

The telegram group that I'm in is chaotic. There's a message every minute saying no slots. And if there is one, they say it's a scam and don't waste login. How else can I book a slot correctly without getting my account frozen? Is there a genuine group giving accurate info?

Please help I'm panicking everytime I get a new message from the telegram group. TIA!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I think Indian embassy tweeted earlier that they will open appointment slots for June in mid May. So stay calm for the next two weeks and keep checking for slots in 4 hour intervals to avoid the 72 hr block.
- New Comment: Haha we're all in the same boat. If your intake is in fall, I'd say wait one more week for slots to become available. Nothing more to do, i guess.
- New Comment: Could you please share the telegram link?
- New Comment: Following
- New Comment: Following

Title of the post: STEM OPT APPROVAL TIME 1-MONTH 2 Days

Body of the post: As the title says just came here to post my processing times Potomac Center

Submitted Mar 04 via mail and recieved a case approval today April 07

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yup me too. From submitting the application to having the card in my hand was 30 days. Regular first time undergrad OPT. Submitted online.

- New Comment: Submitted my STEM OPT on March 12th, got the approval notice and card is being produced yesterday April 6th.

- New Comment: Applied and received: march 25th.

Approved and card being produced: March 28th.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Did you choose not to apply online or is that not an option for STEM OPT?

- New Comment: Same! Applied March 7th and received it April 5th :) loooving the efficiency, my home country could never hahaha

- New Comment: I submitted mine on March 20th (paper-case), which was received by USCIS on March 23. I got a receipt notice but didn't get the online access code. Tried calling and connecting with them via Emma (online chat), but it wasn't helpful lol.

So, essentially, can't view my detailed updates but hoping to receive my card soon - and safe and sound lol. Not sure why the process is so stressful and for no reason at all.

- New Comment: Applied and received march 25th and card is being produced today on April 29th!

- New Comment: For me it was submitted last week of April and approved on June 17. So 6.5 weeks approx

Title of the post: Father Passed away, visa expired. how to travel?

Body of the post: Hi, my father have passed away, my F1 visa expired 3 months ago, my I20 expires in 6 months.

Reddit Posts

My home country has no visa appointments for next 8 months.

What am I to do here? Can I travel and come back? How?

Any suggestion appreciated.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'm sorry for your loss. My condolences to you and your family in this difficult time.

First, apply for the new visa now and see if it can be expedited. You should be able to get an expedited appointment.

Second, if you can get the appointment then travel and make plans for how long you assume you will be gone.

Third, if you cannot get the appointment scheduled then it depends on your situation.

Are you on OPT? Are you graduating? You may be able to delay graduation travel and return complete two semesters and graduate. Can you take a leave of absence and return?

If you can't get the visa appointment expedited then it depends on your situation.

I normally do not do Private Messages but I will make an exception given the circumstances if you need.

- New Comment: I'm really sorry for your loss.

Are you a student? Or have graduated recently? Your school should have an immigration specialist who may be able to help you with these issues. Contact your school's international student center, explain your situation briefly and ask if you could schedule an appointment with an immigration specialist to discuss this.

Reddit Posts

Worst case scenario, you will have to withdraw from your school (if you are still a student) and reapply for a visa/I20 for the next semester you can return. Not sure about if you would have to reapply to your school or can simply get reinstated, but in such extreme circumstances most schools are very accommodating.

- New Comment: Please do not consider this as rude , my personal advise is to visit your family. Nothing is more important than you being available for your family.

Visas are always there at your disposal. You can always come to US and continue what you to be. Please don't take life decisions based on freaking visa? a decade from now, these visas will look silly.

- New Comment: You can get a new visa in another country super fast

- New Comment: You can go back home and apply via post and shouldn't need a new interview even when your I-20 is expiring. I went back home when my I-20 was going to expire in 6 months, renewed visa via post and got a visa that would be valid for 1 year.

- New Comment: I'm sorry for your loss.

Reach out to USCIS on Twitter and ask for an exemption! You can also try asking your embassy for help!

Title of the post: Please share your F-1 OPT timeline(I-765) for the last 6 months.

Body of the post: I recieved notice that Application was recieved on 12/20/2021(I applied online with receipt number starting IOE). I have many things that need to be planned based on EAD approval date.

Please share your OPT timeline if you have applied within the last 6 months along with your current updates/progress to better understand how quickly USCIS is currently processing applications now. This would be helpful for others waiting for approval to get a better idea about when to expect.

Thanks in advance to all those are willing to share.

Reddit Posts

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Update:

got approval on 1-15

card produced 1-18

card picked up from USPS on 1-20

card delivered in mail on 1-22

​

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Please know that late summer and fall dates ARE NOT good indicators for Spring OPT times. Over the last 5 years processing for late Summer and Fall has always been much faster than Spring Applications. Often 50% or more.

This has to do with application volume being lower at those times and with staffing availability being higher as H1Bs will have finished processing.

- New Comment: Applied online- 12/03/21

Approved - 1/03/22

Reddit Posts

Card produced - 1/05/22

Picked up by USPS today - 1/06/22

Haven't received the card yet but it took about a month to get to this point.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Applied online: 10/8/21

Approved: 10/29/21

Received: 11/6/21

- New Comment: Initial OPT

App Receipt: 07/21

RFE Receipt: 11/02

(For Transcripts, Address History, Employment History)

Still waiting?

Been out of work for 82 days. It's hard!

- New Comment: Submitted online: 11/18

Approved: 12/14

Reddit Posts

Received EAD card: 12/20

(This is for the STEM OPT extension btw)

- New Comment: Applied: 7/7/2021

Approved: 9/7/2021

Received: Don?t remember exactly when but maybe a week later?

- New Comment: Update:

got approval on 1-15

card produced 1-18

card picked up from USPS on 1-20

card delivered in mail on 1-22

- New Comment: Applied online, receipt notice - 1/03/2022

Approved, Card being produced - 1/07/2022

For context, this is for Pre-completion OPT.

- New Comment: Guys. Applied on April 6th. Today is May 6th....My work starts on May 15, very stressful situation.

Can't even normally sleep. Hopefully, I will get it next week....

- New Comment: recently USCIS added Myprogress tool on USCIS, it is showing expected in 4 weeks?

how much accurate is that information??

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: F1 Visa Rejected , need advice

Body of the post: Hi Guys,

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So my F1 visa got rejected for the first time a few weeks back , So this happened which I feel lead to the rejection.. So The visa officer asked me to show my father's income tax returns when I told him his(my father's) annual income. I did show him the Income Tax Returns but it seems that he wasn't familiar with the format of it so he straightaway gave those papers back and rejected me(which i felt was kinda unfair), Those were not any fake/forged papers . I had got them from the Indian Income Tax Department Website. So in a few weeks I have my second attempt coming up , I am confused as to what should I say when the officer asks me "What went wrong last time? / Why were you rejected ?" OR "What changes have you made since your last attempt?" unable to figure out a positive sounding answer(can't blame the Visa officer though even if he/she is wrong). The reason I am confused is because He(The Officer in the first attempt) didn't even ask any thing except 1)What does my father do? 2)Annual Income? 3)Show me his income tax returns. didn't even ask me how am I funding or whatsoever. Any help/suggestions would be really appreciated.

​

Thanks

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You don't know that is why you were denied. You only know what reason was given. 214b it sounds like.

The next consular officer can see that denial and the reason. So it won't be a surprise, just say I was denied under 214b.

Reddit Posts

As for your father's income. Is it high enough to pay for your studies? You should give all proof of sponsorship items together. Bank statements, tax returns, etc. That way they can see all your financial documents.

- New Comment: How much is your i20 amount and is your father income High enough? What liquid funds did you show and did you have passbooks with you?

- New Comment: I had a large sum in my bank account & it was a joint business account .Brought net worth documents from chartered accountant, just in case. They never asked me about financials. Hope that helps.

Title of the post: I just recieved my F1 visa today, below my visa there are two stars and my friend h

Body of the post: I was just wondering what does the stars under our visa mean

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: All non immigrant visas have had stars since 1999 or 2000.

The meaning of the stars is classified.

While we don?t know what they mean we do know that the security risk theory is false.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Hi, Could you kindly tell me what documents need for VOC (biometric)??

- New Comment: Ah. I too just noticed I have one star on my F1. Never noticed it before, but I?ve had the same one star on all my previous US visas (F1 in 2008, B1/B2 in 2013, L2 in 2018, and now again F1 in 2021). Considering I?ve not had any issues with security before, this may not be related to that.

- New Comment: [deleted]

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Which university and program you were accepted too?

Title of the post: F1 visa interview (Scared and nervous)

Body of the post: Hi everyone, I am an f1 student that is trying to renew my student visa after 5 years. However, my situation right now is that my (I-20) has been terminated 2 times before due to expulsion from school because I failed consecutively in community college. Now, I am in a university and have been chosen to tutor for mathematics because I am doing well in university. My question is, will the interviewer at the US embassy deny my visa because of my past history?

Thank you all

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No need to be scared/nervous. I know it's easier said than done, but as long as you have all the documents you should be good. Just be prepared to answer when they asked why couldn't you attend college consecutively. The way how you answer that is critical. I think that they would appreciate that you didn't run off, but you are going through the legal method. Just be prepared and you should be good.

- New Comment: If you're currently in the US, I strongly suggest you to NOT leave the US to renew your visa. If you're outside the US, then the best I can say is good luck!

- New Comment: How was it?

- New Comment: Hey there!

I have not been in a situation like yours but all I say is all the best and you will be fine!

I know that it sounds difficult but be confident!

- New Comment: Good luck

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: Can I enter the US with old F1 Visa and new SEVIS ID?

Body of the post: I am a student in a two-year Master's degree program. I took a one-year leave of absence last year and will resume my study this August. I already received a new I-20 and a new SEVIS number. I also paid for the new SEVIS fee already.

I am not sure if I need to reapply for a new F-1 visa since it is still valid (expire in 2024). Note that the new SEVIS number on my new I-20 does not match the one on my visa.

Some link said that I do not need to apply for a new visa since my current visa is valid. However, I would like a confirmation from any legit source so I can print them out and keep them with me upon arrival. I surely do not want any hassle upon my entry, so any help will be highly appreciated. Thank you in advance!

Update: no issue at all! No need to apply for a new visa!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I had this situation a few years ago (2018). No issues for me. I was told to make sure I'm ready to explain very clearly why this happened the first time i reenter. I didn't have to do that though and never had any issues.
- New Comment: You won't have any issues. And whatever the experience you have please update here as well.
- New Comment: I'm in the same boat as you. Except I went to the states in 2019 for a semester abroad program. I go back this year for a master's degree. I'll be travelling to the states this September and I plan to use my older visa (also expires in 2024). My uni informed me it's not a problem. Some experienced DSOs on here have confirmed the same. It's the embassy that's very confusing. Otherwise the CBP won't care as long as it's valid.

Edit: also wanted to add that I plan to travel with the email from my uni's DSO who confirmed this info and reassured me that I can travel with an older but valid visa and a different I-20 so that I can explain myself better.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: I have the same issue with you. It seems that it is not a problem according to other experiences. I wonder if there won't be any issue if this is my first time entering the U.S.

- New Comment: Hi, could you enter the US safely? I'm in a similar situation

- New Comment: Hi, I'm going to report for fall 2024. After long administrative processing I got my visa approved and after deferral I received my updated I20. My visa is stamped on old sevis ID but when I received updated I-20 for fall 2024 then sevis ID is changed. I want to confirm did you travel successfully as you had been through similar situation. My program and University is same just sevid id changed. Please confirm that

Thanks

- New Comment: did you re-enter? What questions were asked and what documents did you show?

- New Comment: Hey there,

Another International Student sort of in the same boat as you.

Since I transferred in between schools, my previous and current DSO told me this isn't an issue and I will be allowed entry. This is echoed by two other DSOs that I contacted via a friend.

The reason being: the visa is an approval of studying in the US. Your SEVIS was terminated and you re-instated that. At the port of entry, you just need to explain why was it terminated.

Title of the post: I created a list of documents to file with i765 for initial OPT

Body of the post: Hello,

This is my first time filing i-765 for my initial OPT. My DSO refused to provide any help. I'm stressed and nervous so I create a list of documents. Please help me if I'm in the right track.

Reddit Posts

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1. Form i -765 (filled and signed)
2. Two identical passport photos (write name and I94 number on the back with pencil)
3. Form G-1145 (if want to receive an email/text)
4. a copy of page 1 and 2 of the new i20 (i20 for OPT) Don't forget to sign, and check if DSO has signed.
5. I-94 (most recent)
6. Copy of passport
7. Copy of Visa
8. Money (Do not recommend using G1450 paying with credit/debit card)

this is my opinion, better use UPS

Please read the comments below as well. they are super helpful! especially mwild648 comment. there is a sample of form i765 and a list of documents.

My friend also suggested me to create a SEVP portal to check if DSO have approved. (Can we check on our own if they approve?)

Questions: can we report our employment by ourselves?

p.s. I got this list from Cornell.edu, I deleted "all previous i20" as I believe it is not required.

Reddit Posts

Thank you !

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 2. Write your name and I-94 number on the photos.

Otherwise your list is good.

Your SEVP Portal activates when your OPT starts. You will get an email. If not your DSO can do a portal reset to get you access.

You still need to work with your school for new I-20.

Can I ask what school this is? I've never heard of a school being that hands off.

- New Comment: I did include my original I-20 in my application as well as the OPT I-20 too.

I'm sorry your school has not been helpful. Mine created a pretty good guidebook, this is the link.<https://isss.utah.edu/forms-publications/F1-student.php>

I hope that helps!

Title of the post: Never filed TAX form 8843. 3rd year in college. am i screwed?

Body of the post: I didnt realize I had to file form 8843 since i'm a non resident who has no income. I began my undergrad studies in 2018 and I was unaware about this. What do I do now?

Reddit Posts

I am going to file this year's form 8843

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can back file it for the years you missed. Download the appropriate 8843 for each year and submit it to the IRS following the instructions.

- New Comment: Following

Title of the post: University start date is on 19th Jan 2021 but F1 visa is not issued yet

Body of the post: Hi guys,

I had my f1 Visa interview on Nov13th, 2020, and was issued a 221g slip. I submitted the requested documents on the same day and after more than a month I got another email asking for more info.

My university start date is nearing and I have any received any updates from the embassy. My case is still refused on the CEAC tracker website.

What should I do if I don't get my visa before Jan19th, I have paid my tuition fee and have registered for my classes?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Unfortunately, there's absolutely nothing you can do. You're at the mercy of the consulate where you submitted your paperwork and you're just gonna have to wait. The consulate is well-aware of your scheduled start date.

On a brighter note, you were lucky to get an interview at a reopened embassy in the first place. So many students are stuck abroad with no scheduled day to return.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Yes talk with your university and see when their late arrival policy is. We are somewhat in similar situation with my bro in law. We talked to the international student service at the university he was admitted into and were told that there is no late day arrival deadline unlike other schools (one school I looked up has a late arrival deadline in March....like wow). But anyways, the guy also told us (his personal advice) that he should make it to the school no longer than two weeks after classes begin and that they will provide a letter of support for late arrival to U.S. If things do not pan out for him by end of the month, he will defer admission to fall. Fortunately, we have not made any payments towards his registration fees/other feescan't do that anyway because his advisor needs confirmation of his Visa approval first...which hasn't happened yet >_<

- New Comment: I am on the same boat. My interview was on dec 6th and my classes start on Jan 19th and I'm stucked in AP.

There are 3 solutions for us:

1. Get the visa by next week and travel before Jan 19th.
2. Ask international student office to issue new I-20 with a new date for spring / or ask them to provide a letter that indicate a future date (i.e February) and send it to embassy asap
3. Defer to fall.

Keep in mind that visa won't be processed after Jan 19th unless you provide a letter from school or new I-20s with future date.

Title of the post: OPT STEM extension - still haven't received receipt notice

Body of the post: Hey all,

My OPT expires next month. I have sent this email to the USCIS lockbox:

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I currently have an EAD, and have applied for another one based on the *(c) (3) (C) (*STEM OPT) eligibility category.

My I-765 application for Employment Authorization was delivered via FedEx on November 27th, 2020 to the address below:

USCIS

Attn: NFB AOS

2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business

Suite 400

Lewisville, TX 75067

I received confirmation of its delivery by FedEx and that it was signed by "B. Robinson".

I still have not received a receipt notice or case number. I am worried... please advise.

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What happens if I still don't have a receipt notice/case number and my OPT expires?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: A lot of us are in the similar situation, check the comments in opttimeline.com maybe someone there can help.

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- New Comment: Technically, you don't even need the receipt as long as you have your I-20 with STEM recommendation endorsed by DSO and the expired EAD to continue working according to [USCIS](<https://www.uscis.gov/i-9-central/complete-correct-form-i-9/completing-section-1-employee-information-and-attestation/foreign-academic-students>)
- New Comment: I'm literally in the same situation. My STEM OPT docs were received on December 22nd by Robinson and my EAD card expires next month. I just sent an email to my DSO regarding what to do if worse comes to worst. I'll comment again when I hear back from my DSO
- New Comment: You can find lot of ppl here in discord <https://discord.gg/AWPzvQUg>

Title of the post: Can I enter the U.S. with an I-20 that has a different SEVIS ID number than what is

Body of the post: Hello guys. From Brazil here and I have finished my master's degree in University A on August of 2019. I came back to my home country after that, and now I was offered a Ph.D. GRA position at University B. Technically, my visa expiration date from at University B is on 2023. However, I have been on my home country (where the travel ban is on) for over 5 months, and I have been approved to start my Ph.D. on University B this fall. My I-20 is on the way, but it is unlikely I will be able to get me a new F-1 visa because of the pandemic. I have reached out to the embassy and they told me not to travel with my old visa from University A as it will not match the new I-20 from university B. However, the international office from University B said that they typically don't recommend students to do so, but due to the whole COVID situation, they believe I could be granted access to the country as long as I quarantine myself for at least 14 days on a country where the ban is not on (e.g. Mexico). But they naturally cannot guarantee anything because it is not up to them. Additionally, my major professor and other faculty members said they are willing to write a letter and all of that in case it helps, so hopefully that together with the funding prove could do it to get there it time. From your experience, do you think I should follow their advise and travel with the old (but not expired) visa and the new I-20? Can I have problems when entering the country because of that mismatch between I-20 and F1 Visa? What could happen in the worst case scenario? Could hurt my future in the U.S. somehow?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Under normal circumstances you can, I have traveled with a new SEVIS number/I-20 and an old (but valid) F-1 visa for 3 out of 5 years of my degree with no problem. I don't know how the present ICE regulations/increased scrutiny will affect things though.

- New Comment: I have not had Student have issues with this process. The 5 month rule is for I-20s. Also, State Department issues visas not Homeland Security. Homeland Security regularly let's Student with valid I-20s in on a valid visa.

If you get a tourist visa it's valid for 5 years even if your trip is only for 2 weeks.

- New Comment: I have emailed both the Consulate in my country (Turkey) and the CBP(customs and borders protection) asking about the exact same situation.

CBP said it is fine and I can use my valid-but-issued-for-another-institution visa to enter the US. (5 months rule was also exceeded in my case too)

However, the US Consulate told me that it is not possible and I should obtain a new visa.

I am afraid of being turned back at the entry port and sent back home, and even if I am let in, I am afraid of not being given a new visa in future as I will be staying in the US with a visa that the US counsulates do not deem valid.

- New Comment: I am facing the same problem as you do. According to the international office of my school, they does not recommend using the old visa with a different SEVIS ID. The university said it depends on the CBP officer, whether the person is strict or more relaxed.

- New Comment: Same issue here!

- New Comment: [deleted]

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- New Comment: Any updates about your experience?
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Hi, could you enter the US safely? I'm in a similar situation
- New Comment: Hi, I'm in a similar situation but it would be my first entry. Any help?

Title of the post: How do the new F1 rules affect PhD students who are taking independent study co

Body of the post: My wife is a PhD student and has finished her required coursework. She is now working on her independent study for her PhD. Normally these credit hours are reported in order for her to be considered a ?full-time? student.

Does anyone know how these new F1 rules (announced 2 days ago) will affect PhD students specifically who weren't taking traditional classes anyway and were doing independent coursework for their thesis.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Generally PhD students are in some form of dissertation credits which are almost always considered in person courses. So should have no impact
- New Comment: Thus far I understand that if there is a lab component to the dissertation credit i.e. you are required to run experiments in your lab and work with your supervisor you are considered in person and should not be affected. However, if your research can be done online and you can commune with your supervisor online, its considered a online course and you will be subject to ice temporary rule.
- New Comment: There is no information for Doctoral students yet. We just have to wait and see.

Usually PhD students enroll in ?dissertation? course. If these are considered in-class(not even know what in-class

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means in this context), then everything is fine.

- New Comment: Understood. Appreciate the fast response.

Title of the post: Is it still possible to go for fall 2024?

Body of the post: Hello guys, I got admitted to Umcp for masters in MIS in the last week of May getting I 20, and arranging funds took a lot of time, and now I am not getting a visa slot Is still possible to go for fall 2024 my classes starts on 26 Aug or should I defer to spring or fall next year given the current market conditions and build my profile, currently employed with 2 years of work experience in operations and customer sucess.

What should I do? Please help!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Defer and build your profile.

- New Comment: Defer

- New Comment: what school is umcp lol?

- New Comment: If you decide to still make it work, you will need to first schedule an interview for any possible date and then ask for an earlier appointment date (you will be required to show proof that your program starts within 60 days). Admission to the US, on the other hand, might be problematic if you arrive way after the start of the school year. Rather than asking Reddit, it might be more helpful for you to ask both the DSO and your nearest embassy for details?

- New Comment: Im going to UMCP. I think the deadline for deferring has passed. Do check once.

- New Comment: still possible. You can get the visa on the same day of the interview. Then arrange immunization and heath exam if the school requires this. It is better if you arrange immunization and heath exam before the visa interview.

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Title of the post: Is it okay?

Body of the post: In my i20 there is mentioned only computer science as a major for my bachelor, is it okay to say i want to be a full stack developer in future if visa officer asked me about future plan?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Sure! Always be honest in the interview. Lying about anything will get you rejected quickly. Also remember that to receive an F1 visa you must have plans to return home. So mention being a full stack developer back home.

The interview will be really quick and it will be over before you know it! They're just trying to make sure you're a trustworthy person. If you have someone to practice interview questions with, that can help you be less nervous. Good luck!

- New Comment: Say u want to be full stack developer but do not give the impression that u want to be a full stack developer in US and stay in US. This is a non immigrant visa and a person showing intentions of staying in US is general seen as a red flag

- New Comment: Yes. Full stack developer ? Computer science

- New Comment: When is your interview?

- New Comment: What will you say when the visa officer asks you what is a full stack engineer and how will CS degree help you become one ?

Title of the post: OPT Extension Denied

Body of the post: Recently, I was denied an OPT STEM extension due to missing the DSO recommendation from my university. For reference, I applied to the STEM extension on April 3 and received the denial on August 6. During the past four months, I did not receive any emails from USCIS or my university on the missing document.

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The denial letter said I need to send in I-290B to reopen the case along with supporting documents. Should I send the request? Is it possible to do it online? How reliable is the process to get my OPT approved?

I reached out to my school but they told me they can no longer help me in this step and I need to find an immigration lawyer. The phone call to USCIS is also only robot directing me to look at their website.

I have only 30 days to mail the I-290B and on their website they request a money order of \$800. I am genuinely stumped on how to best proceed from this and would appreciate any expert help

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: What do you mean ?missing the DSO recommendation from my university?? Why was it denied in the first place?

- New Comment: You can only re-open a STEM extension case if USCIS made an error, or in rare cases your DSO made an error and is willing to write and sign a letter indicating their error.

1. STEM I-290B is not likely to succeed, unless there's clear USCIS error or admission of an error by your DSO.

2. Not receiving emails from USCIS or your university is irrelevant. It is 100% your responsibility to ensure the submitted application is correct and complete, and it takes time for them to review and realize your STEM OPT recommendation is missing.

3. I-290B without a lawyer has an extremely high denial rate; even with a lawyer the denial rate is high.

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4. You cannot file I-290B online.

5. Generally, due to the denial, you are accumulating unlawful presence as of the STEM OPT denial date (presuming your OPT has already ended). Filing I-290B does NOT stop the accrual of unlawful presence; only if the I-290B is approved is the unlawful presence waived. Since I-290B often takes 6-12 months to adjudicate, you would have accumulated enough unlawful presence for a 3-10 year ban if your I-290B is ultimately denied.

The reality is that you've almost certainly lost your STEM OPT extension, and there's really no path forward to keep it. This is a lesson on how important it is to be meticulous and get these things right; and if you can't, you should hire a professional to do it for you.

- New Comment: Commenting on OPT Extension Denied ...jj

Title of the post: Job market

Body of the post: So just some background info did my Master's in CE specializing in VLSI. The market isn't great right now.

I am on F1-OPT VISA. My unpaid internship started from 1st August 2024 and it will be till 23rd June 2025. I have used up 35 of my unemployment days

The market isn't great right now.

I talked to one of my distant relatives who is staying here since 2002 she said that the job market won't improve atleast till next March as the election is in November and then there will be Christmas/ Thanksgiving so people won't be actively hiring. So she was like go to India and try from there and if it still doesn't workout till March come back to the US and try till you exhaust unemployment days as well.

I do know that once I leave US on my current visa I need to come back before 5 months so if I leave in September I'll

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come in Feb.

What do you guys think?

1. Will the job market improve after March? Is it a good idea to go back?
2. Will there be an issue re-entering if I don't have a full-time in 5 months?

Let me know if you have any suggestions as well!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can't pause your OPT status. Once you leave during your OPT grace period, you aren't eligible to come back. Your unemployment days also count when you're outside the U.S. This isn't like H1-B.

The Grace Period: After completing your OPT, you are eligible for a 60-day grace period. During this time, you may travel within the U.S., transfer your SEVIS record to a new school, request a change of level if you are starting a new program at the UW, or apply to change status to another visa category. If you leave the U.S. during your grace period, you are not eligible to reenter with your I-20. You must enter the U.S. in a different visa status.

If you plan to apply for the STEM OPT Extension, you must do so before the end of your OPT period. You cannot apply for the extension during your grace period.

- New Comment: No one can tell if the job market will improve or not . You just have to put your ? efforts in job search irrespective of the job market

- New Comment: What you said is wildly incorrect. If your degree is complete and you go out of the country without any job in hand, your status is essentially over. You will not be allowed to re-enter the country. No offense but your relative doesn't seem to be a reliable source of information. You mentioned she's been living here since 2002. Maybe things were different back then.

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- New Comment: I'm currently pursuing masters in CE too and I thought the job market is good rn. I still have one more year to graduate, are you sure it's gonna improve by march next year ?

Title of the post: Returning to the US on F1 post completion OPT but no job offer

Body of the post: I have a valid I-20, a valid EAD on hand, and a valid F-1 visa, but no job offer at the moment.

I left the US in late June for family, but am planning to return to the US in a couple days to continue job searching/cleaning up my items for around a week and a half (EAD started 5/31/2024).

Will I run into any issues upon entering? (Landing at LAX)

Should I prepare any other documents besides the ones above?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: There are chances you may not be let in since you don't have a job. Better secure a job before you enter

- New Comment: Do not enter without a job offer in hand

- New Comment: Why would you even take such a risk. Unless you are not planning of coming back.

- New Comment: Your clock has started

- New Comment: I was able to return to the USA a few weeks ago with the same situation as you. The officer asked me for my i20. I told her I'm in the process of interviewing with a few companies and she asked me to show evidence of that, so I showed an email in my phone of a company inviting me to an interview.

- New Comment: went through a similar situation before. Border officer let me through but told me to better have a offer letter next time. They like when you have a reason for returning to the US. Best you can do is bring proof that you are

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massively applying to jobs and/or try to secure at least an unpaid one for the sake of having something in hands. Good luck.

- New Comment: Just tell them you're going to be self-employed and try your own business idea. It's completely legal. Just google OPT self employment.

If your EAD started 5/31/2024, you already accumulated 65 days of unemployment. Your max is only 90 days. You better hurry up and come back asap.

- New Comment: But what if the job is voluntary and unpaid? Example an RA?

- New Comment: Update: Went through immigration today! Though was pulled aside for secondary screening, managed to make it out around 4 hours after landing :)

Told officers that I was still looking for jobs and that my university was helping me out as well. I had proof on hand to show but was never asked to. Thanks all for your help!

- New Comment: This doesn't have anything to do with the question but Did you go back to your home country to renew your visa?

Title of the post: OPT employment days running out

Body of the post: I have 23 days left on unemployment days, do you have any suggestions for me what route to take? Is self employment viable as one of my options, please help!

Thanks

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Try volunteering at volunteermatch.org. DM for more info that will stop your clock asap.

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- New Comment: Options:

1. Reach out to your university

2. Volunteering at NGO

- New Comment: If you take a volunteering role or be part of an organization, you don't have to waste your employment days

- New Comment: Hi! You can apply to International Transformation Foundation US. You can do the work remotely and they are hiring volunteers who can help with websites and other CS related stuff. Happy to refer you.

- New Comment: I think so, but would do research as I'm not sure. Take care, Goodluck. Rooting for you ?

- New Comment: Did you try NGO's

- New Comment: Try NGOs to stop the clock buddy

- New Comment: Try and apply for a masters degree with day1 cpt, Harrisburg and Ottawa university offer that

Title of the post: Unpaid jobs for initial OPT

Body of the post: Hi guys, I just graduated in May majoring in MS Business Analytics, and now I'm in initial OPT and being on unemployed days. I wanna ask that I am allowed to work unpaid as Marketing Analyst for small business as nail salon? Do they need E-verify? If so, what documents do I need to submit? Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can work for a cobbler if you want and as long as the job description matches your general field of study, you are fine.

A Business Analyst can absolutely work in Marketing. It's connected to Business Analysis.

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What you cannot do is study math and be employed as a chef.

- New Comment: Employers don't need to be E-verified for the initial OPT. But the work has to be related to your field of study so you can't work in a salon.

- New Comment: Yes you can do that, just keep the following with you:

1. Signed offer letter mentioning your duties, start and end dates, number of hours, location and that it is unpaid internship.

2. Weekly timesheets signed by your immediate supervisor.

3. An employment verification letter at the end of your internship signed by your supervisor and mentioning what work/projects you did, start and end dates, number of hours each week, that it is unpaid, and location.

You don't need E-verify for initial OPT.

You won't need to submit these documents anywhere, but since it is an unpaid internship, USCIS may ask an RFE for employment history if you get a paid job later and file H1B/STEM OPT/anything else, or the consulate may ask if you leave the US and apply for another visa.

- New Comment: You can there if it's related to what you studied and unpaid is fine for just the 1 year OPT.

- New Comment: From my experience and what I have seen with my friends. The first opt, as long as it is somewhat related to your major. You'll get approved. And since you're business analytics. Your playing field is pretty broad. You can do finance, management, marketing, supply chain, research, etc. STEM OPT Extension, on the other hand. That one you'll have to actually show what's related to your major since you have to do the reporting.

- New Comment: Please be careful about any unpaid opportunities. Different states have different laws. Even if your

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university and job can give all legit paperwork, State might have different rules. In some states, you cannot work an unpaid job if you are highly educated (Master's holder). Please be absolutely sure that its allowed by the State.

Title of the post: STEM OPT Unemployment Days Advice

Body of the post: I am currently on STEM OPT. My employment was terminated yesterday. My STEM is valid until Feb 2026. Currently I have 150days of unemployment days left. Would be wise to take a month break in India (Home Country) and return back during these difficult time?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Quite risky if you come back without a job offer
- New Comment: why do u need a month break ??? i think i would spend all days just to secure a job (personal idea)
- New Comment: Question - did you go for express approval of stem opt?
- New Comment: It would be quite foolish to take a 1 month break instead of job searching, especially if you're on a time crunch. Its taking people months to land a job.
- New Comment: How 150? Isnt it 90?
- New Comment: You are on thin ice right now, DO NOT TAKE A MONTH BREK.

Title of the post: EAD yet not approved

Body of the post: Hello guys, I had applied for my EAD card on 28th of March 2024 and I still did not receive an approval for it. Although it's way past my start date and I understand that my unemployment days would start after my EAD gets approved, but it's been 105 days and it's a bit concerning. I have checked my emails, mails, but nothing has been emailed or mailed regarding a RFE(Request for Evidence). Anyone else in the same situation? Did people who applied late March/ early April receive their approval?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: People who applied on march 25 and 26th are getting approvals right now. I hope you will get yours by next week.
- New Comment: 23 March people got approved on 4 July
- New Comment: Hey I applied March 12th and only got the receipt and my case is still pending. Idk what to do????
- New Comment: 80% percentile of cases are being processed at 4.7 months right now. (50% percentile at 2.9 months). 105 days is between that so you?ll probably get notified within the next month.

I actually filed at a similar time too but after noticing the trend notified my new job. They offered to reimburse the cost of PP. From filing the PP to getting the EAD card took 21 days.

- New Comment: I applied April 10th and start my job August 1st, still haven't been approved. I might ask my employer to assist with PP, but I'm worried they won't be able to.
- New Comment: Applied March 16, got the physical receipt a few days later, approval June 16, EAD card delivered June 27!
- New Comment: I?m in the same situation. I?d recommend to check with your DSO because after the 90 days grace period if they haven?t updated your status with SEVIS, your OPT can be cancelled.
- New Comment: For anyone waiting for their EAD, just be patient and avoid spending money on premium processing unless you have a job lined up. It appears to be a trend with USCIS processes that status changes are delayed unless premium processing is paid for. Seriously, why would a case need to be evaluated for 4-6 months for approval? I understand they look at so many cases and all that, but unfortunately, USCIS seems bogged down by bureaucratic red tape and appears to be another money-making arm of the government.

Back when applications were paper-based only and there was no option for premium processing, students would get

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notified of their application status (approved, RFE, denied) much quicker. Since the introduction of premium processing, getting an approval has been taking longer than usual for normal processing. Now you can connect the dots. (You guessed it right, they want you to pay for premium processing? lol)

- New Comment: Update : Guys got the approval today morning ! So basically the timeline is : receipt date: 28th March, approval date: July 16th.

- New Comment: Hello guys,I applied for EAD on March 29th and still haven't been approved. Did anyone receive approval on this date?

- New Comment: March 16 is my receipt date and I haven't yet received any notice. The past week it's been at estimated waiting time: 1 week so hopefully really soon. Good luck!

- New Comment: Applied on the 29th and haven't gotten anything. So you're not the only one.

- New Comment: Wow! I understand the frustration everyone might be going through. I applied on March 19th and got my case approved on June 28th. I will say hang in there. Don't worry about it too much and let your job know about it. While awaiting, keep searching for more job opportunities and you'll be great! All the best guys

- New Comment: Applied March 20th

Approved June 26th

Card was produced July 6th

Received in mail July 10th

- New Comment: <https://optimeline.com/IOE#ReceiptDateData>

You can scroll down to check "Breakdown of Case Status vs Receipt Date". It seems they are currently processing March 25, 26 cases. So it will be your turn soon.

- New Comment: Non-related but I applied Jul 3rd with premium, do u know how long does it take for premium processing service right now?

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- New Comment: So, does your unemployment days start once you get an EAD card or the day you mentioned while applying for the OPT i-20? I applied for the EAD on May 22 and I mentioned my start date as July 9th. Does it mean my unemployment days start from July 9th? I asked my international student counselor at the university, she said it's July 9th. I'm confused here, please help.

- New Comment: Got my notice on March 24 and got EAD approved on July 8, and then got another notification that a card was produced, on July 12.

So hang in there, hopefully you'll get yours very soon. Good luck!

- New Comment: Receipt date: 27th March

Applied for premium: 10th July

No update yet

- New Comment: I applied early April and switched to premium processing July 8th. Still no updates :(

My employer paid for premium processing though so I suggest asking your employer, they might help you!

Title of the post: recruiter asking for a copy of EAD?

Body of the post: I am an international student holding an OPT visa. I am in the recruitment process with a recruiting agency, and they are asking for a copy of my EAD card, a copy of my driver's license, and my passport number. Is this a normal process, or could it be a scam? I didn't even get an interview. We just had a conversation on LinkedIn. Just for

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reference, this company is [Logist IT](<https://www.linkedin.com/company/logist-it/posts/?feedView=all>).

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Scam 101

- New Comment: They are a consultancy firm from India. Just pass

- New Comment: Avoid these at all cost. Do not give out your personal info like that.

They usually all try to ?train? you for jobs and say that they have connections and can almost guarantee interviews with big companies (they will name some FANG companies and etc to lure you in). but all these come with a ?fee? of 5000\$ lmao or they will say they?ll take a ?small? portion of your paycheck. absolute scam lmao

- New Comment: You don't need to give any of those information to anyone unless you got a job.

- New Comment: 5 associated members and they live in India...

Yeah imma pass.

- New Comment: Someone like this called me and asked me for my passport number..The caller had Indian accent too and I didn't share ..(btw I'm Indian too and so I'm very cautious about these). Never give your info like passport, ead etc. before any interview and also research the company properly.

- New Comment: The only moment you give all that is after you sign the contract.

- New Comment: It is a Desi Consultancy. Better avoid.

- New Comment: This feels like a scam

Title of the post: Payment refunded

Body of the post: Hi everyone !

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I filed my STEM OPT last week. My initial OPT ended on June 29, 2023.

I paid \$470 to file it but somehow the fund got refunded on my bank saying "NSF reversed item" with the same \$470.

What would happen now? How do I submit the payment again or does USCIS try to repay the fees by itself? It's already past the deadline to file STEM OPT. I used checking account number to pay the fee.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Why are you filling your STEM extension one year after your OPT ended? That doesn't sound right?

They should be continuous

- New Comment: Ooop

- New Comment: Call USCIS and ask. Sometime the fees are not correct and must be paid by the penny

- New Comment: NSF in banking means not sufficient fund in your account

Title of the post: How can I explain my terribly low undergrad GPA?

Body of the post: How can I best explain my terribly low undergrad GPA (5 on a scale of 10) during my F1 visa interview? I've done my bachelor's in mechanical engineering but am going for a master's in software engineering. I genuinely had some mental health issues during my bachelor's. Would that be a valid explanation? Please share your advice.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: DO NOT MENTION ABOUT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES. It gives them a direct cause for visa rejection.

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- New Comment: 1. They might not ask.

2. If they do, tell them, but then transition to a bright point like ?but I did well in all my computer science classes? or ?but I did much better in my senior year?

3. If they ask, answer and then transition to why you think your Masters university accepted you, like ?I just got a 5.5, but I think this University was impressed with my work experience and the interview I gave? or ?I just got a 5.5, but I did pretty well on the GRE?.

- New Comment: will they ask you about your gpa? i almost failed high school and it wasn't brought up in my visa interview

Title of the post: DSO MIA FOR MONTHS, I20 EXPIRING. HELP MEEEE.

Body of the post: I'm going to give you dates.

****April 15th I submit my petition**** for i20 extension. ****It expires JUNE 30TH.**** At this time, I also pay off my remaining tuition balance THE SAME DAY. DSO tells me "hey, I'll be gone for 2 weeks starting tomorrow." I tell her, enjoy your vacay!

I give her some extra days to catch up on emails but hear nothing. I call May 2nd and get her assistant (She's just a student) and she advises me that my DSO is still gone.

I call 1 week later on May 9th. Still gone.

At one month, I call the Dean saying WHAT IS HAPPENING IM FREAKING OUT. He is the other DSO. I ask can you put through my extension PLEASE. He instead (I didn't know this he just said ill handle it) emails my DSO.

****She finally responds on May 20th saying. Pay off your remaining balance.****

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After I cleared my balance on April 15th to zero, I submitted my petition that day deliberately. But I didn't know she would be away. Later that week, I enrolled in late spring courses (April-June 4th) which incurred a balance of 5300 dollars.

In May, my mom flies from our country, to very rural Africa where her sibling lives because he's sick. He eventually died as of 2 weeks ago.

After I receive the May 20th email, on May 23rd I call the intl office to tell them this. SHE'S STILL NOT IN THE OFFICE. I tell her assistant my situation and she says she will CALL OR EMAIL that same afternoon when she gets a hold of the DSO. SHE DOES NOT CONTACT ME.

Memorial weekend passes, my uncle is getting sicker and I'm drowning in papers. School ends June 4th and still, she's not in the office. By the week after, I'm mourning, without my family, I'm already in Cali with no support system thinking it would at least be my international office but I can't even get a hold of them.

By the time I'm done mourning it's June 20th (he passed the 13th) and I call the office. Her assistant answers. DSO still not there. I say, YO. I told you my situation before memorial weekend and you havent got back to me. I cannot pay the balance until my mom flies back home and has access to a modern bank. She's back July 22nd, can you tell Mary (DSO)? She says YES, and that she will call me that afternoon or email me. I say no email, call me. I GET NO CALLLLLLL.

I call the next day, June 21st. No one's in office.

I call the 24th and as it rings it stops after 2 rings, I think the assistant has my number memorized lol. So I think at that point she calls the DSO realizing she forgot to relay my message of what is happening with my extension.

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I get an email saying ****ON JUNE 26TH**** saying to clear my balance. ****AND THAT SHE WILL BE GONE FOR THREE WEEKS. AS IN LATE JULY.**** In the email, she doesn't reference my situation so I'm thinking the assistant forgot since it took a WEEK to tell her.

I send a reply ****ON JUNE 26TH**** regarding my situation saying that my mom is in the middle of nowhere, (I literally talk to her once or twice a week when she finds internet connection). I also sent the media article regarding my uncle's death as her was loved by the community and you see his body being put into the ground etc.

As of ****JUNE 26TH**** I have received NO response from my DSO.

I emailed my Dean THIS MORNING. I called him first yesterday, and today. He didn't come into work both days so I emailed this morning and left my number in the email saying I would be available via phone call). I have heard NOTHING.

I go to a CC, so I'm not sure if it's different. My i20 expires on June 30th which is a ****SUNDAY. MY DSO IS GONE UNTIL LATE JULY!****

****PLEASE ADVISE ME ON WHAT I SHOULD DO. THANK YOU!!!!****

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Not sure what you can do since you need DSO to take care of your requests.
- New Comment: Transfer to another CC? Preferably with a large international student body so more responsive International Student office. Get new I20.
- New Comment: Hey, sorry to hear this! In this situation, keep record of everything so that you can prove, I reached out

Reddit Posts

to DSO within the deadline for I-20 extension. And you should call to SEVP system regarding extension and say that my DSO isn't responding me.

Based on your situation, I could only think about these things only.

- New Comment: Email the president of your school this timeline. Cc all parties that seem important in the school. If there is a general counsel department, include them. Let them know that you are consulting with "outside professionals" about how to proceed if your status is impacted. Include your extension request in the email.

Watch magic happens.

- New Comment: What kind of school and DSO behave like that? This behavior is illegal, ignoring a student request for months and therefore jeopardizing your legal status.

Since your I20 ends tomorrow, I am not sure which options you might have. Can you use the 60 day grace period to transfer to another school?

- New Comment: If you transfer to a new community college they will issue you a new I20. Check around some are easier to transfer and have a quick turnaround.

- New Comment: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/maintaining-status>

Title of the post: Am I screwed? (I-765 OPT)

Body of the post: I applied for I-765 OPT on April 8th, and since I never heard anything back I ended up spending money on premium processing last week on June 15th. I've been scrolling on Reddit for the last week or so and everyone has been getting approved within 4-6 days of paying for pp recently and I am so nervous because I never

Reddit Posts

heard anything back (literally i know someone who applied for EAD a week after me on April 15th and then switched to pp on June 14th. This is so frustrating and I am so nervous because I'm supposed to start working on July 8th.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Chill man. You applied on Saturday. Wednesday was a holiday. It's been just 4 business days. You'll most probably receive your decision next week
- New Comment: Hey! Don't worry too much. My start date is July 8th and I converted to PP on June 9th and just got the approval yesterday (6/21). While some get approval in couple days, most people get it within 7-10 days.
- New Comment: Chill out my guy! You're gonna get it soon. It's just that there are tons of folks like you who applied for pp and it's all being queued. You're gonna get it in a few days
- New Comment: How much did you pay for PP?
- New Comment: I also applied in April but April 18th and changed to PP early June. I already have my card and I am starting my job soon. I understand the anxiety, tell you to relax or calm down it is very pointless, we've all been there and we had the same feelings. It's part of the process, unfortunately.

Here's my timeline, maybe it will give you some peace of mind:

April 18, 2024 Application and Received |

June 3, 2024 Case changed to Premium Processing |

June 13, 2024 Case Approved |

June 18, 2024 Card Produced (did not receive any tracking number for the mail) |

June 20, 2024 Card Delivered |

- New Comment: Hey don't worry generally for premium processing you should get response in 15 business days

- New Comment:

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[https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/1dmgqa0/ead_not_received_nor_my_opt_has_been_processed/](https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/1dmgqa0/ead_not_received_nor_my_opt_has_been_processed/)

I applied for OPT on the 19th of May. I have my start date at 18th of July. What if my OPT takes more time to get processed. What should I do? If I don't get the approval before the 18th of July will my visa get cancelled? or it doesn't matter when I get my OPT approved and my EAD getting delivered? Will my working days matter only after I get my EAD (or my OPT approved)? Do I have the option to change the start date on my OPT (if that is possible and (or) if the start date mentioned in the OPT doesn't matter)? This is of utmost urgency cause I don't have peace of mind while this goes on.

- New Comment: You're totally fine. I applied March 21, paid for pp on June 5, got approved June 15, and literally just got my card in the mail today (June 24).

- New Comment: How did you apply for pp? I applied with normal processing on 4th April and the status shows it's taking longer than expected. My job is starting on 1st July but I don't have the card.

Title of the post: Delay in Passport Issuance after Visa Approval

Body of the post: Hello! I had my F1 visa interview at the Kolkata consulate on June 6 and it was approved. I still haven't received any updates on when I'll get my passport back. Apparently, as mentioned in the disclaimer on the CEAC tracking page, the status should change from 'Approved' to 'Issued'. However, some people saw updates after just 1 day! But it's been 3-4 days and still nothing for some of us. Is it normal? Any idea what might have happened?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Yo I am in similar situation. My interview was on 6th June and still have not got any updates. I contacted other students who were there and they got the status 'Issued'. I am pretty tensed. Let me know what can

Reddit Posts

we do further

- New Comment: Same here bro, i had my interview on june 5th. Status is still Approved on ceac.
- New Comment: Does anyone have any idea why is this happening? I am from third country and have been staying in Delhi solely for passport. It has already been over 7 days but there's no sign for passport delivery.
- New Comment: Op, did you get info on passport dispatch? What does the scheduling portal say? Anything else than created?

My vi was on 8th in Kolkata itself, approved but stuck in the status since then. Anxiety inducing

- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: I had my interview 11 June and still didnt get update since then.. is that normal? Anyone has such delay ?
- New Comment: They are checking your background and Social Media. If they find anything suspicious they will put you into the dreaded Administrative Processing.

Title of the post: Any luck finding a job?

Body of the post: I am on stem opt and unemployed since april. How is the job market right now?

I did a lot of applications and now feeling burnt out and lost. Anyone else?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Biggest piece of advice: if you have a network (profs, past internships, anything) try reaching out. The difference is night and day when someone in the company vouches for you in the form of a referral.

Reddit Posts

This also applies to LinkedIn. Someone in the company on a similar career trajectory as you and from the same uni??

Shoot a DM, it increases your chances ever so slightly but it all adds up.

- New Comment: Same boat, it's a terrible market.

- New Comment: Use google, indeed, zip recruiter to find more listings. Don't limit your search to LinkedIn.

Search for employment agencies near you and reach out to them for opportunities.

Get more involved in the community programs near you. That's a good way to meet people and potentially get referrals.

Make sure your resume is in line with the job description. Your application will not even see a human eye if your resume doesn't match the keywords they are looking for.

Be positive and patient. It is a difficult job market but keep grinding.

- New Comment: Same boat.

- New Comment: try state departments and public works. see where the funding's going.

- New Comment: So you had a job on opt and then lost it after getting the stem extension?

- New Comment: How are you able to get the payroll running? I'm on the same boat because my stem opt starts in a month I just wanted to know how it works

- New Comment: If it's through LinkedIn, you should add the HR person who posted the job and even email them. My brother got a job by doing this

Title of the post: Coming back to US during summer on F1?

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Body of the post: I'm a PhD student in California, I left US after classes ended on April 30 to go to a conference, give an academic talk, visit my family. I'm planning to come back almost 2 months later on June 21.

I heard of other students having issues entering the US during summer on F1 since it didn't reflect their intent to enter the US for study. However, as a PhD student I'm expected to do research over the summer in my lab. I have a GSR (graduate student researcher) offer from my school to reflect this.

Can I just enter the US with my F1 visa + I20 form? Or is there anything else I should prepare?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No issue. Just make sure that your I-20 is endorsed for travel by your DSO.

- New Comment: >I heard of other students having issues entering the US during summer on F1 since it didn't reflect their intent to enter the US for study.

The first time I EVER heard of this was a post a few days ago.

Otherwise the thousands of students I have had, not one has reported this issue. So it is either new (unlikely and clearly against policy), a single incident repeated many times, or one CBP officer with bad training.

- New Comment: I routinely did this during my PhD and was never asked. If you are asked, show your summer fees receipts and enrollment status in the student portal. Worst case scenario, make a call to your thesis advisor and ask them to confirm your enrollment status. The chances of this happening are pretty low.

- New Comment: Why would there be any issues if you have an I-20? It's basic knowledge to bring it with you when traveling.

- New Comment: I just did it right now, and there was no issue!

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Title of the post: Is it difficult to get F1 visa approved if we are going for second master's

Body of the post: As the heading suggests, I have done my ME CSE in 2021 and working at an MNC after that. I got admitted to NEU MS CS but then visa got rejected.. only 2 questions were asked. The VO was quite rude.

What can be done now ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: From what I've heard, getting a visa for a second masters is a bit difficult, especially if it is in the same field. It apparently shows an intent of you wanting to study in the US just for the sake of getting a job later on

- New Comment: Why are you doing a second master?

- New Comment: Nothing, there is no appeal process

- New Comment: Go for a PhD program or a different program. Two masters in similar fields are a big red flag to VO.

My and few of my friends visa got rejected for the same reason. Some got their visa in 2nd or 3rd try and some are on their 5th try and still getting rejected.

- New Comment: Why not PHD? It will be fully funded and you will get a stipend as well!

Title of the post: Urgent !! Please Answer

Body of the post: The consultant company I work for is in California, and the client I work with is in NY. I have meetings from time to time with the consultant company to update them and there is also evaluation every 90 days done by the consultant company. Most of things I am learning are from the client since I use their system. The consultant company agreed to fill the i983 form regarding the OPT Extension. Am I going to face problems with the USCIS when I apply for the extension ?

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: You are hired by the consulting firm, so ensure you file the I-983 with their E-Verify number and contacts. The client is not your employer so you can't include their details.

Other than that, be careful of how you write about your projects and evaluation criteria at the company. If this is in a STEM field, you should be good for the extension.

- New Comment: As someone else said, you're hired by the consulting firm, they are your employer, so they should fill everything out. Additionally, for your peace of mind, the i983 is just for your DSO for you to obtain your i20, and USCIS only takes your i20. So if there is any confusion or complexity, not that I think you should run into any issues, your DSO will be much more easier to contact than USCIS.

To all these people immediately screaming fraud just cause OP said consulting firm, yall know there are real consulting firms right?

- New Comment: Whoever pays u is the one who should sign!

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Is it ok to land at a different airport??

Body of the post: I am attending a college in South Dakota this fall. My plan is to fly to DC first to meet my family (my grandfather is also traveling with me) and then traveling go to college after staying with family for 1.5 weeks or so.

However I have heard stories of students who were also questioned by immigration and possibly sent back because they landed somewhere far away.

We're thinking about buying a domestic ticket from DC to Sioux Falls to show that I do really intend on attending not illegally immigrating. Is this good enough?

Reddit Posts

I've also asked my university about this so in case immigration asks I can tell them that university was okay with it.

I'm thinking about contacting Immigration or Dulles Airport but I'm worried that might be seen as a red flag. Should I?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It's totally fine as long as you tell the customs officer the truth. Just tell them you have family you will visit for a couple days and then go to your college.

- New Comment: I flew to Miami the first time I came to the US while my college was in NC. No problem at all.

- New Comment: it's absolutely fine! from my home country the only direct flight is to LA and my college was in NJ so I've flown through LA every time and have not faced an issue. And the thing is, a lot of these smaller states don't have many international connections so either way you'll need to fly into a major international airport first and catch a connection to your state.

- New Comment: Completely fine. I study in New York and have entered in Tampa, Miami, Orlando, Charlotte, DC, you name it. Never been questioned once about why I'm landing at a different airport despite my school being in one that has similarly easy connections

- New Comment: Yes all my friends landed in New York to spend few days there before coming to the midwest

- New Comment: Of course - idk why would they even bring it up lol. I've been to all 50 states in the country as a student and 2 provinces of Canada. I even entered the US by land the first time I came here. Flew to Toronto to meet my aunt (who is now a Canadian citizen - she immigrated to Canada when I moved to the US for education), drove down from Toronto into Detroit (where I crossed the border) and into the Midwest to my college

- New Comment: I went to Purdue and landed in LA and I had no family or anything. Totally fine

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: You can enter through any PoE but then I would advise you book your flight to South Dakota and make sure you have it in hand.

- New Comment: It's totally fine. I had landed at different airports, and stayed and visited both east coast and west coast cities before the Fall semesters start. Most of these immigration stories don't have reliable evidence to back up their claims.

- New Comment: It was fine for me. Landed on SEA but school was in ATL. Though it happened during lockdown period. Customs asked me whether my relatives live in WA and I said yes, and they let me go without any more question

- New Comment: If you ask me you shouldn't do it. Any reason more you give them to deny entry is a risk taken that is not necessarily worth it in my opinion. Sometimes the officers are very understanding and cool and sometimes, they just pin you down to one small thing they don't like and you get rejected. That said, it is more likely that it won't be an issue than that they reject you, but your overall risk is still slightly higher. I personally wouldn't take that risk, but it is up to you.

That said, what will help you out is your grandfather. Usually, travelling with family and parents makes it easier to enter.

- New Comment: This is not at all recommended. Enter the port closest to the univeristy and then once ur thru immigration you can go any domestic route you want no one cares. Initial admission into the US is not a joke, esp if you?re from a high immigration country.

- New Comment: And make sure you have paid your tuition.

Title of the post: Past visa rejection

Body of the post: I had applied for a tourist visa to the US a couple of years ago and I was rejected, but I don't remember the reason they gave. Now, while applying for an F1 visa, the DS160 form has a field where I need to explain why I was refused a visa in the past. What should I mention here?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The truth ? US considers lying as the biggest sin you can commit at par with Murder, rape :)
- New Comment: ?Denied under 214b when I applied for a tourist visa in {Year}?. This was my exact response when applying for my F1 last month. I got it .
- New Comment: It?s hard to say without knowing a lot more details, but they had some kind of problem with that last interview. You should reframe your intentions for traveling at that time in a way that is consistent with what you said back then AND explains it is a way that makes your purpose of travel back then seem reasonable. Add a tone of confusion about the refusal and the officer may come to the conclusion that you were refused in error.
- New Comment: Did you choose like regular slot or refusal slot ?

Title of the post: Academic probation: How f*cked am I?

Body of the post: I was put on academic probation in my second term in graduate school (engineering) because I failed a course - there was an unavoidable personal circumstance that prevented me from completing my final. My grades improved significantly and last fall I got all A+ grades for my three courses. After that I just needed one more A in the subsequent terms to cross the 3.0 GPA requirement for graduation. In my final semester(this spring) I enrolled in one subject since that?s all I needed to graduate and was on track to get the final A. I scored well in all my assignments and tests (basically 90or more out of a 100 in each) but there was a group project that was worth 30% of the total. I hate group projects, especially after coming here since I?ve been shafted twice by it including this time. The group project tanked embarrassingly and we got the lowest grades in class. My individual contribution gave me 20 out of the 30 possible points but the overall score was still too low. So instead of the safe A or even A+ that I was aiming for, I ended up with a B. Now my cumulative GPA is still lower than 3.0 and that means I will not be able to graduate this term.

The biggest problem is that I applied for Post OPT and although it hasn?t been approved yet it has been over a month. My program end date was updated to May 6th and I just find out that I wont graduate. What do I even do now? My

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advisor tells me I have to request my school's graduation department to move my graduation term to either summer or fall and enroll in another course but the international student affairs advisor committee (the DSO) told me that I would be able to continue with the Post OPT i20 and just enroll in an additional course if I don't end up graduating (i asked them about all possible options/outcomes two months ago just to be prepared). It seems like the two departments are saying two different things and I am not sure where to go from here.

I have been on probation from three consecutive terms with significant improvement in each. There's hardly anything more I could've done in the other terms since I maxed out the grades except in one and of course that had the other group assignment which dragged me down. I can't force anyone else to work or finish everything on my own and now because the grades didn't matter so much to others not on probation I might have to drop out and move back to my home country.

Please help me.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Unfortunately the answers to all of your questions can only be answered by your school.

This could be a small thing or a huge deal. So follow your school's guidance here.

>seems like the two departments are saying two different things and I am not sure where to go from here.

Because Academics and Immigration are two separate items with two separate rule sets. Academics inform immigration, but not the other way around.

Seek clarification from your school. You could withdraw your OPT application or do what your DSO said.

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Regardless you still have to delay graduation.

- New Comment: Listen to DSO. Schools are different but if they say that then that's how they run things. My school was the same. I know two people that for one reason or another didn't end up graduating with OPT already applied and were told to not withdraw it, continue enrolling in school and get that missing credit completed.

Yes, in this case the rules of OPT will apply, so you will have to work 20 hrs or more (on top of completing the school credit), or your unemployed days are ticking.

ETA: I reread your post and the two sides didn't really say anything contradictory if the above is followed. Your graduation will be postponed to the next period, and you will also be on OPT.

- New Comment: Same thing happened to me. My advisor asked me to write a letter to the committee of "why i should graduate". Ended up graduating without an issue

- New Comment: One thing you could do is withdraw your OPT application. You just need to write a letter to USCIS and mail it to them, its pretty easy. Second, the program end date can easily be changed by your DSO until you finish your degree. You don't wanna waste OPT, especially in the current market. Also, some schools let you appeal if you get academic probation, you could explain the situation and they will give you atleast one more chance. If I were you, I would withdraw my OPT application asap and apply again later before it gets approved.

Title of the post: Is it risky to quit your job a few weeks before your F1 visa interview?

Body of the post: I will be pursuing an MS ECE degree in the US starting Fall'24. My term starts end of September. I have around 1 year of work ex and was planning to quit my job in the first week of July. If my visa interview is scheduled sometime in mid-late July, would this cause any issues during the interview process? I have been hearing mixed opinions about this and would appreciate any valuable insights

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: For that matter, if it's help I have been jobless since March 24. It won't be an issue in your case because anyway, you have to quit your job in July if your sem starts in Aug. So yeah you're good to go.

- New Comment: This is risky. It COULD be totally fine and people do this all the time with no problem, but officers are suspicious of gaps and people who are out of work and the interview is often too fast to be able to explain your reasoning for quitting. The officer may suspect that you lost your job and are desperate for some other work opportunity overseas. I have had quite a few clients who quit before their interview and then got refused (for whatever reason) and then the gap and unemployment is more obvious and looks worse on the second attempt. I would not quit until you have visa in hand if I were you.

- New Comment: What if your visa is denied? Why not just wait?

- New Comment: I wouldn't quit my job if I didn't have a visa for whatever reason.

Now it depends, do you have a fully funded offer? If yes, you almost certainly would get your visa.

But still, I wouldn't quit without a visa

- New Comment: +1

- New Comment: I quit my job in Feb, for a course that was starting in September. And it was simply because I wanted to spend more time with my family.

Don't worry about this, they don't go into such details. Just be confident about whatever you're saying - and convince them you're a good student worthy of pursuing your studies in the United States.

- New Comment: Not at all

Quit my job in Jan

Reddit Posts

Interview in Jul

Session started in August

Title of the post: Waiting for 3 months

Body of the post: I applied for a STEM OPT extension in late January around the 20th, and it's still stuck on case received. Do I have any options available? Anyone know the reason behind this long waiting period, or is it better for me to just pay premium at this point?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Processing times are around 4 months or even more. If you plan on traveling out of the US just get premium processing done.
- New Comment: Mines pending since December 15, and there are many on the same boat. You're not alone.
- New Comment: Dec 20 here. Atleast 5 months from the date of application. So hang in there.
- New Comment: How much time premium processing is taking?
- New Comment: I applied on Dec 29. I have to travel soon. So I ended up applying for PP on April 2. It took 25 days to receive my EAD card.
- New Comment: I applied on Feb 20 for an extension and have been waiting since. I thought it's gonna take a couple of weeks. Didn't realize there's been people waiting since December and still haven't gotten it yet. My current EAD expires on May 13. Should I apply for PP or something else?
- New Comment: You just got fucked in the ass bruh

Title of the post: Speeding ticket for 115 on a 65 in NY State

Body of the post: Hi All,

Reddit Posts

I'm a student on F1 visa status got a ticket driving 115 on a 65, this is my first speeding ticket, do you think I should hire an attorney or just show up at the court date and argue about the ticket. How's 'Off The Road' app for hiring a lawyer?

State: New York

Ticket: Chautauqua County

In my defence I was heading to a hospital because backseat passenger was sick. The trooper offered Ambulance but was denied by me and the passenger due to the expensive ambulance charges.

I have been summoned next month to Portland Town Court NY State which is a local criminal court.

Anyway, what do you suggest? Plea guilty or plea not guilty?

I'm not sure if it would affect my future visa status.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Do not plead guilty.

Talk with an attorney and they will at least get you a "no point" ticket or get it converted to a lesser ticket like parking violations. This will cost you though.

If your university has student legal services, talk to them. They might do the paperwork for free.

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Again, DO NOT plead guilty.

- New Comment: Not sure how sick your passenger was that would require you doing 115, if they weren't at the point of the death, the trooper wouldn't suggest an ambulance, they'd let you off or even provide you an escort or offer to take them in the squad car. Cops do this all the time when handling gunshot victims that are critical.

That being said, don't try to fight a criminal speeding charge yourself. I'm surprised you didn't even spend the night in jail.

Try this in Georgia, it's jail for the night.

Get a lawyer, possible talk to an immigration lawyer also.

- New Comment: That if felony level if you plead guilty, get a lawyer asap, the whole affair might cost you a few thousands to convert into a nonspeeding ticket.

Keep all the documents/copies for any green card application?

- New Comment: HIRE A LAWYER

- New Comment: You should have go to jail.

- New Comment: You declined an ambulance over money and then drove 115 in a 65 zone risking the lives of other people?!?!?! Yeah good luck defending the "passenger was sick" reason in court yourself.

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Plan to graduate 5/2025 and get a Master in 9/2025. What can I do in between?

Body of the post: I'm on F1 visa of course. I plan on graduating in May 2025, and maybe getting an internship over the summer(6,7,8) of the same year.

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However, I have some concerns: If I graduate in May 2025, my university will end my I-20 sooner (from May 2027 to May 2025). Does this still mean I am NOT allowed to get an internship after graduation and I have to go back to my country until my Master program starts in September?

Note that my F1 visa will expire in December 2025! Can I still stay in the US legally in the 2025 summer for internship after graduation?

My friends suggest getting OPT. But are there any companies that wanna hire for a 3-month OPT?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Apply for OPT. If you find an internship, transfer SEVIS record to the new university before your masters program starts. This ends OPT. If you don't find an internship, the unemployment days will allow you to stay until your masters program start.

A valid visa is only needed for reentry. If you don't plan on traveling, it is irrelevant.

- New Comment: Apply for OPT. If you find an internship then perhaps wait until you finish that internship before transferring SEVIS to your master program. If not, even without OPT, you are legally allowed to stay in the US if the period between your previous program end date and new program start date is less than 5 months. Talk to your international student office and confirm your plans with them.

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevis-help-hub/student-records/completions-and-terminations/complete-program>

Title of the post: How much should you have saved to study in the USA

Body of the post: Assuming you are undertaking a one year graduate degree how much should you have saved with loans not in the picture?

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Average cost of living isn't uniform across the country. Budget anywhere from \$5000-\$7500/year for food and drink alone. Rents are \$2000/mo and up unless you have many roommates or are on campus, so \$25000 for room&board is a good baseline to go off of, even if you're on campus ? because on-campus room & board fees are usually separate from tuition and are also in the \$10-\$15k per semester range, since you wouldn't be eligible for in-state rates available to locally residing citizens and LPRs.

Add to that your tuition, which can be anywhere from \$0 (if you have a full ride scholarship) to \$100,000 for the year or even more, depending on your program.

Subtract from that what you could earn on campus: those jobs which you'd be eligible for under F1 are usually minimum wage and capped at ~10~ 20hr per week, so you can expect to earn 300 hrs x \$10-15 minus tax, so ~\$4000-ish. If you get day-1 CPT (frowned upon but possible depending on program) or pre-completion OPT (not recommended because it eats your post-complete OPT allowance) you could conceivably earn much more at the cost of severely cutting your available study time.

Overall, if you have \$150,000 in the bank you should be entirely set by the vast majority of metrics, but even much less cash is usually enough to demonstrate you'd be able to afford it. IIRC, the absolute minimum amount of funds you can show and have a chance to not be denied is your portion of one ~semester's~ year's tuition, less any grants and loans, *as stated on your I-20*. (Thanks u/thebettermochi for clarifying minimum funds!)

- New Comment: Since you're asking in the f1visa sub: your (target if you haven't got an offer yet) school will have a webpage for estimated cost of attendance, which includes everything - tuition and fees, health insurance, living expenses. They will list that annual total cost on Form I-20 which you will use to apply for your F-1 visa. Your visa officer will want to see at least that amount in liquid assets. Regardless of how much you'll actually need once you're here, that's the amount of money needed, sitting in a bank, at the time of your visa application, that can get you to the US.

Reddit Posts

It's also a fairly accurate estimate of your actual costs unless you live very frugally or very lavishly.

- New Comment: Without specifics like type of course and location no one can give you any number
- New Comment: If you are going for a top 100 university, MSCS for 2 years, then assume, 60k for education without scholarship and 20k for living.

If you get a TA or RA job in university then fees will be half the original cost.

It depends on which uni you are going and where you are staying.

- New Comment: \$0-500,000. Depends on so so many factors

Title of the post: Can't even use my Stem Opt

Body of the post: I switched my majors to qualify for stem... I tried so hard to get myself into tech. And now boom.

Terrible market for tech.

I'm unable to find a full time job to even apply for Stem Opt extension.... rip me...

I have less than 90 days till my post grad opt is up. What can I do now ???

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: phd lets go !
- New Comment: If you are currently on your OPT, try getting an internship. Look for tech startup's or talk to your university professor. Don't lose hope even if you have 10 days left, you never know what miracle could happen. I know the tech market is pretty bad but I know people who are getting jobs and they're surviving. Look for contract jobs even if they don't offer H1B because a job is what you need now. Set a target and keep applying. I'm sure you'll get through this, stay strong and positive.
- New Comment: My f1 visa opt not verified what to do?

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: STEM OPT PREMIUM processing question

Body of the post: Hello.

So we know STEM OPT wait time is literally forever and will be way after EAD expire date.

I know I can work 180 days after, but I am wondering what would happen if I were to switch jobs while STEM OPT is pending? I'm not planning to, but in the event of a layoff I am wondering what would happen.

I thought about premium processing as an emergency method, but then I heard that AFTER SOME TIME YOU CAN'T PREMIUM PROCESS your application.

Is this true? Should I be worried?

Thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can't do premium processing once there is a decision in your case. If you feel there could be layoffs it would be better to go for premium processing and have the EAD card in your hand. If your application is pending while you lose your job it's most likely the application gets denied.

- New Comment: I believe you will need to let your DSO know and submit a document to your USCIS portal mentioning that there has been a change of employer with their e-verify number.

Title of the post: Showing 2x funds on i20

Reddit Posts

Body of the post: I recently secured an educational loan of approximately \$96,000 (80L INR) for my master's program.

The university has requested proof of \$50,000 in funds for the issuance of the I-20 form.

I plan to use my loan sanction letter as evidence for the I-20 procurement. Is there any potential issue with demonstrating that I have access to \$96,000 on the I-20, even though the requested amount is only \$50,000?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: That's not an issue. I had 1.8 times the i20 amount and I got the visa. Just don't express your intent in making a career in the US.

- New Comment: Not an issue just don't show any intent of staying in the US after you graduate even if you do want to don't show it at all.

- New Comment: First check if University accepts loan sanctioned letter or not because most of the universities need liquid funds which should be in savings account or FD.

In my case i shown loan sanctioned letter for requesting i20 but university says they need liquid funds either in bank account or FD.

- New Comment: Yeah I showed 2x in my loan letter and it was completely fine. Getting i20 should not have any issues

- New Comment: In fact for a 2 year program, it would better to show 2x the I-20 funds. What's on the I-20 is the amount for two long semesters.

So if your program is 33+ credits you are better off showing that higher amount

- New Comment: So is that okay to just show the loan letters to receive i20?

And is it okay if we change the loan lender with some better roi afterwards?

- New Comment: hey there, so i've decided my school and already approached know a bank to approach for a loan. can someone tell me what are the requirements from my end other than all the details, assets etc. that the bank needs

Reddit Posts

to sanction a loan?

Title of the post: Confused about the transfer process from OPT to H1B

Body of the post: I'm a STEM grad student and I'm graduating this year (May 2024). I had originally planned to start working for a company in June on my OPT EAD (already received the OPT EAD card).

I got the notice today that I've been selected for the H1B lottery this year. While I'm really happy that I got picked for the lottery, I'm not sure about how that affects my OPT status. Do I have to forego my OPT and shift to H1B within this financial year? Or can I choose a start date that is 3 years in the future so that I can maximize my time on OPT here? I'd really appreciate any help here.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You should speak to your company's team who are managing your case. They will probably take care of everything and let you know what the best step is. You can also talk to your DSO about it and understand what the best approach would be. I'm not sure if you can just hold the h1b selection for 3 years and apply only when your STEM OPT ends.

- New Comment: You don't have to do anything. Look at your approval documents. The I-94 on the H1 document will tell you when your H1 will start and end. As of that date, your F1 will end. When you start your job, the HR will update your I-9 to say you are on H1b. Check with lawyer anyway.

- New Comment: No you cannot hold for 3 years, it's for each year..

- New Comment: Your question about why H1b is safer is this:

You get 6 years as opposed to three years on OPT + STEM. Once your I-140 is approved, you can renew it every year. True that you'll not pay additional taxes on OPT a few years, but there are cases where one had to travel to different country just because they were never selected in the lottery.

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As others have pointed out, your employer has 90 days to file the H1b (June 30th usually), and you'll be on H1 status by default starting October 1st once the petition is approved (usually July/August). Once you start your job on OPT, make sure to ask for access to SEVP portal and update your job information or have the DSO update it for you. You can update this yourself on OPT, not on STEM OPT. Once you're in H1, every time you change your address, file AR-11 online by creating USCIS account. I hope this helps!

- New Comment: If you forego your OPT. Can you use the remaining OPT next time at same education level?

- New Comment: Hi i had a few questions about how u applied for H1b and many more please tell me how can i connect with you

- New Comment: If you haven't started working how did you file for h1b?

Title of the post: Unclear RFE for STEM OPT Extension

Body of the post: STEM OPT Extension

Receipt Date: Nov 20 2023 (126 Days)

The USCIS Portal is showing 1 Week till decision, I got this in the mail and am not sure what USCIS is asking for here.

Any help would be much appreciated.

<https://preview.redd.it/5texfj014oqc1.jpg?width=1536&format=pjpg&auto=webp&s=31d4d2b8aab63d5d46a19fa01622a5ea72e8a355>

<https://preview.redd.it/ynsxwj014oqc1.jpg?width=1536&format=pjpg&auto=webp&s=be72f1c76a21ee22839c9adbd7e56d4262b766b8>

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: yeah, that is a good one, they dont really say what they want...

Side note: you put all the effort to cover all ID numbers but not the bar codes... They are super easy to read.

- New Comment: Is this even genuine? can anyone confirm? OP try getting in touch with the DSO. Maybe they can confirm.

- New Comment: You're missing a page my good man.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Is there another page?

The coversheet shows 1/1

But the other page shows 1/2

- New Comment: Check the USCIS portal

- New Comment: Are all the boxes checked for the requirements for STEM OPT? Does your job indicate a connection with your degree ? If you've ticked all the boxes, then a letter from your DSO should be sufficient in providing evidence. What did they say after you called them ?

Title of the post: Tips on getting a job/interviews in this market

Body of the post: Tips for a getting a job in this market

Question for fellow tech folks here who managed to get an offer in the last one year. How did you do it?

Advice/suggestions/tips on how did you manage to get interviews, interveiw prep, interveiw experiences.

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US tech market is pretty shit right now and has been like that since the last one year. I was active in the job market from May 2023 to oct 2023, and got just 2 interviews after applying for ~300-400 applications, cold emailing, reaching out etc. Have given up since then. Planning to start again and wanna be more aggressive this time

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'm not tech but we're in similar situation. I applied over 1500 positions for about a year only got 30ish interviews. And my current job isn't even from job application. My advice is keep cold applying jobs daily, spend sometime to do some projects that you can show off on your resume, spam on LinkedIn for coffee chat/networking/referral, ask around if you can get referrals from friends or friends of friends, attend career fair at school if you can (I got my job by doing this, wasn't expecting it at all), last but not least, spare sometime for entertainment and exercise and relax. your health is more important than anything.

- New Comment: How did you give up in between? Are you on OPT still?

- New Comment: Not in tech but in finance and so I think my struggle was equally bad if not worse.

Some of my big takeaways were that, getting past behavioral rounds is pretty easy, as long as you are 6 - 7 stories ready with you, and you can play around with them according to the questions asked by the interviewer. Secondly, networking is an ongoing process. Talk to as many people as you can, to ensure when there are right opportunities at XYZ firms, you already have connections there, who will be willing to push your application. I would highly recommend to look away from transactional relationships. And lastly, get a mentor for yourself. You will always find someone who'll be willing to help you grow. I am who I am in the US because of a white dude that I sat next to on the first day of class.

Title of the post: Paid Research Assistant on OPT

Body of the post: If I join as a paid researcher under a PI in a Medical School Lab after Graduation, can I file it as a valid job offer with USCIS?

Reddit Posts

Said Research Position will not file my H1B but the goal is to join a PhD program.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 1) OPT employment is not reported to USCIS. F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT) employment is reported to the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) which is part of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Everything your DSO reports to the US government and everything a student enters in into the SEVP Portal is reported to SEVP and ICE. If you report OPT employment to your DSO, your DSO records that information in SEVIS (which is an SEVP database). If you report the information in the SEVP Portal, it is transferred by SEVP from the Portal into your SEVIS record.

2) Any position you take during OPT has to be giving you practical training in the field of study of the I-20 program for which you applied for OPT. If a position is giving you practical training in your field of study you can take that position during OPT. If a position is not providing you with practical training in your field of study, you cannot take that position during OPT. You need to document with SEVP/ICE (not USCIS) how each and every position during OPT is practical training in your field of study when you report that position to SEVP/ICE. You are responsible for knowing what is your field of study and only taking positions that are providing you with training in that field, and you are also responsible for reporting each of those positions to ICE either through your DSO or using the SEVP Portal.

Different schools have different instructions on reporting directly to the DSO or using the SEVP Portal. Please refer to your school's specific instructions for that topic.

- New Comment: What is your major?

That is a completely valid job as long as you work 20 hours and it's related to your major.

- New Comment: I'm currently doing the same thing! If it's for initial OPT there's no problem. Before you accept to

Reddit Posts

multiple years commitment make sure it fulfills all the requirements for STEM OPT if that's your plan and that they'd be able to fill out the form. Keep records!

Title of the post: I-539 F-1 reinstatement application was approved yesterday!

Body of the post: My application was received by USCIS on October 30, 2023. No RFE was sent to me.

This is such a torture and a hard time for me to go through. I was hopeless, anxious and helpless.

A big thank to the redditors who I chatted with. Good luck and best wishes to everyone who is still waiting for a response from USCIS. Finger crossed.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: What was the reason behind you filling reinstatement of status?
- New Comment: Hi, congratulations. my case is similar to yours. Please can I private chat you ?
- New Comment: Congratulations!!! Did you receive updates on your USCIS account throughout the process?

Title of the post: F-1 OPT RFE

Body of the post: Hi

I received an RFE from USCIS a month back, and it goes like this.

This evidence must include but is not limited to:

1. A statement from the Designated School Official (DSO) and the Registrar attesting to your

Reddit Posts

physical presence in the classroom;

2. A full description of your course of study/academic program, including all graduation

requirements such as the number of credits or classroom hours and your college's definition of

full course of study for your degree level;

3. Copies of your course syllabi for all classes and coursework in which you earned credit towards

your degree. Provide delivery method (in person/lecture, lab, virtual, online, tele-learning,

broadcast, satellite, etc.) of the course if not listed on the syllabus;

4. Proof of tuition payments made by you for the duration of your enrollment;

5. A copy of your most recent transcripts showing number of credits or hours received.

6. Copies of your bank statements showing every transaction for the last 90 days.

7. Documentation indicating how your sponsor transfers funds to cover your expenses (Note that

a statement from the sponsor is not considered sufficient)

Reddit Posts

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If anyone else received any of these questions and has tackled them, I would appreciate it if you could share your experience and advice.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Seems like day 1 CPT college.

- New Comment: Weird how the dude ask for guidance and dumbasses keep spamming about day 1 CPT. Ok and?

- New Comment: Any updates??

Title of the post: Seeking Advice: Initial OPT Expiring Soon, Should I Apply for STEM Extension No

Body of the post: Hey everyone,

I'm currently in a bit of a dilemma and would appreciate some guidance from those who have been through similar situations or have knowledge about it.

Here's my situation: My initial OPT (Optional Practical Training) is set to expire in mid-June, and my company is planning to put my name in for the H1b lottery. However, I understand that I also need to apply for a STEM extension.

As I'm approaching the 90-day mark of my initial OPT, I'm unsure whether I should start the process for the STEM extension now or wait until the results of the H1b lottery come out.

Additionally, I've heard about something called the STEM Extension CAP gap, but I'm not entirely clear on how it works.

From what I gather, I can apply for the STEM extension in the last month before my initial OPT expires, and as long as I

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apply before the last day of my initial OPT, I'll get a 180-day CAP gap. Can someone please explain this concept in simpler terms and clarify if it applies to my situation? Will I be able to work during this period?

So, what do you suggest? Should I wait until the end of March and then start the process for the STEM extension, or should I do it as soon as possible?

Any advice or insights would be greatly appreciated! Thank you in advance.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Apply for Stem OPT as a backup as well. You never know if you get later off while on h1-b & then don't have stem opt. You'll be stuck and may have to go back.

- New Comment: What is your reason to not apply for STEM OPT? Is it the hassle and cost? IMO both are worth it

- New Comment: Hi, I didn't read the post completely, but I want to suggest to apply for STEM OPT extension. It has more steps compared to OPT. Firstly you have to get I-983 plan ready with all the details of the company (you may have to reach out to HR or immigration team at your company), then ask your manager to write the training plan as part of the i983. Depending upon your manager's timeline, you may easily take 1-2 weeks by the time you have your i983 ready. Then you have to submit i983 to your DSO and apply for new I-20. This may take a week. Then you apply for STEM OPT. These days it's taking 3 or more than 3 months to get STEM OPT. You can keep working even without the EAD card on your hand. But as I said you have many things to plan even before you officially apply. Atleast get your i983 ready. I think once you get your i20, you have to apply in 3-4 weeks for STEM OPT, otherwise it gets rejected. So if you want to wait, maybe you can get your i93 done and wait for lottery results. If you don't get it, go ahead and apply for i20.

- New Comment: How is this even a question? You literally apply for STEM-OPT either way

- New Comment: [deleted]

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Title of the post: Media request - International students and I-20 funds

Body of the post: I'm Andrea Gutierrez, a reporter for public radio show [The World](https://theworld.org/). I'm working on a story about international students and how they pay for college or grad school in the US. I see quite a few questions in this sub about the I-20 and funding, and I'm hoping to speak to current degree-seeking international students about their experiences gathering those funds and paying for school. Is this you or someone else you know?

My deadline is this week (March 8), so it would be great to talk ASAP. I'm happy to answer additional questions, especially around confidentiality (you can be anonymous).

Feel free to email me at andrea [at] andreagtrrz [dot] com or message me for number to call/text/WhatsApp/Signal.

(Mods, apologies if this is against the rules!)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I can volunteer. Let me know what questions you have

- New Comment: Can volunteer! DM me :)

- New Comment: Willing to help DM

- New Comment: I can help you, please let me know

- New Comment: I can volunteer no worries.

- New Comment: Shoot me your question. I can answer them too

- New Comment: I can volunteer

- New Comment: I can help DM me I have very good story.

- New Comment: Willing to help if I'm paid in return

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Title of the post: How long can I stay outside of the US while on OPT?

Body of the post: I'm planning to travel outside the US during OPT and I can work remotely . I read that we can travel up to 5 months and still be able to come back to continue employment in the US. Is this true? Has anyone travel for 5 or more months outside the US?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This is not true. There is no 5 month rule applying to opt. See <https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/s/Z4q3gGkopZ>

I just entered US yesterday after I working from my home country for 10 months, to apply for stem OPT. CBP doesn't ask anything except current employer information. It looks like they don't really care about how long you stay outside of US. They only care about if you have a valid employment.

- New Comment: As per my knowledge, we're not allowed to work from outside the US while on OPT

Title of the post: LLC on OPT

Body of the post: Hey,

Does anyone have experience with establishing their own LLC on OPT and then sponsoring their H1B?

Would appreciate if you guys could share your experience.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It's complicated and likely not do-able but an immigration attorney will be your best option to explore if

Reddit Posts

there are other visa categories, apart from H, which could work for you. It is worth the consultation fee.

- New Comment: By sponsoring H1B you mean petitioning for yourself? You cannot self-petition H1B.

- New Comment: Wouldn't this be the EB-5 path?

Title of the post: H1B attempt STEM OPT

Body of the post: Hi all,

I am on opt right now and it ends in the next few months. I want to talk to my employer about my situation but don't know how to approach it. I want to ask if they would sponsor me for an H1B visa and get e verified for be eligible to do stem extension on opt. Idk how to bring this topic up and I want to understand how the H1B application process works and how the e verification process and stem opt extension works to be able to explain to my employer. Is the H1B application process around a specific time each year? Also my employer is a very small company with not enough funds so I don't mind paying the filing fee or whatever if it's a few thousands.

Any thoughts are appreciated.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Stem OPT requires them to enroll in the E-Verify program. I believe it is a fairly simple process and free. And then you apply for the extension on your own by paying \$410 to USCIS.

H1B requires them to sponsor your visa, and the company incurs significant costs. They first need to register you to the lottery. It is \$215 from this year. If your application gets picked, they pay the visa filing fees and other fees which runs into 1000s of dollars. Add lawyer fees on top of that. And yes, H1B applications open up only around March every year. You should not bear the cost of H1B. There is a reason it is called 'sponsoring a visa'.

Title of the post: Too many credit cards on F1 visa!

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Body of the post: Would having 12 credit cards and 4 bank accounts be a problem while applying for my stem opt extension? I like collecting credit cards for the cash back and other joining bonuses.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No. Churning credit cards isn't exactly illegal. Signup bonuses are rewards/rebates and are not exactly income. You are fine.

Make sure that you don't open business credit cards and claim to own "businesses" of your own.

- New Comment: No

- New Comment: No

- New Comment: I've done this for years. One of the few legal ways to make some money on the side as a F1 student.

- New Comment: Yo what credit card hv u been able to open without an SSN? was there any?

- New Comment: Can I dm you to ask about the credit cards and benefits

- New Comment: What are the benefits of it and what you suggest

- New Comment: Even I am on F1 and I opened 14 credit cards and 7+ banks to get sign up bonuses, miles and cashback from credit cards

Title of the post: EAD not received. But my OPT start date is nearing

Body of the post: Hi Guys. I applied for the EAD card last month. My OPT start date is 5th Feb. I haven't received my EAD card yet. I am a bit skeptical about the 90-day unemployment clause. Will this apply here or will my OPT start date change?

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Your start date will be the day it is approved and unemployment days will count since then even if the card hasn't been produced yet. -from my experience
- New Comment: I applied for mine on November, i got a notice in the mail that my EAD should arrive in 1-2 weeks
- New Comment: Are we allowed to work if the card has been approved but not delivered to us?
- New Comment: Did your EAD is approved yet? If you applied in Late December that means you need to wait more than 2 months to get an answer right? Or did you pay express?
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Try contacting USCIS and request expedited

Title of the post: Can I apply for an F1 visa to study abroad while I am applying for F4-1 immigration

Body of the post: My uncle applied for a settlement for my whole family in 2009. As far as I know, the sponsorship application is for 10-12 years, except for the two years when the epidemic stops everything, which means that around this year - 2024, will be my turn. My mother and uncle are worried that I (2001) will be over-age and unable to go, so they want me to study abroad first. Can I apply to study overseas while applying for settlement? Thank you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: They should be able to see your F4? you can apply but the chance isn't good.
- New Comment: My aunt has a F4 petition from 2009 and was able to get a non-immigrant B-1/B-2 visa in 2017. No reason why you can't get an F-1, just have to show strong ties back home and that you'll return when your studies are complete.

Edit: also not to upset you, but the final action date is currently May 2007, and that date has moved maybe 2 months in the last year, so it will probably be another 4-6 years at the least before the priority date is current if the current pace

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continues.

- New Comment: Does OP have any options for obtaining an American education without having to wait for the F4?

Title of the post: Re-Entry into the US with an Arrest Record

Body of the post: Hey everyone!

Needed advice on a situation I'm currently in:

I am an international student in the United States, currently employed on on F1-OPT extension. In May of 2022, I was arrested for Resisting Arrest in college, however the charge was dropped and case never pursued.

Details:

A person in plain clothes from an unmarked black vehicle approached my girlfriend and I and we ran from this person because it was late at night and warnings of human traffickers were going around campus. Turns out it was a cop, and he thought we were smoking weed. We stopped when some officers approached us on a floor below in uniform and shouted. They searched us, we had absolutely nothing but we still got arrested and charged with Resisting Arrest because we ran initially (completely non-violent). Paid bail and got out in a few hours. Lawyer contested the charge saying we didn't know it was the police and the prosecutor dropped the charges, we never went to court.

Fast-forward to 2024, my F1-OPT was approved and I'm considering traveling back home. However now I am concerned that considering my arrest history, will I be allowed back into the US? I already get stopped by US immigration sometimes even before all this happened as I am from a developing country in SE Asia. I have heard that in the eyes of immigration, an arrest may as well be a conviction.

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Really scared to travel and would appreciate your advice!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: I suggest you collect any court documents relating to the arrest and dismissal. An arrest alone will not prevent you from re-entering the USA. Good luck

- New Comment: I know of a few people who have been in similar situations. Sometimes they have to go through secondary inspection but not always.

- New Comment: So this happened to me, I re-entered the US, but they put me in a room (tons of other international travelers too were there) they make you sit, they check the record and then they let you go. It's gonna happen everytime you come back but you're going to be good with coming in. Just gotta go through that record check every time. It's tedious but it takes like 15 min for me each time.

Title of the post: Late arrival after to us after semester break

Body of the post: Hello all,

I am on f1 visa and travelled to India for semester break. I planned to travel to USA one week after the program start date on i20 for spring 24. I have got travel signature on i20 and when I checked with iss they told that it's completely the professor's decision and i should get an approval from professor.

My professor agreed with this, could any please share your thoughts on whether this will create any issues at the port of entry.

Thanks in advance!

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: - Done that my first time - no issue
- done recently few months ago - no issue
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: No issues but sure your college updates the same in your sevis id.
- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: F1 visa renewal (Dropbox) time line

Body of the post: Hi all,

I want to share my F1 visa renewal timeline just in case it helps someone.

Dropbox appointment date: December 18th

Dropbox VAC: Kolkata VAC for Chennai consulate

Visa issued: December 22nd

Pick up email sent December 22nd

On the visa the issuing post is mentioned as Kolkata. I think my passport never left for Chennai. I went to the VAC again to pick up my passport on Dec 24th. They asked to see my visa application confirmation, identification (I gave AADHAAR) and a photocopy of the identification. The process took half an hour as there were many people like me who came to collect their passports. But when my turn came I got the passport in 5 mins. The visa got renewed for 5 more years.

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Wow, that's amazing. Best of luck!

I just got a refused status on 21st Dec, called up to know it's actually in admin processing... Hoping for the best now ?...

- New Comment: Whoa, that's refreshing to see. I only kept seeing the 1 month timelines and got a little worried. Thanks for the post!

- New Comment: Similar experience dropping off at Delhi for Chennai location. End to end the process took 8 days. Looks like it's better to drop off at other locations until Chennai backlog is cleared.

- New Comment: Hi - I am on STEM OPT (valid through July 2025). I submitted my documents (they only took my I-20 and photo even though I insisted on other documents) at Delhi VAC on March 11. I saw today (March 26) that my status switched to Refused. I don't know the reason yet. I think they'll send a letter when the passport is ready for pick up, which will be God knows when. I am freaking out. I was supposed to fly back on the 30th and have used all my PTO. Has anyone gone through such an experience recently? Can you please share your experience?

- New Comment: Hi all,

I had my dropbox appointment in Chennai on 6th March, 2024. The status of my application still says "Application Received" on 22nd March, 2024. Anyone on the same boat? Whats the expected timeline to receive any notification?

- New Comment: Submitted an F-1 Dropbox renewal on Jan 8th, 2024 in Mumbai for centralized processing in Chennai. Jan 22nd today with no change to status (delivered to post). I was told that it would take 7-14 days to process but it seems to be taking longer.

- New Comment: I dropped my documents on the 10th Jan, in Chennai for F1 renewal. On the 18th it changed to application received, after which no change in status. Anyone in a similar boat?

- New Comment: I dropped my documents on 24th Jan, 2024 in Kolkata VAC for Chennai consulate, still delivered to

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post. What are the approximate wait times people are facing?

Title of the post: H4 to F1 dropbox refused at Chennai

Body of the post: Hi, my h4 to f1 dropbox for MS at Chennai was refused on 21st Dec 2023..dropped documents on 28th of Nov at Kolkata VAC..anyone going through a similar experience?I am wondering what to expect next..As of now I did not get any email or call from the consulate asking me for an interview nor did I receive any notification for passport collection with any 221g slip..In another thread I saw the status got automatically changed from refused to issued but that was for PHD where the OP didn't have to pick passport up or provide any other additional documentation and it got sorted smoothly. Anybody on the same boat? Appreciate your comments and insights.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hi, 221 g is administrative processing. You might have to submit a few documents that they may ask for in an email or you may have to go for an interview if you haven't already. It usually gets sorted out. Mostly it's a matter of time. If you get your passport back, check for a slip and do as they have asked. In my experience when I got my 221g, I submitted the asked documents, and they asked me to drop my passport and it was approved in 4 days.
- New Comment: Wait until you receive the slip containing the information on the next steps. You may have to submit more documents or appear in an in-person consular interview. Nothing to worry about, at least not yet. You're not returning anytime soon though. Could take 2-6 weeks, in rare occasions a little longer.
- New Comment: Any updates? I'm in same situation for F1 renewal on opt
- New Comment: I too am in the same boat, I had the visa change from B1 to F1. Got the dropbox location in Chennai, it was on 1st dec. But on 26th dec it got a refused status with the same message. Really worried as I was a spring intake student so this might affect my semester. Please post for any update anyone receives.
- New Comment: [removed]

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- New Comment: I'm in the same boat, status change from h4 - F1, dropped my documents on jan 22. Today the status was updated to refused.

Title of the post: Travel while STEM OPT is still processing or pending.

Body of the post: Asking for my cousin:

My cousin is on Post completion OPT untill Feb 19 2024. He applied for STEM OPT and it is still in process. He is planning to visit India on December 29 and planning to come back by 29 January . He will still be in OPT when he comes back. If he doesn't get any result by December 29

1. is it advisable to travel?

2. If so Will he be able to come back and has anyone encountered serious issues in immigration?

Kindly share your experiences and advices.

Thank you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: My university strongly suggests travelling outside the US only after receiving an EAD card. However, if you receive an EAD card somewhere in mid-January, get it posted (from someone) from the US address to the local address before returning to the US. Also, you'll be required to produce a job offer letter and an EAD during reentry. If you don't have a job offer letter but have an EAD card, you'll be left at the mercy of an immigration officer. This is something I learnt from the ISS.

- New Comment: i don't recommend doing so, just wait it out.

- New Comment: No one posting here so far gave any reasoning about why it would be risky. So here's argumentation why it would *not* be risky and, in fact, fine.

His post-completion EAD will still be valid at the time of re-entry. His STEM OPT card will not yet be valid, hence it's

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irrelevant. He should be good.

Sources:

1. My company's immigration lawyers (2 said the same thing, independently)

2. Other threads

1. Confirmation from /u/codetornado:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/17tc6ej/stem_opt_application_pending_can_i_travel_out_of/?rdt=60322]

(https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/17tc6ej/stem_opt_application_pending_can_i_travel_out_of/?rdt=60322)

2. My own thread about this:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/18gn44c/reentry_on_unexpired_postcompletion_opt_after/](<https://www.r>

[eddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/18gn44c/reentry_on_unexpired_postcompletion_opt_after/](https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/18gn44c/reentry_on_unexpired_postcompletion_opt_after/))

- New Comment: Did your cousin travel?

- New Comment: Update: He came back.

Title of the post: Sponsored by Uncle (citizen)

Body of the post: Hey guys, I'll be applying for an F1 as soon as any admits for the fall24 cycle comes out. The issue here is that I will be funded by my uncle and he is an American citizen, however I will show the proof of funds through my grandfather's account. The first question here is how big of a risk would this be ? and second how much funds would I have to show ? I am trying to find the approx amount early so that my uncle can plan and hold certain amount of funds as cash in that account. Thanks.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It?s not an issue just tell them your grandpa is sponsoring you. Showing that your uncle will be

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sponsoring isn't a very great idea. Sometimes visa officers deny because they think you'll end up living with your uncle permanently or he may sponsor you green card.

Approx amount you should have in your account is same as your expenses as an international student. For example, 40,000\$ for one year.

Title of the post: I am currently on an OPT visa. I got a job in July and worked there for 2 months but

Body of the post: I didn't have another job on hand but just had to leave. I am now finding it very hard to get a new job. I still have my previous employer on my sevis record. Can I travel home and come back if I have my previous company on my i20 but in reality I don't work there? Will anyone find out? I know it's very risky but wanted to ask

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: What if they will ask for recent paystubs as proof of employment?

I hate how half of this sub is "I'm doing something illegal, can you give me advice on how to cheat the system"

- New Comment: First-year OPT can be unpaid; stem extension should not be unpaid

- New Comment: Aren't you supposed to report the termination of your employment to the University? As far as I know, we are mandated to submit any changes to addresses and employment changes within 10 days of the change. Check with your university

- New Comment: Sometimes the job environment sucks. I do not recommend to travel on your situation. Good luck

- New Comment: I am in the same boat. Interned at this place twice before taking up the full time job because I couldn't get anything else given the market. Unlike you however, I did not have the balls to quit so I'm still here and sucking it up. Kudos to you for making that tough choice. Hope you find something soon :)

- New Comment: Hi, I've been doing some research on this topic and was just wondering if you're willing to share a bit

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more about what, specifically, you hated about the OPT job and workplace culture? For example, were they just giving you small, meaningless tasks? Or whatever the problem was, I'd be really interested in hearing more!

Title of the post: Automatic Revalidation Experience (Houston to Cancun)

Body of the post: After many months on researching automatic revalidation, I tried it. it was less intense than I expected.

On most reddit posts, people emphasize on time (get to the airport very early) and airline type (US airlines better); helped a lot My experience below:

Traveled from Houston Hobby to Cancun Mexico for a week. My passport isn't on the exemption list so I needed to get a Mexico visa. I did this months prior and it was a relatively quick experience. Whole process took 3-4 hours and I got the visa same day. Once I got my visa, I bought my airline ticket. I flew Southwest airlines, I recommend it.

When I landed in Cancun Mexico, the immigration lady was a bit mean and she asked if all I have was my Mexico visa (I assumed that was enough) but she asked for my US visa, when she saw it was expired she told me to wait aside while she checks on something. I don't think this is normal but she spoke to a supervisor and that person told her all I need is the Mexico visa. So I got in, this whole process took maybe 15 minutes.

The part that matters, coming back to the US. My flight was at 1:45PM so I got to the airport at 9AM but found out the check in counters at the Cancun airport opens at 10am but they didn't attend to anyone until 10:45. Anyway, I went up to the counter with all my documents (I-94, I-20, print out of the automatic revalidation law, STEM OPT EAD card, passport and visa). The guy at the counter was very helpful and communicated with CBP and they said I was clear to travel. However, printing out a boarding pass took forever (45 minutes).

When I landed in the US at the border, be ready to stand your ground. The first immigration officer laughed at my face and said "F1 don't get Automatic revalidation", I told him "you are not correct, I did my research". Then he passed me on

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to a different agent who worked on it. She instructed I go pick up my bags from baggage claim and come back. Once I got back, she handed me back my passport with the stamp on it. This process took 15-20 minutes.

****TL;DR:**** If your passport isn't one of the exempted ones, get a Mexican visa. Traveling out, you don't need to do much. Coming back, have your passport, US visa, I-20, I-94 and EAD card. Get to the airport very early just in case of delays and stand your ground. Good luck!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You shouldn't have needed a Mexican visa to enter Mexico since you are on f-1? Am I wrong?
- New Comment: How was your experience getting a Mexican tourist visa? From your post it seems like you got it in just one day?

I want to travel to Mexico in 2 weeks and my F1 visa stamp is expired so I'm not sure if I can get Mexico visa in time. I saw a few people said they successfully traveled to Mexico with expired F1 visa but also found info saying you cannot travel to Mexico with expired visa.

- New Comment: Hi, got a quick question my F1 visa expired since 2020 you think i will be good?
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: I have my valid J1 visa in my passport until 2027 but I changed my status to F1. Do i still need a Mexican visa? My J1 visa or F1 status is not enough?
- New Comment: Was your F1 visa multi or single entry visa?

Title of the post: Repeated Secondary Documentation Checks at Customs; F1 on OPT (Chicago - O

Body of the post: Hi All,

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I am a Canadian citizen, in the US on OPT after graduating with my PhD. Ever since I graduated, each time I've crossed the border at O'Hare (home airport), I've been brought for secondary processing (not questioning, just brought to a second room and told to wait up to 45 min). One officer told me it is because my SEVIS record says OPT is "not active"; which doesn't make sense because my I-20 and EAD are in good standing. The most recent time it happened, an officer told me this will happen every time, regardless, simply because I'm on OPT. I've contacted my international student advisor and they say my record looks fine on their end/SEVIS.

Q's: are you on OPT and are you brought for secondary document checks every time you re-enter the country? if so, have you been able to rectify it?

Any help appreciated - Thanks.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Your record is flagged likely incorrectly and they are obligated to pull you.

Use the Traveler Redress Inquiry Program to see if you can get it to stop.

<https://www.dhs.gov/dhs-trip>

- New Comment: Happened to me for the first time early this year and has happened since for the past 2 times when I went through NYC, also due to a the SEVIS portal being slow/outdated idk

- New Comment: Chicago seems like an annoying airport to deal with. One time when I was a student (not OPT) I got taken into a waiting area for no reason and then they let me out after a bit. That's the only airport that happened.

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- New Comment: Just wanted to comment that the same thing happened to me yesterday at O'Hare, I'm on OPT and had to travel for a work-related conference. I need to travel in a month and a half to renew my visa so I'll contact ISSS to see what can be done about this problem. Hopefully the Traveler Redress Inquiry Program will solve it.

Title of the post: Urgent guidance required!!!

Body of the post: I'm applying for Masters in US for 2024 fall.

The thing that scares me and keeps me awake at night is the fact that I might not get f1 visa even after all the hard work.

So my sister is a citizen, parents have green cards and I have my B visiting visa. So even though I am eligible for drop box I am scared I will not get the visa since it clearly looks like I'm trying to immigrate.

Kindly help and tell me what to do ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Sticky situation for sure. Can't your sister sponsor a green card for you?

- New Comment: >So even though I am eligible for drop box I am scared I will not get the visa since it clearly looks like I'm trying to immigrate.

Yep

>Kindly help and tell me what to do ?

To prevent a denial based on family green cards? As them to give up their green cards. Other than that there isn't anything to stop that from impacting your application.

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Build up super strong ties to your home country in the meantime.

Other than that, you can not apply, but that doesn't really resolve the situation

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Do job/career fairs benefit international students?

Body of the post: As the title says, as someone who's planning for a cs grad degree, i wanted to know are international students allowed to participate in job fairs or is it only for domestic students?

If yes then how effective are they for international students?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Not in my school. Most of the companies give you a link through QR, which redirects to their career page.

For locals/GC there're a lot more options. For internationals, nope.

- New Comment: International students can attend and be part of Job/career fairs. But I think it's mainly an opportunity to network the crap out of companies and people. Even if they don't hire you, the people you communicate with might hear or have something for you. Also, don't just focus on networking during job/career fairs. Network with alumni's and teachers, they've job hunted before so they might've come across a job opportunity that they weren't interested in but it might fit you.

For international students, the main obstacle is finding a company that is willing to sponsor visas. So focus on finding those types of companies and be straight forward regarding your status.

- New Comment: It's been awhile (2017-2019) but both my internships and my first full time offer came from career fair.

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- New Comment: Depends on your school.

We worked with our career services department to make sure company attendees were clear and upfront about their ability/desire to hire and even sponsor international students.

Anyone who indicated they wouldn't hire students on CPT or OPT had to give a very clear reason. If they did not or could not (ie:its just our policy) they would be placed in inferior locations or would not be given space. It forced the recruiters to actually speak to their HR and get answers. Then if student applied and we're told they didn't hire F-1 OPT etc. We followed up with our contact with a professional inquiry of "hey, what they hell. You stated you do hire OPT, please explain this situation". This resulted in at least three students getting job offers because the lower level HR person didn't know or do what they should and higher level HR came back on them. This was advocacy at our school that worked well.

Your situation will vary a lot depending on your degree, your employment history, your school, and more.

- New Comment: Finding a job is going to be an entire job for you. You have to apply as many companies as possible. Network with people in companies. Go to career fair. Prepare for coding and technical interviews. Building a resume with hackathons and personal projects. Don't rely on career fairs. Even the U.S. citizens have trouble finding a job in career fair.

So your question should be ?How prepared I will be at the time of the graduation from this school??

- New Comment: It depends on the area, for instance a university in California might have more CS companies and hence more opportunities, but if you are in the middle of buttfuck nowhere, then most of the companies will be local and hence less willing to take the risk of sponsoring an international student. That's when LinkedIn becomes your bestfriend.

- New Comment: Depends on your school.

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Went to a very small school in the middle of nowhere. Only local companies came.

If you go to a bigger school, you might have bigger companies that could potentially sponsor you come.

- New Comment: > are international students allowed to participate in job fairs

yes

> how effective are they for international students?

depends on sector, your skillset and desires, the companies at the fair, what roles they're hiring for...

- New Comment: It really depends on your school. Although my school had Google, NASA, and a few other big companies there, the majority of companies were defense contractors and required US citizenship. So most times, it was pointless to go there.

- New Comment: If your school is a target/semi target for a firm you want to work for I'd say go for it. I went to meet the firms and felt like it was a bit more helpful when I applied for the internship. Attendance definitely mattered but not sure to what extent

- New Comment: My school had career fair and companies come to campus on a weekly basis for network purposes. My job for CPT and OPT for my bachelor degree came from career fair, and I was able to built a professional relationship with recruiters that has kept in contact with me throughout the years and has offered me a job for my masters degree OPT. So I would say, it is worth it and definitely worth the try. It also helped me master my interview skills.

It also depends on your sector, I am in the hospitality and tourism field and really benefited from it.

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Title of the post: OPT deadline passed, I-20 expired what to do?

Body of the post: I recently graduated and was originally planning on applying for OPT. I made a mistake and believed I could file for it up to 90 days after my graduation date but I learned that it was 60 days when they had already passed. In the meantime, I got a job offer which I had accepted and they fingerprinted me which now worries me in terms of triggering something in the system that shows I'm now out of status. I also started renting an apartment and I'm on a 1-year lease

I've been looking for a way to fix my situation but I'm not sure. I'm all alone looking for solutions and I can't afford an immigration lawyer.

I hear it might be possible to apply for overstay forgiveness? What would it imply? If I can get sponsorship from my job, could I possibly change my status to Hb1/2? Should I try to get my F1 status reinstated and try to either finish a different major at my previous school or apply for grad school? I know marriage is an option as my boyfriend is a US citizen but I wouldn't want to necessarily use my relationship as a way to stay here. Is there any exemptions to apply for OPT past the deadline? What other options do I have so that I can legally be here before my 180 days go by and I get banned from re-entering the US for 3 years?

Sorry for the amount of questions I'm trying to get a clearer picture of my situation so that I can advise what's best for me to do.

(Also i'm 21 and unemployed atm so it would be realistically hard for me to buy a 1000\$+ flight ticket to travel home ASAP, I would need time.)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >I recently graduated and was originally planning on applying for OPT. I made a mistake and believed

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I could file for it up to 90 days after my graduation date but I learned that it was 60 days when they had already passed

Unfortunately, that's it. Your F-1 is over and OPT isn't possible nor is transferring your record.

> I got a job offer which I had accepted and they fingerprinted me which now worries me in terms of triggering something in the system that shows I'm now out of status.

It doesn't.

> I also started renting an apartment and I'm on a 1-year lease

You can walk away from that lease.

> I've been looking for a way to fix my situation but I'm not sure. I'm all alone looking for solutions and I can't afford an immigration lawyer.

There isn't a fix for this. You missed the deadline. That's the end. You need to leave or get a new status.

> I hear it might be possible to apply for overstay forgiveness?

Yes... but it does nothing for OPT or your ability to work in any reasonable time frame.

> If I can get sponsorship from my job, could I possibly change my status to Hb1/2

Even if this company wants to sponsor you the application/lottery draw was back in April and you cannot stay long

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enough for that to happen again in 2024. Even if you could stay, you could not work in the meantime anyway AND would need to leave to obtain the visa AND that application/lottery would be for a status that starts in October 2024. So unless you're marrying someone, the fastest option for you would be starting October 1, 2024 and you wouldn't be able to stay here and wait it out.

>Should I try to get my F1 status reinstated and try to either finish a different major at my previous school or apply for grad school?

You do not currently and did not previously have admission for this, so yes... but not really in your situation. Your admission came late and was in your control, so a reinstatement almost certainly would not be approved.

>Is there any exemptions to apply for OPT past the deadline?

No.

>What other options do I have so that I can legally be here before my 180 days go by and I get banned from re-entering the US for 3 years?

Marriage or leaving and reentering on a new I-20. Anything else will require a lot more steps or require times you have not brought up or would require hundreds of thousands of dollars in investments.

- New Comment: Try to ask your school's DSO for advice too!

- New Comment: I'm not sure exactly what to do in your situation but try looking into getting enroll in a community college (associate degree) and apply for F-1 again.

- New Comment: Is the company that you got the offer from an international company? If so, they might be able to

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transfer you to work from your home country or a country that is more immigration friendly. After that, they might be able to find a way to move you back to the US through H1B or L1 visas. Have you checked if the company have an immigration team? Have you talked to your DSO?

It is suck to go through to this but things will get better. Wish you all the best!

- New Comment: What is your Nationality?

- New Comment: Sometimes you graduate before your i-20 date, maybe that's the case with you? You should just try filing opt asap and hope for the best maybe.

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: I have a week left to complete 90 days of unemployment in OPT.

Body of the post: Any advice or help please?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you have \$750 upfront, you can volunteer at RND4Impact! I did that for 3-4 months this year during my unemployment streak. It's ridiculous expensive but you'll be able to report them to your school as a valid volunteer opportunity. After the \$750 (250 registration and 500 for that month), it's 500 dollars monthly. Very expensive but I was desperate and I ended up having less than a week of unemployment days too and it gave me enough time to get a job after 5 months and to submit my stem opt application

- New Comment: I just graduated early from college this past March, and had to leave the US because of 90 days of unemployment. I'm currently in my home country right now. Realistically, you will have to go home. This happens more than you think. Two weeks before my OPT running out I was panicking and emailing literally hundreds of companies and even NGO's. Basically no one responded. I saw this option of non-paid volunteering at this NGO, and having to pay like

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\$500 I think? I had no money, and I didn't want my parents to pay an extra \$500. So I had to go home. I would suggest literally trying your best and calling/emailing/reaching out to as many companies/NGOs as you can. If not, you will have to go home. I went home depressed but with my head held up high knowing I tried my best in looking for a job, but maybe staying in the US wasn't just meant for me. Good luck and hope to get something.

- New Comment: Find someone with connections and beg them.

Call the companies you expect to hear from and explain them, if you think they want to hire you enough to be understanding in this situation. Good luck

- New Comment: Join literally any job that is remotely related to your course. You have a bachelors in CS...IT help desk also works. Find a job locally since they are likely to have a faster hiring process. Speak to a professor and tell them your situation. I hope you find something very soon. :)

- New Comment: Volunteering is probably your best option to stop the unemployment clock and buy more time. The one good thing is that they're not *that* strict when it comes to employment during your initial OPT so almost any volunteer work will do. Just remember to update your SEVP profile.

- New Comment: Leave

- New Comment: Hey what did you end up doing?

- New Comment: 0 info? Suits you.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Go ask your university. Look at positions related to cs.

- New Comment: Did you try making a LinkedIn post telling about your situation? Also try the research labs in your college to see if they will take you. Paid/unpaid doesn't matter as long as you are RA

- New Comment: When did you start searching for jobs? The job market is tough in tech now

- New Comment: Go to a professor and volunteer for free,

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You can volunteer at a NGO for free during OPT.

(Important that they both should give you an offer letter)

- New Comment: Incorporate a business (\$500 with Stripe Atlas) and claim self-employment. Then you can get a year of OPT because it's a legitimate employment even if you're employing yourself.

- New Comment: I was in a similar situation last month. Start a voluntary position/part time job asap. Ask the professors of your department for voluntary positions in their lab. You have to be proactive because the start date of your voluntary position must be before 90 days of your OPT unemployment end date.

Title of the post: Got a 25 second approval for F1 at New Delhi earlier today.

Body of the post: I thought I'll share the conversation, so who has an interview coming up can relax a little bit.

Me: Goodmorning (while passing my i20 and my new and old passport)

VO: Oh! (while taking the document, riffles through my old passport and putting back) I don't need this. So, you wanna go for Masters in _this University_ is that correct?

Me: Yes, that's correct.

VO: What year did you finish Bachelors?

Me: In _twenty-nineteen

VO: What have you been doing since?

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Me: I worked in _this field_ since graduating and currently employed at a mid-size company in New Delhi.

VO: Why this course then?

Me: Because I want to transition into _this new_ role, as I want to?..(vo cuts*)

VO: Yeah, your visa is approved. Thank you.

Me: Thank you.

That's it, this guy rejected 3 back to back applications ahead of me. 5 mins interview each. If you are legit you don't need to be worried. I didn't even open my binder to show documents.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: What could be the reason for approval in such a short interview time?

- New Comment: Congratulations ?

What's next?

- New Comment: Congrats! My interview was almost the same, it was 45 seconds and the VO had rejected everyone in front of me. Goodluck for your studies!

Title of the post: Forgot to mention social media profile in DS160

Body of the post: I forgot to mention my Instagram page in my DS160 form. I'm worried if this will cause an issue, mostly because it's a big page with many followers (>10K) and posts. I've also mentioned this page in my SoP.

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I did mention my YouTube channel, and the Insta page is in the same name. Hence, the Instagram page comes up first if Googled with the channel name.

Should I submit a new form with the Instagram account? All my other details are filled correctly, so im afraid that submitting a new form will cause more harm than good. I've already paid my SEVIS Fee as well, so I don't know if it's possible to submit a new form. If I do submit a new form, should I carry both forms for my VI?

I'm requesting safe advice, I'm very afraid right now ?? I don't want this mistake to ruin all my efforts so far :(

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No problem at all. Most people only mention their LinkedIn profiles. So relax and focus on other 100 important things for your interview
- New Comment: Not worth updating or submitting a new DS-160. I usually advise full disclosure, but this is an honest mistake that is very, very unlikely to be dispositive.
- New Comment: Not sure why you are so afraid. You just forgot one thing, and if they question about it you can always say you forgot to mention it.
- New Comment: I don't think it should be a problem
- New Comment: Don't worry, it is okay!
- New Comment: Same situation, any advice
- New Comment: Safest is to file a new one- especially since you've publicly posted acknowledging you forgot.
- New Comment: Don't worry about it, most people don't really put everything.
- New Comment: Not an issue at all. I'm fairly certain that your contact info is taken from the visa appointment

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application not the ds-160.

- New Comment: Not an issue at all. I'm fairly certain that your contact info is taken from the visa appointment application not the ds-160.

- New Comment: It's ok. I forgot to list one of my profiles too and my visa process was a smooth sail.

Title of the post: The note below the ?Approved? status worries me

Body of the post: Like the title says, I'm worried about the note in my status page despite having the ?Approved? status in big bold font?

The note is as :

?The consular officer has approved your application subject to final processing by the consular section that is necessary to issue your visa. When that processing is complete, the status will change to "Issued". However, a final screening step must still be completed prior to issuance that could lead a consular officer to conclude that you are not eligible for a visa. If that occurs, the consular officer will notify you that your application has been denied and your status will change to "Refused". ?

FYI, I had my VI today morning, and I still couldn't believe that I had been approved the VISA probably the reason why I'm this worried? could use some assurance from you guys in the comments.. is this some regular note that every approved person gets or is this saying something in particular?

PS : My status changed to ?issued? on 15th June (so around 5 working days since my interview) and I received back my passport with Visa on 17th June

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Lol, my visa was approved yesterday and the note is also scaring me. I thought I was the only one. Hoping to see the status to issued.
- New Comment: It will update to issued by tomorrow
- New Comment: Mine was the same and it took them 9 calendar days (but 6 working days) to change from approved to issued. This was in London. Nothing to worry about.
- New Comment: I have the same message from Hyd location. CN we followup anywhere ? It has been 22 days for me
- New Comment: Congrats! Absolutely nothing to worry about now
- New Comment: If the VO says your visa is approved then be it is. Congrats.
- New Comment: Don't worry! It will soon be changed to ?issued?. Based on recent personal experience :)

Title of the post: Post completion OPT EAD card arrival date

Body of the post: Hi! I submitted my post completion OPT application on May 19th (I know it's my fault for not applying earlier, but I was overwhelmed with exams and moving out, and received my I-20 late with a mistake on it as well hence had to be re-issued) with a start date of June 12th. I found an internship position last minute with one of my former managers I worked for before and she wanted me to start work on June 12th. I received a notice about my application almost 2 weeks ago but haven't received any other information since. I was assured that my card should arrive by the start date but I'm concerned right now that it will not. I technically have to start work on June 12th (I should be able to extend however the date if my card doesn't arrive by that time, but I'm not sure how big of an inconvenience that would be). Has anyone ever contacted USCIS separately on their EAD application progress (called or emailed) or tried to successfully expedite in any way the process? Do you have any advice in this sense? Thank you!

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: You can only expedite your process by paying \$1500 for premium processing. I did that and got approved a day after. The current processing time is about 7-8 weeks, so don't expect to get your EAD before mid-July.
- New Comment: I was hesitant to pay for the premium processing fee thinking that my card would arrive on time but I had to push back my start date by three weeks, losing more money compared to if I paid for PP. I applied 4/3, got approved 5/30 and card was produced today. I know that the fee is big and it sucks that it's the only way, but try to see if you can do something to afford it because it's worth it.
- New Comment: I applied for my EAD on May 3rd and I'm still waiting on it to be approved. Looks like on average it takes eight weeks to be approved and I'm in the eighth week. I got an internship that begins on July 10th. Should I wait and see what happens or expedite this process? I didn't apply for premium processing because it honestly seems like a lot. Hoping it gets approved soon
- New Comment: I applied for PP on Friday. Do you think i will have the card before June 26?
- New Comment: Does anyone know how long it's taking for getting the card after "card is being produced"?

My start date is today (19) I got the approval on June 12 and card in production on June 15. When can I expect to get a card, I'm super worried.

- New Comment: Applied on April 14th and not approved yet. Should I pay for pp?
- New Comment: I applied for my EAD on May third with a July tenth start date. Still hasn't even been approved. Can someone tell me the timeline when switching to premium processing ?

Title of the post: Sponsors in US

Body of the post: Hello my dad and my sister both who have agree to sponsor my education are both residents of USA .

Will this affect my chances of getting an F1 visa for a masters program

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes. You will need stronger evidence to get over immigrant intent if to immediate family members are residents in the US.

- New Comment: Hello! I understand the whole intent issue and I've been there. It's important to know where the USCIS or how the US consul from your embassy perceives our applications just to set our own expectations and so we can better prepare our argument as to why we're looking to study abroad.

However, in my experience, I have no ties in the Philippines but still got approved. I have two sisters who are now US citizens in NY, one of which was the sponsor and financed my education. I also have both parents who are now PRs who were petitioned by that same sister who sponsored me. I still have two siblings back home, no spouse but I do have a boyfriend, and no job because I quit to pursue my master's. I had no money to finance my education, except my sister who was willing to support me (God bless her!)

I obviously had the profile of someone who would likely stay in the US, but got approved anyway.

I would suggest to be truthful if you are sincere with your intentions. It was a natural conversation for me during my interview. I explained that I got into one of the Ivy Leagues and it was an opportunity I could not pass up on.

I would also suggest that you consider the school and program you will pursue as you study abroad, and have an answer for how that credential will benefit you in the next 2-3 years. For example, I was pursuing my MA in Clinical Psychology. I explained that my plan was to come back home and practice. I remember being asked by the consul if the program wasn't available in my country. Fortunately I was prepared and had an answer for that.

Good luck to you!!

- New Comment: @u/CodeTornado can you explain what you mean by strong evidence. You replied to the post but I

Reddit Posts

can't see it .i really don't want to migrate to USA so I want to know

Title of the post: Is my reason valid enough for me to apply for an F1 from a third-country

Body of the post: I'm currently 23 years old and live in India. As a child, I resided in Singapore for 9 years and was a Singapore PR but my REP expired during my teenage years. My father still works there so I usually go to visit him for a month every year using a tourist visa. If possible I'd like to apply from Singapore as the wait-times are much better than in India but I personally doubt that this is a valid reason. Please let me know what you think.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Bangkok Thailand has opened appointments specifically for Indian nationals to help lower wait times in India. That is probably a better choice for you.
- New Comment: Hey OP, I recently renewed my F1 in Singapore because of longer wait times. They do open up slots for people from other countries specifically. I travelled on a Tourist VISA and was able to get it done. So you should be good regardless of anyone working/ or you having stayed there :)
- New Comment: Can you get your dad to apply for a LTVP for you in Singapore? If you have a LTVP, that means you're a long-term resident and then you should be able to apply for F1 from Singapore.

Title of the post: (P)DSO Failed to Report Address Change on SEVIS

Body of the post: A few years ago, I reported my address change to my PDSO, but I recently realized he failed to do so on SEVIS. I got a written letter from that PDSO confirming it was his responsibility for failing to make such SEVIS update for US address change. My F-1 has never been terminated in the meantime. Will this be any issue in the future like green card or naturalization? I did everything on my end back then, and I assumed they processed it correctly, and now I am freaking out.

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It will only be a problem if the move was substantial.

If you stayed in the same city and changed apartments that's fine. I have not heard that come up before.

If we are talking about a substantial move (45 minutes to an hour or more away) that could be an issue.

All that said, the letter should take care of the issue.

- New Comment: Do I have to report address change on OPT?

- New Comment: I changed address using online AR-11 online form , just how to confirm the address has been changed. I read somewhere that USCIS will send a mail in 15 days, but I did not get any mail on my new address

Title of the post: Renew F1 Visa Before Expired

Body of the post: I would really appreciate your help on this.

I am currently a first-year grad student, and I have been studying in the US under an F1 visa for more than four years. My F1 visa started in June 2018 and will expire in June 2023. I am planning to use the incoming Christmas break to renew my visa in the UK. However, as my visa is still currently active, will I be able to renew my visa even if it is not expired?

Thank you everyone for your help!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes, you can renew your visa before it is expired.

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But your current visa will not be valid anymore once you submit a new visa application. i.e. if your new visa application gets rejected for whatever reason, you will not be able to return on your old one.

- New Comment: Yes.

Technically, it's a new application, nothing such called "renew" but it's ok.

Wish you all the best

- New Comment: Its a risk. But in case you don't want to take a risk, I think you can stay in the USA even after the visa expires (you just can't travel) as long as your i20 mentions your program dates.

May want to confirm that. I just waited till mine expired.

- New Comment: Did you manage to renew it? If yes, was the new visa valid for a year from June 2023 or a year from December 2022 (i.e., when you applied for renewal)?

Title of the post: Going back to the U.S. while on opt but I forgot my employment authorization card

Body of the post: I think I only need my signed I-20 which shows that I am on OPT. But now I am worried that I am forgetting something. I have a letter from work stating that I am their employee and will be going back to work. I also let my roommate take a scan of my employment authorization card. I don't know if I'd be in trouble with the customs because I don't have the physical card on me.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Explain your situation but they'll probably send you to secondary inspection. The last time I returned I made the mistake of handing my I-20 first and the CBP officer ran it and said it's expired so I said yes I graduated and then handed him the EAD card, he told me that's what I should've given him first and not the I-20. He couldn't process

Reddit Posts

me because of that and I ended up waiting in secondary inspection for like an hour. In the end they only took 2 mins to ask what school I went to and where I work and stamped my passport.

- New Comment: You'll be fine! I panicked when I forgot mine earlier this year as well. But as long as you have the i20 you should be fine. Keeping a scanned copy of the EAD should help as well.

Anyway, the EAD card mentions that it's not valid for re-entry.

- New Comment: As I am reading about this, I started to panic. I wish more people would comment

- New Comment: Chicago Port, checked I20 and passport. The officers did not talk to me at all, apart from greetings.

- New Comment: Please give an update when you return to the US.

Title of the post: F1 Visa renewal Dropbox experience on STEM OPT

Body of the post: Have a Dropbox slot for October 27th in mumbai but would love to hear about different experiences. I am on STEM OPT but it says I don't have to submit a copy of my EAD card or offer letter from my job. Can I still submit it? What documents did you guys submit for the appointment? And how was the experience like in your embassy? Would appreciate any advice. Thanks!

Edit: Just wanted to update that I got my renewed visa in a week. Submitted my documents on October 27th in Mumbai.

Documents submitted:

Passport, I-20, DS-160, 2 photographs. They didn't ask for it but I insisted that they take Sevis Fee receipt and offer letter of my job. They took all these documents.

Visa approved : November 2nd

Visa issued: November 3rd

Passport picked up: November 5th

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Just picked up my approved visa last week from the drop box office. Here is how it went. (F1 visa extension post graduation OPT)

1) super quick

2) submitted my passport, i20, photos, and they said they didn't want my sevis receipt and offer letter, they said some documents were not needed, but I just said my college advisor insists for best outcome and they took it

3) 4 days later it got refused under 221g and my instructions were to appear for an interview between 10.30 and 11 am

4) at the embassy they only asked me about my gap year, and why I lost my student status. Explained to them that I was taking a break from college to reconsider my major. Told them I didn't stay in the country during my break.

5) visa approved and ready in 2 days

My 221g probably happened because I had 2 different SEVIS numbers due to my gap year. And they wanted an explanation

Hope this helps a little.

Make sure you just follow the instructions well, nothing to be intimidated about.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Hey guys,

I have F1 Visa renewal drop box on Dec 16th. I'll let you know the process once it's done. Fingers crossed that the process is smooth.

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- New Comment: Adding my experience here. I am also on F-1, have a Bachelor's from the US, graduated in 2023. Currently on my first year of OPT which expires in late July.

Embassy: Islamabad, PK

April 1 2024: applied for a renewal

April 4 2024: received an email stating refusal under 221g pending administrative processing. They requested documents like my employment contract, CV, detailed research plan, advisor's CV, transcript, etc.

Now I have been in AP for 80 days. My OPT expires in a month and I have to be in the US to extend it. It's very unlikely I'll be able to return to the US.

- New Comment: Same boat as you and have the same question. Please please keep us updated. I was planning to INSIST that the visa officer accept my EAD because I've seen other people post about refusals.

- New Comment: The DS160 website (<https://ceac.state.gov/>) won't allow me to retrieve my old DS160. Should I create and complete a new DS160?

u/riflesnroses07 u/super-bat-man ? thanks in advance frens

- New Comment: Had a Dropbox appointment for F1 visa renewal on stem opt on March 21 2023.

Reddit Posts

March 21-Dropped of my documents at 12pm they only took my ds160, interview confirmation, i20 and photos.(Chennai Embassy)

March 23- REFUSED

March 26- Passport returned and ready for pickup.

​

I dont know why was my visa refused. Anyone had the same experience as i did?

- New Comment: Dropbox for stem opt f1 visa on 22 march chennai

Refused. Was issued 221g after 7 days

Picked up passport which had 221g form with interview date of 9th may 2023

For dropbox they only took my i20, ds160, passport photos and all passport.b

They didnt take my offer letter or employment verification letter. I shoud had forced them to take it which might had avoided the 221g.

Well hoping everything to go smoothly.

Can anyone tell me what are the documents required for the f1 visa renewal on stem opt visa interview?

Btw my employer is a consultancy so will it be a problem?

- New Comment: Thanks for sharing. Did you make a new SEVIS payment or take a copy of your program's first SEVIS fee receipt?

Title of the post: Renewing f-1 while on Stem OPT. Success stories?

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Body of the post: Pretty much the title. I have not been home in very long and want to renew my f1 visa so that I can visit home again. Please share any stories if renewing f1 is possible. Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I have had very few student have issues doing this. As in, I can count them on one hand few.

Need a valid passport, valid I-20, EAD card, and a job letter confirming employment.

The risks are similar to your original application. If you are from a country with a high denial rate, then keep that in mind.

- New Comment: Hi any updates?? I am in a similar situation, my initial opt will expire in August and F-1 visa expires in July. Should I have a stem opt application pending/approved for visa renewal? or am I good as long as I have the current EAD card from initial OPT to apply?

- New Comment: Got mine renewed last month. Didn't have any problem

- New Comment: As long as you have the paperwork, I think there are more chances of getting it approved than denied

- New Comment: If my F1 expired in June 2021 and there is only 8 months left on my stem opt, is there a chance for renewal?

Title of the post: My f-1 hasnt been issued and my university start date has passed and classes hav

Body of the post: Its exactly whats written up there

Im in university of illinois urbana champaign

Reddit Posts

And apparently asking for a deferment to next term for visa reasons will get me rejected (as whats written on their website)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You should have contacted admissions at your school and asked to defer for a semester, it's probably not too late to do that but I don't know how they would assess tuition.

It shouldn't affect your F1 as far as I know but you should contact your DSO regardless

- New Comment: Contact your university DSO for your options, including possible deferment.

- New Comment: Contact your department and ask for options if it is gonna take longer. I am not sure which university you applied to, but ask if they have online semester option. I guess some universities still do that, but verify. Else, they will probably ask you to defer to next semester. So they will probably keep your admission and your curriculum will start in spring semester instead of fall.

BTW, was your visa approved? Have you sent your passport to embassy? If the answer to above two is yes, then MAYBE ask the university the date upto which they can let you join. Because of visa issues, and universities do issue late arrival letters. If your university is fine with it, then maybe ask for it also.

- New Comment: Like everyone said. I once had to defer a semester after getting my visa and since it was within the (I think) 6 month period, they only issues the I-20 and I was allowed to enter with that

- New Comment: Hey OP, sorry that you're going through this. I'm just curious about your country of origin; looking to see if that had any impact of you getting a DS-5535 aka the "extreme vetting" form.

Also, did you visit any of the red list/Department of State Level 4 countries in the recent past?

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Title of the post: F1 Stem Opt - Will Companies Hire? Pls help !!

Body of the post: Hello Everyone,

I am currently on my F1 Visa-Stem Opt and has validity until Feb 2024 for my EAD.

My company filed for H1b Visa and unfortunately not picked in first 2 attempts and I am left with last attempt in Mar 2023.

So I am wondering If I plan to switch the company in Jan/Feb 2023, Will the companies be interested in hiring us with 12 months validity & 1 attempt left for H1b???

I have 5 years of Work Experience in IT industry.

Please someone help me.I am seriously planning to make a switch and want to feel hopeful.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: With more then 6 months left and one h1b lottery attempt left, many big companies will still hire you.
- New Comment: Interview at multiple companies and try to get offers from them to increase your chances of selection in the next lottery. Good luck!
- New Comment: Go for a big company, 10k+ employees, multinational, sponsored 100-200+ H1, 20-30+ GCs. They have better lawyers, even if things don?t work out, you can go on day 1 cpt, and apply again, if none works, you can get transferred to closest country, canada, uk etc. work a year, come back on L1 or settle there?soo many options, just don?t worry, be positive, something or the other will 100% work out ??
- New Comment: Apply for M.S. in case...
- New Comment: Same situation as you, just got hired. Good luck!

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- New Comment: a couple of my friends were hired in a similar situation. So it does happen.

- New Comment: There is only one way to find out

Title of the post: my 12-month initial opt is expiring but i have applied for my stem opt extension a

Body of the post: Hello folks! I applied for the STEM OPT extension last month and have not received approval from USCIS. I have received my I-797, which confirms the receipt of my application.

I asked my DSO if I am still able to work once my 12-month OPT expires since I already applied for my EAD on time. My DSO said I am unable to extend my EAD once it expires (without the EAD extension approval) and that I should pause from working since they said I have the (C)(3)(C) Category, and this extension only applies to F-1 visa holders of certain category.

I scoured the internet for some confirmation of whether or not my DSO is correct, and according to the USCIS website, the EAD is automatically extended to 180 days once the STEM extension OPT application is sent on time (for f-1 students). Not so sure if some of you are on the same boat as me and if my DSO is giving me wrong information, but I kinda need help hehe. Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Your DSO is giving you wrong info. If you applied for the STEM OPT and received receipt notice before your OPT expired, you automatically get a 180-day extension.

u/codetornado

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Title of the post: 2nd VI in mid-August.

Body of the post: Greetings!

I was previously refused a student visa for this fall at Chennai Consulate, India in July. The reason is still unknown as the VO only asked a couple of questions after which he handed me over the 214(b) slip. Everything was perfect: right dress, precise answers, funding, confidence.

I booked my slot again at Chennai as I couldn't find my slot anywhere else as of now. I am planning to change the location if it's possible.

Any key points you would like to emphasize for me so I don't mess up this time?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It's not all about perfection. There really isn't such a thing in human interaction. If you got a 214(b) it wasn't a perfect interaction as something in your information or the way you presented it indicated to the VO a lack of confidence in your non-immigrant intent. If it sounds like you're giving a performance/acting, that can also be a red flag for them. They're not expecting perfection especially from younger students. They're expecting to get a feel for who you are, your intentions, and whether what you're saying matches what they can already see in your application/background. ALL to see if you meet the requirements for the visa including non-immigrant intent. All in like 30 seconds.

- New Comment: Make some changes to DS 160. That is crucial.

- New Comment: were you trying to pursue a bachelors or postgrad studies?

Title of the post: My EAD has expired and the STEM OPT extension application is pending. Can i ch

Body of the post: I have been applying for Jobs which would sponsor me H1-B (my current employer disagreed to

Reddit Posts

sponsor). There is a probability that I would score one. But, My EAD has expired 15 days ago and my STEM OPT Application is pending. Is it possible to switch employers in this situation and more importantly is this worth risking it?

Thank you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes , I just switched employers 15 days after my initial OPT expired and while STEM OPT was pending (it is still pending). I started with my new employer 2+ weeks ago. I am glad I didn't wait for extension to be processed. The opportunity was great and too hard to let go.

1. Reach out to your preferred DSO, May be a video call appointment. Tell about your current status and plan of action to switch employers. They would already know your situation as they recently released a STEM extension recommendation I-20. They will help you with precise steps to switch jobs.

I'll add a few helpful pointers:

1. Since your initial OPT has expired, you are now on 180 days automatic extension of work authorization while your application is processed. So, technically you are already on STEM OPT extension.
2. The employer you filed your STEM extension with is no longer going to be your employer. So, according to STEM reporting guidelines, You will get your last page of I-983 signed. Specifically, the final section which concluded an employment with its review filled & signed by the student and the employer.
3. Once you report your end of employment I-983 with the school, you have now 10 days from the day that information is added to SEVP to report your new employer. This is critical as you must report new employment within 10 days of starting.
4. Get your new employer's signed and filled the same initial I-983 plan you filled with the old employer. This is needed so your portal has up to date information on your employer. (As application waits to be seen)

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5. The DSO have been the best help for me personally, they go above and beyond to help me feel anxious about the process.

Good luck!!?

Title of the post: Can I arrive a day late after the program start date?

Body of the post: Flight prices are BATSHIT CRAZYYY right now.. and I was wondering if I could arrive a day late to avoid paying such stupidly expensive fares. My initial I-20 start date is 22nd August, but the cheapest flights for the whole week before 22nd cost between \$1450-2200 one way which is just insane for this route. However, the cheapest flights from exactly the 22nd are all ~\$840. That's almost half the fare to arrive just a day later..

I know it's risky but I want to know if they might show some leniency if it's just one day? ISSS said they don't really care as long as I show up before add/drop date (29th), but I'm worried about CBP causing an issue or questioning me. Would financial shortcomings be a valid reason to give if asked (I'm also on a full academic scholarship if that helps)?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Your I-20 technically needs to be used to enter the U.S. by the program start date on the I-20, so you're getting a lot of bad advice from several people here. They're telling you to ignore the immigration rules in the hope that you encounter a CBP officer who just doesn't care. That's not a guaranteed encounter.

Instead of following bad advice to just ignore the rules, work with your university and DSO first. If they approve of your late arrival to your university, they can update your SEVIS record with an official later arrival date. They can also either issue an updated I-20 or a late arrival letter to carry with you.

You also need to make sure you're not missing important events at your school. Most schools have been greeting new students for at least decades if not longer. They tend to have a bigger picture idea of a truly successful start to your new

Reddit Posts

life there than others giving online advice may have. It's also not a great start with your school to ignore right away their advising, including when they said you should be there.

Short answer: Work with the experts, your school, first.

- New Comment: Exactly my case as yours ?

- New Comment: I mean carry a late arrival letter with you from your university. Also, I wouldn't mention the financial shortcomings part. It could be a red flag maybe.

- New Comment: It's not worth it. They'll take you to some office and try to verify everything. It's long, boring, and filled with tons of unnecessary anxiety. Come early and get a good start. Being late to anything is never a good idea anyways.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Make sure you check with your school to make sure you won't be dropped from courses for not being there on the first day. Otherwise you'll be fine.

Title of the post: OPT finally approved

Body of the post: OPT finally approved today May 14th to June 24th.

This is my 1st OPT after graduating from Nursing.

I called every week on Tuesday, the last time I called the girl was being rude and I was rude back to her, the next week

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after I passed my nclex I just signed in yesterday and it said approved.

They do not send you a notification but I got notification when they did something on my account the 1st week I applied, so thats wierd.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Why did you call them every week?
- New Comment: Congrats! I hope I will get approved soon too
- New Comment: 5/11 still waiting. This is really driving me nuts
- New Comment: How long did it take?
- New Comment: 5/24 the anticipation is killing me
- New Comment: What did you ask USCIS for status so that don?t give standard response?
- New Comment: Is it opt extension or your first opt?
- New Comment: I've been waiting since May 4 with no updates

Title of the post: As an Iranian National on an F1, can I ever leave the U.S. safely?? :(

Body of the post: So I?m an iranian national. I entered US on a J2 visa in 2016, switched to F1 in 2018-2019 and am currently on OPT.

The F1 in my passport expired a year or so after I entered the US.

I?m in my early 20s and have always wanted to travel but had always been advised against leaving the country while in school, i was told by my DSO Itll be better after I graduate.

Now with my OPT and a job offer I was again strongly advised against leaving the country as the chances of me getting

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a non-immigrant (F1) to get back into the US will be low, especially as I am an Iranian and have my immediate family residing in the US (and they are permanent residents now).

Will I ever be able to leave the country? I feel like I've been held hostage and I'll never be able to return once I leave. :(

I realized even if I start my masters or PhD I'm still in the same boat where I get an extension on my I-20 and not a visa in my passport so I practically can never leave the country, right?

Is there any scenario now or in the future where I could leave and travel safely ?

I'm feeling defeated so any shared experience or guidance would be much appreciated!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Let me clarify the DSO recommendations.

As an Iranian you face severe difficulty in obtaining a visa. Especially now with COVID-19 backlogs. If you left during your academic the ordeal in obtaining a new visa could complicate your academic situation.

You are not a prisoner, but you do not have the same simple path to return as others do.

To make an analogy : the US is on the top floor of an 80 story building. If some people can use the elevator, others get an escalator. Then others have to walk up the stairs. You have to climb up the building from the outside.

As such, once you are here on the "top floor" it is significantly easier to not descend and need to climb up the building again. You can however do so if you wish.

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The extra difficulty for you is that your family in the US means you cannot use ropes in your climb.

So, if you understand the risk and are willing to take it, then you can go. But given the difficulty of obtaining a new visa and the family in the US I wouldn't advise it.

- New Comment: >Is there any scenario now or in the future where I could leave and travel safely?

Of course there is, and you know how. From now on, only date US citizens while you complete your education. If this leads to marriage and US citizenship, problem solved.

- New Comment: I'm sorry. I can't fully relate to your situation, but I know how difficult it is to want to leave the country and not be able to.

Best you can do is probably to accelerate your path to permanent residence as much as possible. Marriage can't really be rushed, and I'm assuming your immediate family sponsoring you is a long road, so focus on your career. How can you plan your career in a way that maximizes your odds of employment based green card sponsorship? Whatever the answer is for your field, do it.

- New Comment: Did you ever determine if any travel was possible? ChatGPT when asked states Croatia is feasible for example.

Title of the post: HELP- My application was refused under 221g

Body of the post: Hey,

As the title says, my case was refused and put into administrative processing. I was handed a yellow page that asked me to submit some extra documents and later on received an email which asked for even more information such as: dob

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of my parents, siblings and spouse, travel and residential history both for the last 15 years, social media handles and more.

I'm going for a PhD in Aerospace engineering and I'm required to be there before the 10th of August. I've seen some people getting their visas after 3,4 months while others have been waiting for 6 months or more.

I'm just wondering if there are any specific reasons for such delays, as I'm afraid I would have to defer my admission but I'm not sure if funding would be offered next year. I haven't discussed this with my advisor yet but might have to in a months time.

I have been to the U.S before on a J-1 visa, and even have a BSc from another foreign country. I was really hoping these would work in my favor but I'm worried now.

If there is anyone who has been or is in the same boat and has any relevant information, please help!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Aerospace Engineering is a protected program. You are going in at the PhD level. You and your family are going to be run through a significant background check to ensure that you are not a potential threat to US security interests.

Likely names, birth dates, nationality, etc. Triggered a background check.

It could be days or months until it is finished.

- New Comment: Which embassy and what's your nationality? I've been handed a 221g yellow slip at the Hong Kong embassy. They asked me for a study plan and I didn't have it with me during the interview. They asked me to submit the

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plan along with some additional documents. Had my interview on June 9th and really hoping it gets resolved soon :(.

- New Comment: Let me guess. Are you coming from non-European country or you have been in ? (e.g. China, Russia, Middle East...).

They apparently want to do "security check". Thus until this is resolved your case will be refused under 221g. I am also subject for AP. I've been refused for 50 days long.

- New Comment: No answer is possible without knowing your nationality and where you applied.

- New Comment: I have got 221g twice before. I also got my PhD in Aerospace Engineering. Aero/Astro comes under the technology alert list (TAL), which is likely why your application was put under review by the consulate.

In my case, I was asked to submit my resume, publications, travel details etc. If you see DS5535 written anywhere in the email, then this is a more exhaustive form and can take some time to get cleared.

My first 221g took about 3 months and the second one took about a month. Worst case is to tell your department about this and plan for a deferral to Spring semester if possible.

- New Comment: did you get this resolved?

Title of the post: Best intl student insurance in the US?

Body of the post: Shared this on the international student r/ but I haven't gotten any answers so I'm sharing it here as well ?

Best intl student insurance in the US?

Hey everyone! I'm about to start my integrated MSci in the US, and it just so happens that I will no longer be part of my parents' insurance due to hitting the age limit.

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What are your best recommendations? I'm checking out the Compass and Student Secure websites [recommended by the school], but don't really understand what my best options would be or how to compare plans.

Thank you in advance! ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Not sure about your grad school but mine required all students to get student health insurance, which was part of the semester bill.

- New Comment: If you are healthy individual and require minimal coverage I would recommend [ISO](<https://www.isoa.org/>). I went with the most basic insurance plan they had that was accepted by my college. They probably had better plans, but I needed something cheap and fortunately never had to use it. Good luck.

- New Comment: What insurance did you choose? I'm looking at ISP and ISO

- New Comment: You can get insurance from the link below. It's for international students and is good anywhere except your home country. It lets you choose the amount of coverage you want. Double check the limits your college will accept and then you can buy online.

[International

Medical

Insurance](https://purchase.imglobal.com/Quote/student_health_advantage/pre-quote?imgac=524095)

- New Comment: I went with PSI because it's accepted at upenn and vtech. But I had to upgrade my plan when transferred to penn.

Title of the post: Interview waiver but not sure of the proceedings?

Body of the post: I'm a student from India who previously had a B1/B2 visa and applied for the F1 visa. I was intimidated

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that I have an interview waiver but still had to book an appointment for my biometrics scan and document drop off .

I just wanted to know how exactly to go about this and what sort of documents to drop off. Are we supposed to carry any additional documents other than the ones required?

Thanks in advance

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You still need to book the vac appointment. You will have biometrics and Dropbox on the same day. For Dropbox documents bring your old and new passport visa appointment confirmation ds160 confirmation bar code page i901 sevis two American passport sized photos and visa payment fee receipt

- New Comment: Hello can I DM you

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Renewing/applying for new F-1 during STEM OPT

Body of the post: I'm 9 months into my post-completion OPT and have started the process of applying for my STEM extension. My current F-1 expires this August. I know that, depending on circumstances, applying for a new F-1 while on OPT/STEM OPT carries a risk because of the need to demonstrate one's intent to depart the US following expiration of work authorization. Still, I would much prefer to have the option to travel outside the US; I have a family member in precarious health and would like the option to temporarily travel in case of emergency.

Although I'm not planning to apply for another F-1 until August, I want to get out ahead of this. Of course I intend to leave the US when my status ends, but how specifically do consular officials expect me to demonstrate this? And how substantial is the risk, really? I'm not really old enough or wealthy enough to have meaningful assets here or back home,

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although obviously I have significant family ties.

If it's at all relevant to the question, my country of citizenship is Ireland and I would be applying for the F-1 at the Dublin consulate, where I obtained my first visa prior to the beginning of my studies.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >applying for a new F-1 while on OPT/STEM OPT carries a risk because of the need to demonstrate one's intent to depart the US following expiration of work authorization.

...what? The F-1 visa is about your ability to exit and re-enter the country. You have the same burden you had originally.

>how specifically do consular officials expect me to demonstrate this?

The same way they did before.

>how substantial is the risk, really?

I've not had anyone denied in recent years for this while on STEM OPT.

>my country of citizenship is Ireland

ESTA eligible applicants are mostly waived through F-1 renewals. In fact, you may just qualify for an interview waiver.

This is a ridiculously low bar and one you already passed before. Don't overthink it. Submit the same/similar ties to the home you did before. Can you get denied? Yes. Your plane could also go down over the Atlantic.

- New Comment: Following

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Title of the post: I-20 & F-1 Status Violation. PLEASE HELP!!

Body of the post: I am an international student in the states right now graduating soon in May . I was doing CPT for 12 months (CPT ended in beginning of April) and only full-time (holiday and school breaks). While I was applying for OPT, I requested for my newest I-20 and realized that my CPT I-20 indicates that I've been working full-time during the Spring semester, and clearly I have been working part-time during my entire internship. I contacted my DSO to update my CPT I-20 but said SEVIS wouldn't allow them to make changes and there's nothing they can do about it and I'd have to remain "full-time" status on my current I-20.

Keep in mind that this DSO had been giving me problems rather than assisting me. They've stated that everything is under the student's responsibility (I guess this includes incorrect immigration document filing/information). Not being able to go in office in-person and sending emails are just making things hard because the International center staff are all working remotely. The DSO wouldn't reply till end of day or even few days later.

Does this mean I have violated my F-1 status for "working" full-time CPT during the Spring semester? Is there a way I could call SEVIS to make amendments? Will my OPT get denied due to the circumstances above? Please help a fellow international student out!! Thank you!!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'm not sure I'm 100% clear on what you actually worked.

"I was doing CPT for 12 months (CPT ended in beginning of April) and only full-time (holiday and school breaks)."

"and clearly I have been working part-time during my entire internship."

Those two statements seem to be in conflict. In one it seems to indicate you were doing full-time work part of the time, and in the other you state you've been working part time the entire internship. So which is it?

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Being authorized for CPT doesn't actually require you to do the CPT. It is authorization that *allows* you to do practical training. For F-1 status purpose, it doesn't then obligate or require you to do that practical training. If you are authorized for full-time CPT and then only work part-time, that's not an F-1 status violation. It just means you didn't work full-time.

That's for F-1 status purposes. Of course, if you're required to do a full-time internship to earn your degree and you don't do that, that's an academic matter.

It would be a violation if you were only authorized for part-time CPT and then worked full-time. That would be a violation as you would be doing work for which you were not authorized. Even during school breaks. On-campus work is allowed for more than 20 hours per week during school breaks. There's nothing that allows someone on part-time CPT to work full-time just because school is on break. Working full-time on part-time CPT authorization would be a violation. Working full-time in a CPT position requires full-time CPT authorization for the time spent working full-time.

The only way full-time CPT impacts OPT is that one year of full-time CPT authorization makes one no longer eligible for OPT.

- New Comment: SEVIS does not always allow edits to the full CPT information once the CPT has started. Your DSO certainly wouldn't want to change your full CPT history to "part-time" CPT as you've stated here that for part of that time you did work full-time. That would be a huge immigration problem for you.

If you are truly working part-time now, the DSO could end the current CPT authorization in SEVIS as of the current date. The DSO could then start a new CPT authorization going forward for part-time.

- New Comment: You can work full time on CPT so no, it's not a violation of your F1-Status.

In theory, you become ineligible for OPT if you have 12 months or more of full-time CPT.

Try contacting other school officials as well as USCIS employees and explain your situation. If the DSO keeps giving

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you problems, take this all the way to your schools Office of Legal Affairs.

- New Comment: You can work full time CPT but don't exceed 12 months.

Title of the post: Can I receive multiple I20's from different colleges and later decide which one to c

Body of the post: Hi, sorry if i am doing this wrong i am new to this sub.

Is it possible to receive two I20 documents for F1 from different universities without creating a problem for the visa process and problems related to SEVIS?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes you can. I20s are admission letter. You can receive it in any numbers. You just have to choose one and move forward with it for the visa process.

- New Comment: I'm not a DSO, but from what I know from my university experience - and researching for others - schools give you the I-20 AFTER you've committed to attend (usually after giving a deposit). Because of that, the only situation in which you should conceivably be receiving two different I-20s is if you commit to a school but later come off a waitlist and decide to enroll in the second one. Otherwise, you would be telling both schools you will be attending, which is unethical and disrespectful to other applicants, and could lead to a rescinded offer of admission if the schools find out you committed to two places

Title of the post: OPT Timeline

Body of the post: Just wanted to share an experience with anyone in the same position as myself. Submitted my OPT application on September 21st and got the notice around a week later saying my application was received on September 24th.

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Just got notice today that I have been approved and my OPT card is being sent. 3 week turnaround might be a record ??

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Many of them submitted in September are taking a month or less. While some students who applied earlier may still be waiting for their decisions (I'm aware of more than one July application still pending).

Around October 6-8 I noticed a bump in approvals. I don't know if they've done some coordinated push or if it's just coincidence.

It's important to note again though that two applications submitted on the same day can have results come back weeks apart. Someone reading this who applied earlier than OP but hasn't had a decision should not allow this to stress them out.

I would also say that I've seen before applications received in September take short weeks while in that same year applications submitted in October take four to five months. I'm not saying that will happen this year, but it is to say December 2021 grads who haven't applied yet should not assume their application will also be approved in three or four weeks. Maybe they will. Maybe they won't.

And while this is great from USCIS, I wouldn't advise May 2022 grads to see this and think their applications are likely to get approved this quickly. USCIS is very unpredictable in their processing times, and it's nearly a certainty that longer processing times will reappear as they do every year. Your best bet in all of this is still to apply as early as possible if you want your approval to be sooner rather than later.

It's a pleasant surprise when USCIS gets this fast in OPT application processing. It never lasts.

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- New Comment: Was this an online application?

- New Comment: Fastest I have had so far was 17 days. Fastest I know of, 11.

- New Comment: I submitted my application online last week and just received confirmation by snail mail ~10 day turnaround.

Is there a different waiting time for online vs. mail application?

- New Comment: I sent my application on October 12th to Chicago Lock Box. I was expecting G1145 text/email updates in 24hours as read online. But No any updates yet. Please share your views.

- New Comment: Where did you sent your application?

- New Comment: I submitted my application online yesterday and got a notification saying action has been taken on your case. But when I logged back into my portal, there was no action shown. Should I be worried? Has this happened to anyone else?

Title of the post: Automatic visa revalidation 2021 experience

Body of the post: Has anyone had experience with AVR from Canada or Mexico in 2021 (or just any other year)? How was it with the CBP officer? What do they ask for?

I would be SO GRATEFUL for any insight or advice!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I did at the end of 2020, but I went to a Caribbean islands instead of Can or Mex. CBP actually didn't ask me anything at all. The airlines will ask a tons of questions tho. Be sure to bring your I20 EAD(for OPT) and print out the CBP Automatic revalidation page so you can show them since this is not common and people might not know a tons about it

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- New Comment: I did in 2017 coming back from Canada. The airline check-in staff asked about my visa having expired but I told her it would be okay because I was in Canada for less than 30 days. She took my words for it. The CBP officer didn't say anything and just processed things as normal. I did print out a bunch of information about this just in case though.

- New Comment: Just flew from Chicago to Cancun for an 8 day vacation. Interestingly, I had more problems with the airlines than with CBP. The former are not very knowledgeable in the matter (specially if you fly in a shitty airline like I did), the latter definitely are. Mainly you will need your I20 but take all your docs in cause you need them.

- New Comment: I traveled in January 2022 from Canada (Toronto). Only 'Delay' that happened was with Delta issuing my boarding pass.. after around 1 hour of calling their support, their CBP contact and again their support they figured they had to use a **'Reentry Form'** to override and issue the boarding pass. fortunately the lady at the Delta counter was also very helpful and patient.

Make sure you have the expired visa (mine was in my old passport) , the current Approved I-797 (they need the i-94 on it) with you .

Go early so that you can work with the airline to get your boarding pass. the CBP is in the Toronto airport and took me only 5 minutes.

- New Comment: It would be great to know your experience. Planning on traveling Dec this year.

- New Comment: Travelled with an expired O1 here in December 2021 to Mexico for a week.

It is a hassle but as long as you check all the boxes I don't see why it would be problematic. It's more of mental torture for me than anything else.

↳ Aeromexico had no idea how to handle me, I was at the check in counter for over 90mins and missed my original

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flight, but the staff told me I should be okay, they just couldn't figure out the way to print my boarding pass. So my advice

- go to the airport EARLY.

\- Landed at LAX, got sent into detention for 2 hours. No tricky questions asked, all seemed friendly, just what were you doing in Mexico, what do you do in the US, etc. Got out fine. I don't know how to advise for this part besides staying lucky.

Good luck!

- New Comment: Quick clarification on AVR, is the AVR only available for travel by air, or we can avail the same if we travel by land too?

Title of the post: Visa Approved but now under 221 g?

Body of the post: My visa interview was on 26 July 2021, and my VO asked a few questions and said ' OK I am approving your visa. Please adhere to the quarantine guidelines". I said thank you and left.

It's been a week since this and my visa status still says 'under administrative processing'. I emailed the embassy today and they replied back saying 'Our records indicate that your case is refused under 221(g) for administrative processing.Please be assured once again that we will contact you as soon as the processing of the case is complete.'.

What does this mean? What do I do?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Wait another 5 working days and I suspect your visa will be issued.

?Refused? in this context doesn?t mean you think it means.

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- New Comment: wait

- New Comment: Any updates?

- New Comment: Any update?

- New Comment: Any update ?

- New Comment: OP I am going through same situation can you please provide the email id you mailed , so that I can email them and hopefully get my passport ASAP. Thanks in advance

Title of the post: Has anyone ever had their OPT denied

Body of the post: Out of the curiosity. Has anyone gotten their OPT denied? If so why?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I have had several students get denied over the years.

Number one reason: Applied late. Either after the 30-day window from the OPT recommendation OR after their Grace Period ended.

Number two reason: Really messed up on their application. Like did not complete something, did not submit documents or made a critical mistake (like entering something different than C3A C3B C3C, etc.)

Number three: Student applied for OPT, then got accepted to Masters/PhD and transfer the record for the new academic level

Number four: Payment issues (declined/denied, too little funds improper amount, etc)

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- New Comment: I had my OPT denied for the stupidest reason. For some reason they said my credit card i out on file didn?t go through so they sent the letter of denial to me through mail that I received weeks later, which past the deadline. So by the time I found out about the issue it was too late to do anything. I ended up getting a H1b visa afterward so things kinda worked out eventually

- New Comment: It happens. The most common reasons I think are:

- missed time window. There?s the 30-60-90 rule, that you have to apply within 30 days of your DSO endorsing your I-20, no later than 60 days after your program has ended and no earlier than 90 days before. I?d say the leading cause of OPT denials is people not upholding one of those 3.

- DSO error. DSO are only people too and unfortunately, they sometimes make mistakes. Not often but I?ve heard about cases when someone?s DSO issued a new I-20 but forgot to change the date in SEVP portal, resulting in the application being delivered past the 30 day window.

- using an outdated version of the form. Always use the form from the USCIS website.

- Missing signature or some other info: I think that they?ve recently allowed people to resubmit while maintaining original filing date but still, missing signature on either I-765 or I-20 will be grounds for denial

- wrong fee - this one was quite specific for last year. USCIS was planning to raise the fees but some court in California blocked it, resulting in some people sending the wrong fee. Again, check the USCIS website right before submitting

- problems with the payment - either the check bounced or they were not able to get money from the credit card. Personally, I was using cashier?s check both for my initial OPT and STEM extension to make sure the payment goes through.

This is by no means an exhausting list but I think those are the main ones.

- New Comment: It's rare and usually for a technical reason like a problem with the application fee. If someone applies outside of the eligible application dates that will get a denial. Submitting the application without first getting the OPT recommendation in SEVIS/OPT I-20 from the DSO will result in denial. Occasionally someone who wasn't technically

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eligible to apply will get through and get denied. Examples would include someone who already had a previous OPT at the same or higher degree level or someone who didn't meet the full academic year requirement.

Applying online now should, in theory, end application rejection due to application fee issues as the application is only successfully submitted if the online fee payment goes through.

- New Comment: I was asked to send a different picture before. It delay my application but it wasn't denied

- New Comment: You can be denied if you send your application too late or too early. Its very unlikely that you get denied otherwise most of the time if a document is missing your application gets delayed

- New Comment: During my undergrad, I did two co-ops accumulating 350 days (356 according to USCIS) of CPT. I was under the 365 days limit regardless. But unbeknownst to me, my DSO never updated the correct employment dates on SEVIS after my completion of each co-op so my application went in showing that I worked for 384 days which is completely untrue. This is despite the fact that after each completion, I came back to my school and got my I20 travel signature from the same DSO to travel back home. The first clenching fact is that she had 4 years to enter the first set of dates and 2 for the other to the time I was applying for my OPT. I had a job in hand before graduation and had timely applied for my OPT. I was also in talks with another firm for a better opportunity which I was hopeful about. I still remember that day...10th August, 2019. After 134 day, I checked my phone that morning to get a case update and it said that my initial OPT was denied. Devastated is an understatement to describe how I felt at that moment. I work my butt off during undergrad, extending my graduation by 2 years by doing 2 co-ops so that no employer can ignore me for lack of experience, only to be in the situation that I was in. After notifying the HR of the Nebraska DOT (who I had the job offer with before graduation) about the denial, they revoked my offer since they had already waited for almost 2 months for me to start. Within 12 hours, I also got a rejection from the other firm I was hopeful about. I walked to my school with a heavy heart asking them for any help they could provide. Another senior employee at the International Student Office went through my I765 form and could immediately see the reason for denial. Luckily, I had a week left to reapply which was time left upto the 60 day mark after graduation. I mailed my application again on that day itself with

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the correct dates along with former employers' letter saying the same for additional proof because a motion to re-open the case was more expensive and time consuming. Craziest part was that I actually got a call from an USCIS agent (which I first thought was a scam lol) on around the 40th day mark after my second time applying, asking me why I have applied again when it was rejected the first time? He joking said that you can keep applying...we like your money...WOW! I explained the whole situation to him and pointed out the proof of employment dates from my co-op employer. When he gave me a verbal approval, I was more than relieved. Rightaway, I got my case approved the very next day on the portal. The cherry on the cake was that a new position had opened up with the firm who had rejected me at first and extended me an offer. Talk about a complete 360 degree change of fate! I just got picked in the H1B lottery earlier this month on my 5th try in the last 5 years. This whole fiasco taught me an invaluable lesson to never take anything for granted and to always be flexible. Now that I look back and ponder sometimes, had the online denial notice taken a bit longer to update or if I would have waited to get a written notice from USCIS for the reason for denial, how different my life would have been.

- New Comment: I application was received on the 61st day by uscis, will my request be denied?

- New Comment: How about some silly mistakes in the documents that I provide in the application - let's say I use the wrong color of the ink or forget to sign something. Does USCIS reach out to applicants to request corrected paperwork or do they just reject it for such errors?

- New Comment: Hello, my opt got denied since I applied for my i765 beyond 30 days of DSO approval and it was denied...but I'm still under my 60 days period...can I still apply for another i765 with a new latest i20?

Please respond as soon as possible... It's a cut throat kinda situation ;)

Title of the post: Entering the US on a Continuing F1 VISA but initial form I-20

Body of the post: I am currently a 3rd-year student with a valid F1 VISA. But I have an initial i-20 as my previous one was terminated due to not entering the US during COVID. Is it possible to enter the US more than 30 days before the

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program start date on the new Initial I-20? Note that I have entered the US with this VISA since 2018. Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I have been taking my classes online from my home country since COVID. I would like to return so that I can take my online Summer classes in the US because the time difference with my home country is unbearable.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Get a new I-20 if your visa is not expired enter with the new I-20

- New Comment: You should be able to. But to be safe, just enter in that 30 day window

Title of the post: Visa refused under 214(b) section.

Body of the post: Hey !

Guys I need your advice on this visa refusal I received from the VO. I was not able to explain my finances well , and at the end of the interview he handed me 214(b) white slip along with passport .

My orientation is on August 23 . I request you to help me out.

I want to reapply again and give my best shot .

Please suggest me as to how should I tackle this situation .

My University admit - univ of Michigan Ann arbor .

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I?m not sure how much time you have but if the only issue is that you freaked out and failed to explain

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the savings correctly, I'll suggest you reapply for a new interview, you'll usually get a different VO and a clean slate to defend your claims. Good luck ??

- New Comment: Thats an amazing university so congratulations on the admission.

In order to give you any advice, can you tell us how you are planning to finance your education and what documents you have to support yourself.

- New Comment: pls check your dm kartik

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Sure

Title of the post: Total 5 years of OPT after masters?

Body of the post: So im currently a ug pursuing a stem degree and I'm probably going to pursue masters right after I finish my ug.

After completing my masters degree, I plan to work and use up 1 year of opt and 2 years of stem opt extension. I was wondering if I can then use my bachelors stem opt extension after I finish my masters stem opt extension, which would collectively give me 5 years of opt after masters(1 years of masters opt + 2 years of masters stem extension + 2 years of bachelors stem extension)

Has anyone done this or been in this situation? Would love to chat!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can't stack OPT.

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Academic Study Period - > OPT 1YR - > STEM OPT 2YR.

You can go back to studying a new degree or change status or go home. If it is a higher degree then after that you could repeat the cycle above

- New Comment: No, you cannot stack optional training.

- New Comment: You can not use OPT from a different level once you move to another degree

- New Comment: As far as I know you cannot stack OPT periods like that. You only get one year regular opt and 2 year STEM extension once in your life.

Title of the post: Would I be violating my visa status by working vacation on F1 visa while I am *in n

Body of the post: Hi,

I am on F1, on non-resident status, getting paid as an assistant (20hours per week) on campus even when I'm away from the US.

I plan to work while I'm in my home country for vacation. As a freelancer I will get paid through PayPal. I heard that US work rules do not apply to work restrictions when we're out of the States.

My worries are:

1- Could being registered and paid as a worker in the US and working in my home country at the same time be illegal?

2- PayPal is not used in my home country so I registered to the system using my US address and phone number and I will eventually connect it to my US bank account... However, now I'm thinking about what will happen if PayPal sends me a form 1099 or a similar form reporting this income for tax purposes... This income will be earned while I am outside of the US, so I think I can just ignore this form when reporting my taxes. But then I am afraid of what happens if PayPal treats it as US income and reports it to IRS as well? Could I maybe use my I-94 travel dates and paypal payment dates

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as proof of that I earned this money outside of the US? Or is there a better way to deal with this problem without triggering an unnecessary IRS audit at the first place?

Thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Work done ****outside**** the US is irrelevant to your F1 visa and status.

​

There are tax implications here that could muddy the waters in the water in terms of documentation in the future.

- New Comment: Who is paying you? An American or foreign entity?

- New Comment: no one will know, you can go home.

Title of the post: Regarding emergency appointments for f1 visa

Body of the post: Anyone has any idea how to book emergency appointments for visa?

It says if you have the classes that are starting from 60 days of applying the visa you can request for an emergency appointment. But what is the process? Kindly let me know!

Also is there any possibility that i can get the normal appointment in any consulate in india?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: In your visa portal, there's an option in the left menu called "Emergency Request". Here you can type out the reason you need an EA, attach supporting doc's like your i20 and submit. You should hear back in a few days. If

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your claim has been accepted, they'll assign you a few dates in the near future which you can select from for your interview.

- New Comment: Following

- New Comment: Following, I am in a similar boat

- New Comment: I am still facing an issue with the appointment date. The US consulate websites show the available dates but when I'm clicking on a specific date its says no appointment dates available. Has anyone else been facing this issue could you suggest what should I do?

- New Comment: I have an appointment in Chennai on 30/11 and I live in Hyderabad and would want an appointment in hyd. So can you reschedule your appointment to hyd under EA?

- New Comment: Similar issue!

Title of the post: My request for an expedite appointment wasn't approved, what can I do?

Body of the post: Do you know why? And what can I do to fix this? Should I request another expedite appointment?

Please help!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Very anecdotal, but a friend went to the embassy and pled her case and was given an earlier date.

- New Comment: UPDATE - I spoke with the embassy and they told me to postpone my dates. I will leave ten days later, the school should issue a new I-20 that I will bring to my appointment. Hopefully everything goes according to plan. Just wanted to come here and update you, in case anyone is struggling with the same stuff.

- New Comment: If it was for an F-1 visa there's nothing you will be able to do now. Did you apply for one because your program starts in less than 60 days? If so, then even in that case unfortunately it has been very common for U.S.

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consulates to deny those requests after COVID. Do you already have one scheduled?

- New Comment: If I were you, I'd fill another DS-160, go to another country and give visa interview. Ofcourse, this depends upon which countries you're allowed to travel via your citizenship and how much money you got.

Title of the post: US embassy India - unable to get an appointment

Body of the post: Been trying to make an F1 visa appointment at the Delhi and Mumbai US embassies in India, and its just impossible! They show you a bunch of dates with "available" appoints, but as soon as you click on it, it says that there are no slots available. If you try to do this like 5 times, it locks you out for 72 hours. It's just so incredibly frustrating -- how haven't they fixed this issue! Has anyone else faced this issue and solved it? May lose my chance to start my PhD in August if this keeps happening. I can't believe the embassy hasn't addressed this anywhere.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: ALL Embassies in India are closed or emergency appointments only. You are not alone and it is in fact likely you won't be able to get a visa in India due to COVID-19 related closures.

The few limited available appointments are getting snatched up very quickly. You have 14+ months of student appointments that haven't been able to be made. The embassy hasn't addressed it because there is a lag time in the display and the connection.

So far over the last month, I have had 2 students who were able to get appointments and 50-100 more (not all report to me their attempts) who have not received appointments. In a typical year, 700-800,000 nonimmigrant visas are granted in India. Well, in the last 14 months there have been very limited options. As such you are competing with a HUGE number of individuals for a tiny fraction of available spots.

It's not a bug, it's the nature of the internet. Someone got to them before you did. It was luck of the draw and whose

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electrons got there first.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I am in exactly the same boat. My PhD starts on 19 Aug, so just waiting for the "60 days before the start date" to book an Emergency Appointment.

Title of the post: How do I show deleted social media on the ds160?

Body of the post: So I had deleted my facebook account back when deleting Facebook accounts was the fad (like 3-4 years ago). I don't remember my account link so what do I do here?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Nobody cares about your social media truly, unless you constantly share hate posts or something. You are overthinking here.

- New Comment: Wow Ds160 is THIS invasive now? I?m curious too on this!

- New Comment: They don't give a shit I'm pretty sure. I left mine blank and got my visa updated no problem. Don't overthink this.

- New Comment: Wait u need to list ALL OF UR EMAILS FOR DS160? I?m fked.... I use one for research purposes *cough cough*, one for sports betting, one for college and one for social media. The first two definitely gonna get me on the hook for some watchlist now

Title of the post: Is CPT/OPT considered work authorization? What should I say if they ask me if I am

Body of the post: From my understanding, CPT/OPT is considered work authorization, but I got rejected for it when I mentioned it. Would it be bad to omit saying that I am an int'l saying by only saying that I am legally authorized to work in the US?

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: I think the answer would be NO, because you have not been approved for OPT/CPT. You can claim YES only when you have a EAD card.
- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Tips on F1 Visa Interview

Body of the post: Hi! I'm having my F1 Visa interview next week. I'm really nervous. I'll be going to a community college and I'll transfer after two years to a university. Any tips for the interview?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Honestly it's pretty easy as long as you stay confident and have all your documents organized and ready to go. Mine took 5 minutes max.
- New Comment: I had my interview last October! Just relax and answer honestly. My interview lasted about 5 minutes.

Personally i tried practicing a lot of questions but i was only asked about one of them. Just make sure you have all the documents ready to show and you should be good.

Goodluck!

- New Comment: Be honest and polite. Being nervous is fine, I was nervous and mine took about 5 minutes also. I think they understand how big this is for us and as long as all the paperwork is in order and you are comfortable and honest, I think you will be fine.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Did you get the visa?
- New Comment: Which country?
- New Comment: Good luck! I may be not much of help on your question. But I'd like to ask how did you get ur visa? In my country all visa routines are suspended during the pandemic. Any advice?

Title of the post: Emergency appointment for F1 visa appointment in India

Body of the post: Has anyone been successful in getting an emergency appointment in a consulate in India. I know requests in June were declined, but anyone who applied after the July 15 update?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Applied on 17th July but no reply from the consulate. It's a wait and watch game right now.
- New Comment: I applied on 30th June. Still haven't heard back from them. Also, when I ask them for their decision on my request they just ask me to wait. Applied to New Delhi btw
- New Comment: I have applied recently but haven't heard back from them yet. They said it will take more time to get back to people as many students are applying for emergency appointments. I read on twitter that people have applied and have not heard for more than a week now, so I am not very optimistic ??.
- New Comment: Following
- New Comment: I'm not from India but the embassy in my home country is still closed. Out of curiosity, has the US Embassy in India stated that F-1 applicants should apply for an emergency appointment or are you doing it out of your own initiative? What's the process for emergency appointment? Do you e-mail the embassy or do you apply formally viaustraveldocs?
- New Comment: Hi was thinking of writing to the consulate any idea where to find chennai consulate email address. Don't want to write to us travel doc email they just give standard reply. Thanks

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: The Mumbai consulate said that one can apply for emergency appointments but they won't review it until they resume student visa processing

[twitter link](<https://twitter.com/usandmumbai/status/1288050892722200576?s=21>)

- New Comment: Can you apply for an F1 appointment? How do I do that?

- New Comment: Did anyone get any response or have you given up hope?

Title of the post: So are we going to face problems or not?

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I 100% disagree with this lawyer based on ALL our communications with SEVP, the emails from SEVP in my in box, and the published and posted guidelines from both SEVP (Homeland Security) and from The Embassy/Consulates (Department of State)

IF your school is ALL ONLINE & you are a new initial student studying on a brand new SEVIS record that you have never previously used to enter the US with. (So new Freshman) You cannot enter or even get a visa.

If your school is face to face or in Hybrid mode you are fine.

How do we know this? Because Schools have to update our mode of instruction with SEVP per SEVP instructions.

SEVP has guidelines out about new students not being allowed to be in in an online only format.

Additionally, the new visas are only being issued for schools that are not in an online only mode. So you can only get visas with the NIE waiver if your school is hybrid or face to face.

Reddit Posts

So, if the public and available rules say you need a face to face component AND the two relevant government agencies have policies for both student and school about what enrollment must be and how it is documented... Why would a student following those rules who was issued a visa to study have problems?

Edit: Greg Siskind is an immigration attorney who seems to focus on employment visas. The information on F-1 student visas he has on his own website is out of date. It was last updated 7 years ago. I don't think the man is stupid or anything, but he isn't really practicing in F-1 immigration. I cannot agree with one guy famous for being a talking head on immigration knowing something more than the professional group of several thousand International Office members, various other immigration attorneys and a few hundred schools. All of whom agree that, a hybrid or face to face mode is fine for Fall 2020.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: I think it depends if you're an incoming freshman or not

Title of the post: Due to Federal Visa Restrictions, International Freshmen Will Not Be Allowed on C

Body of the post:

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: THIS ONLY APPLIES TO SCHOOLS THAT ARE ONLY ONLINE FOR FALL 2020.

IF YOUR SCHOOL IS IN HYBRID OR FACE TO FACE, THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO YOU.

- New Comment: If I am not mistaken, I think this is only for those with all online classes who are newly admitted.

- New Comment: Will this affect 1st year graduate students?

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: Are initial students allowed in?

Body of the post: I just got my visa for the us and I love in the Schengen area, meaning I'll have a NIE printed on it.

There seem to be a lot of conflicting information. By calling cbp from different airports, they all seem to be saying different things. Some say they shouldn't have problems, some say they can't enter.

My classes are hybrid and I was told at my consulate appointment I shouldn't have any problems entering the country but I've also been hearing from other sources that I may

Does anyone know of new students being let in and ones that are being rejected? If so what do the students getting rejected have that gets them rejected?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: u/codetornado have you heard of any student being let in/rejected? Is it too early to tell?

- New Comment: would also love to hear from any continuing/returning students who have travelled back, especially if they have all-online classes, thanks!!

Title of the post: Will I maintain Active status on SEVIS if I'm taking classes from outside the country?

Body of the post: I am a current student and my university is planning a hybrid mode of instruction this fall, with options from in-person to fully online classes.

With SEVP rescinding their July guidelines and supposedly reverting to the March guidelines, can I maintain active status on SEVIS if I'm taking all remote classes from my home country?

Comment of the post:

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: As if right now, yes. You can maintain status from home.

Other readers:

However, we already heard that they may release another update to prevent students staying inside the US from being all online.

- New Comment: /u/Codetornado , would appreciate your advice on this

- New Comment: I'm in the same boat. I would really love to go home for the semester but I'm afraid to make housing decisions right now and sublet my apartment out. My school's DSO said as of now, we are allowed to take the semester remotely back home while keeping an active SEVIS record, but that could potentially change.

My other concern is if we do have to stay in the U.S. our school is hybrid, do we literally have to be at school or can we stay with family in another state?

Title of the post: Which US embassies are opening up?

Body of the post: We should keep track of embassies opening up. So far, I've heard the New Zealand, Brunei, Vietnam, and Bermuda embassies are opening up.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Trinidad and Tobago embassy is resuming services around August 1st

- New Comment: Vietnam, Thailand, Taiwan, Brunei, Jamaica, Bermuda, Slovakia, Austria, New Zealand, and Mauritius have announced plans to resume student visa services.

Edit: Switzerland as well.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Reaaly?

- New Comment: I can't see official announcement except for the Brunei and Bermuda embassies .. is there any source confirming the other countries?

Title of the post: New SEVP risk

Body of the post: I'm very concerned about the new guidelines for fall... in starting to think they are doing this so they can open schools for a couple of weeks and then "realize" they made a mistake and go full online forcing all international students to go home. I'm very scared cause I believe there is no way around this, they can just force everyone home with this new guidelines. What are the chances this happens? What are the chances ICE modifies guidelines in case schools were forced to close?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: There are schools that needs money from international students cuz we pay loads of money for tuition and they can't afford to lose that. Hopefully the classes will change into hybrid like the ICE want. There's many suggestions on just make it look like it's hybrid and students don't have to actually come to class. With this news, countries would have to open the gate for us to go home.

Title of the post: Ead/opt processing and delays

Body of the post: Hello,

I just wanted to ask students in this subreddit who have applied for their opt / ead after their graduation. I am in the same boat. I will graduate in August. Right now I am simply suffering from too much stress and anxiety waiting for the card. Added to that, suddenly there has been this huge delay of ead processing and now I am not sure when I will even get it. How is everyone else coping with this problem? Anyone in the same boat as me? Just wanted to talk and share

Reddit Posts

thoughts.

P. S. If this is not in line with the subreddit please feel free to delete.

Update

:

<https://www.ajc.com/news/local-education/international-students-work-pursuits-slowed-red-tape/mMBgZVTGT0cU35u7P>

Ai4GM/

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I applied in March, graduated in May and still haven't heard anything (approaching 4 months). I would suggest using that as a reference to propose a start date if you get a job offer.

I'm lucky because my employer is willing to wait, but most will not and will just pass on you so make sure you give yourself a good cushion. Good luck!

- New Comment: Not much we can do but wait :(I've been checking

<http://www.opttimeline.com/> every day xD

- New Comment: I got my receipt date on April 1st after sending the paperwork in early March, and have not heard back since. To be honest, I feel hopeless, and like I can't apply to jobs with confidence, because even if the employer say yes, I can't really start work, you know? This process is nerve wracking.

- New Comment: My university is seeing 115+ days for processing and shipping. The last dozen cases in the last week have all been 115 days plus.

- New Comment: I applied March 11, (117 days and counting) and it's still Case Received. Graduated in May.

Now I'm panicking because I just realized I didn't submit I-20s from previous institution (I didn't do CPT/OPT) and only

Reddit Posts

included I-20s from my current institution (with pre-OPT)... I'm gonna visit my DSO on Monday.

I lost my job too because I was supposed to start late May. It sucks but I still hope I get my OPT approved... I hope you and others have better luck than me!

​

UPDATE: My status changed to EAD Card being made today (127 days). Best of luck everyone!

- New Comment: I applied mid February and got my card mid May (week of graduation). It took me about 90 days!

- New Comment: Applied at the end of March/start of April (would have done so earlier, but apartment was broken into, passports and all documents got stolen :/), case status was received on April 10, got my receipt shortly after that. It will be 90 days from April 15 in less than a week, and application is still pending. I know that it's well within the expected timeframe but I'm starting to get worried. I have a job offer where the start date is August 5th, and it is definitely looking like I will have to push that back, though they did say they could wait for me for a little bit.

​

What further complicates things is that I had to leave the US due to some personal circumstances. When, if I do get my EAD, I will have to have it shipped home before reapplying for my now expired F1 visa before I can return to the US to begin work. Starting to get really worried about this whole situation.

Title of the post: RFE on STEM OPT EXTENSION!! CANT FIND WHAT THE RFE IS ABOUT

Body of the post: Hi

Reddit Posts

I recently got an RFE for my stem OPT application that was on premium processing.

The problem is I cannot find what the RFE is about. In the USCIS portal I can see this

There is nothing in the documents tab except the receipt notice. I didn't receive anything in the mail yet. What should I do?

It's been 2 days since this update happened in the portal. Should I wait or request again with the link provided ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You will have to wait, it will take some time to get the mail.

As it's described in there, if you didn't get it by 21st, reach out and request it again.

- New Comment: You will receive the RFE notice in a few days, and it will be explained in it. Wait until late next week.

- New Comment: You will see the notice in the portal in 4-7 days

- New Comment: Check on documents side.

- New Comment: You will get that in mailbox or in the document section soon . Kindly keep checking hopefully it should be there

- New Comment: I recently worked with a student who received an RFE on his OPT application. The RFE itself was uploaded in the student's online account a few days (like 3-4 business days, I think) after the RFE was issued.

- New Comment: I got RFE for photos. My photos didn't meet the standards, so they asked me to send them again.

Other possible reasons are:

Reddit Posts

1. Proof of legitimate employment in OPT
2. Miss submitting OPT reporting to DSO

But like others mentioned, you will receive a mail explaining the reason.

- New Comment: I got the same thing, it'll take a couple of days for them to upload it to the portal
- New Comment: Hi, How many days did it take to see rfe document in the portal?

Title of the post: Getting married during OPT

Body of the post: Hello people, I am engaged and planning on getting married next year. My fiancé is an American citizen and once we are married we plan on applying for the Green Card. However, right now I am a F1 student and will also be applying for OPT next year. What issues can I face for applying for my green card same time as my OPT? Should I get married and apply for Green Card once my OPT is done? Has anyone done something similar?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >What issues can I face for applying for my green card same time as my OPT?

Depends on the timing of each application but neither prevent the other from being approved.

- New Comment: > What issues can I face for applying for my green card same time as my OPT?

Nothing in particular. If your marriage is genuine and it has been over 90 days since your last entry into the US, you can apply AOS and you should get your GC in one year.

- > Should I get married and apply for Green Card once my OPT is done?

Reddit Posts

Apply for GC as soon as you can after marriage.

- New Comment: I would say to get married and start your green card process soon! The job market isn't looking good for someone who's on OPT.
- New Comment: Ive heard that you cant work when you apply for gc, if you are on opt when you apply for gc does that apply when you are on opt?
- New Comment: You can get married and apply for opt. Later on file for gc.
- New Comment: I did mine while I was almost graduating and my OPT still got approved. My GC came in last week.

Title of the post: Can I open HYSA?

Body of the post: I'm starting my OPT soon and would like to open a HYSA. I was wondering legally and based on immigration rules, are F1 students allowed to open HYSA?

I know I'd get a 1099-INT and then I'd just report it on my taxes but I just wanted to make sure.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: yes you are allowed to open a HYSA.
- New Comment: Yup
- New Comment: You can have a HYSA.

Just report the gains while filing taxes.

Dm if you need a referral for wealth front or Marcus!

- New Comment: You are allowed to. But, it is tough to find one that allows F1 students to get HYSA.

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: i just opened one on marcus a week ago. it took me minutes... i'm not a resident for tax purposes. i havent been here for 5 years.

- New Comment: I am a student on F1 visa with a HYSAs. I also filed my taxes last year and it was no issue. Dm me if you want more details.

I have a Marcus account with 5.4% APY. Let me know if you want a referral for extra 1% over their rate for 3 months.

Title of the post: Can I open High Yield Savings Account while being on F1 VISA

Body of the post: Hey guys,

Being on F1 VISA (1st year of OPT) can I open any High Yield Savings Account and if so, will the interest be taxed ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes and yes

- New Comment: I have Amex

- New Comment: Yes, yes.i use wealthfront and get 5.5%. hmu if you need a referral.

Title of the post: Canadian student going to the US to apartment hunt, should I enter as a visitor or

Body of the post: Hi all. Canadian citizen here. I am planning to start school at a US school from August 25th. Want to visit the US this weekend to find housing, do a few viewings, hopefully finalize something, come back to Canada to wrap things up, and then move formally a week or so before August 25th.

Should I enter the US this weekend on F1 status or is it OK to go as a visitor? Please keep in mind I was in the US the entire last week as well on a visitor status because my grace period to enter the US as F1 student hadn't started at the time.

Reddit Posts

Thanks all

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Visitor unless you are coming to stay
- New Comment: You cannot enter more than a month before school starts, and you need your i-20 when you enter with F1.

Title of the post: F1 EAD

Body of the post: I am a F1 student and My ead is delayed and it's been more than 2 months. What should I do ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: What do you mean "delayed"? Has it been generated and posted?
- New Comment: I applied on April 14. No decision till July 11.

I applied for premium processing on July 11. No decision till now (July 23).

- New Comment: Average wait time is like 4 months and premium processing is a waste unless you really need it to work immediately.
- New Comment: Pay for premium processing
- New Comment: Guys, just adding on to the question, my EAD was approved on July 17th, and the portal has still not been updated with the Delivery tracker, it says it should be delivered within a week or two, but I have a question, I already have spoken with my professor for voluntary work and I shall start as soon as my EAD arrives, but that would result in me wasting 14-20 days from my unemployment days. Is there a way around this? To actually not waste these

Reddit Posts

days? Can I start working from the day of my EAD approval ?

- New Comment: If you have a job, apply for premium processing. If you don't have a job then just wait till you get approved. Your unemployment days won't start till the day you get approved.

- New Comment: I applied on April 14. No decision till July 11.

I applied for premium processing on July 11. No decision till now (July 23).

- New Comment: I applied on May 20th, got same information that it's taking longer than expected. Paid for premium processing on July 11

- New Comment: It happened to me as well. During the case history, when it says it takes longer than expect, there's a link to check the regular timeline for the case. Going to that link, it'll ask you to enter your case date, and if it's indeed surpasses the normal timeframe, it actually lets you file an inquiry form for your case. And then USCIS will respond to that form within a week or two, and they will most likely tell you why it's being delayed.

Title of the post: Applied for OPT on April 25th still have not gotten approval, need help

Body of the post: Hi I recently graduated in spring and I applied for OPT during the semester. I applied on April 25th with the start date of July 1st. Initially I did not opt for the premium processing as the processing times were good and people were getting their OPTs on time. The estimated time for approval was 2 months and 2 weeks(on my progress tab) the estimated time was 2 weeks longer than the start date but during the week it was supposed to come the estimated time changed from 1 week to 5 months. I applied for premium processing on July 13th and it does not show any progress or estimated time. I tried to fill the outside normal processing time but it seems to have issues. Could anyone guide me on what I should do ? Is there any way to call the USCIS guys ?

Edit: so i got the approval email but the USCIS website doesnt mention anything about approval or when my EAD card is coming. So did I get approved or what ? Should I call them ?

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >I applied for premium processing on July 13th

Premium processing guarantees action within 30 days. Only 9 days have passed since you applied for PP. The only thing you can do is wait.

- New Comment: The students who have applied on 1st April have not received yet. My friends who have applied on 28 March have got the card in hand. So now you can estimate

- New Comment: I also am in the same boat, applied for regular in May. Just switched to premium processing on July 16. I am currently out of US and need my card to be mailed to me. Have a flight back on Aug 31. Hoping all goes well before that

- New Comment: I applied April 12, the start date was July 1. My job start date was July 8. As I started nearing July, I switched to premium processing on June 12. I was approved on June 17. Then it took 3 weeks for my card to show up. It was delivered exactly on July 1. I think that timeline should help you out!

- New Comment: Irrelevant to the OP's post though, does upgrading to PP raise the chance of getting approval?

- New Comment: I applied OPT on April 16th 2024 still waiting for approval. Did anyone get OPT approved through regular processing who applied on the same date or earlier. Please let me know. Thanks

Title of the post: Quit Job on post-completion OPT

Body of the post: I quit my job and I am currently on my post completion OPT and I was wondering how much time of unemployment time I get and if there is anything else I need to do. I know I have to report the change in my employment once I find a new role but should I also report the end of this one?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You should report both start and end of each job
- New Comment: You have 90 days on initial OPT minus days that you already used.

On STEM extension, you get 60 extra days that get added to whatever is left of your 90 days (150 days in total).

- New Comment: You have 90 days of unemployment that you can use, starting from the start date mentioned on your EAD card. If you have not utilized any of these 90 days, you have the full 90 days to find another job. If you have used some of these unemployment days, you can simply calculate how many days you have left by subtracting the days used from 90.

From what I know, you need to update every detail on your SEVP portal. From ending a role to beginning a new one!

- New Comment: You might wanna check the uscis website for this, usually people ask questions here for tricky situations rather than stuff stated in the website.

Title of the post: Can I work 40+ hours on my post completion OPT (non STEM)?

Body of the post: My degree is non STEM. I was wondering if i could work for more than 40 hours during my post completion OPT. I already reached out to ISSS at my Uni.. but I couldn't find any info about this online. Wondering if anyone can help with this doubt?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: There is no maximum.
- New Comment: In theory, you can even have multiple jobs. Just gotta let your DSO know.
- New Comment: As long as you meet full time req, you can work as much as you want. I'm over 70+hr a week

Reddit Posts

Title of the post: F1 Visa Interview

Body of the post: Hey,

I'm very stressed and feel like throwing up. The person paying for all of this is my father who is a physician. Can this be a problem? Also, should I talk about my plans for after completing my master's to apply to a phd in U.S. or avoid talking about it at all? I don't want to be rejected, this has been very stressful

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Don't talk about your future plans unless you're asked. Don't lie about anything. If you end up talking about a PhD application, don't ever tell that you want to stay in the US after completing your education.
- New Comment: don't talk about staying in us under any reason. say something like u would come back to work at a company or join as a researcher here
- New Comment: Have complete information about what you are currently doing, and what you plan to do in the US.

When being asked about your future plans, just tell them "I want to come back and take care of my family business (or handle your dad's clinic)." with a straight face.

The most important to them is your intent to visit US. If you are a student, you must know what you are going for. In my case i had already reached out to the professors from my University and even knew their names. Tbh there is a difference between excitement/stress, and fraud/misrepresentation/stress.

Just know if you are meant to be there, you will be there! Best of luck!

Title of the post: Need Advice: Working Remote as an Unpaid Intern for my University.

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Body of the post: Hey everyone, I'm a recent master's graduate, and my EAD start date began on July 3rd. To halt the 90-day timer, I'm working as an unpaid intern at my university under a professor's research until December. Due to some leasing issues, I might need to work remotely for this position outside of my campus area (probably a different state). I've received permission for this from my professor.

My query is: Will DHS or ISSS have any issues with me working remotely in this situation? Additionally, do most universities allow remote work for such positions? Please help! I really appreciate y'all advice on this.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Remote work is not an issue.
- New Comment: No. As long as your employer (the professor) is okay with it, and you update your address to SEVP, you should be good.
- New Comment: u/Codetornado
- New Comment: Should be no problem. I am also working remotely as a volunteer on OPT for my professor.
- New Comment: Which university bro?

Title of the post: Chances of finding job before 90 day OPT period expires.

Body of the post: My friend is graduating with a Masters in marketing (non-stem) in December and is concerned about finding a job during their OPT period. Is it common for people to not find a job within the 90-day OPT window? What percentage of people are unable to secure employment during this time? Any advice for finding a job would be appreciated. Thank you!

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: >Chances of finding job before 90 day OPT period expires.

0-100%

>Is it common for people to not find a job within the 90-day OPT window?

Its not uncommon, but it depends on how picky you are. Lots of ways to stop the unemployment clock.

>What percentage of people are unable to secure employment during this time?

0-100%. Depends on how picky you are. Lots of ways to stop the unemployment clock.

>Any advice for finding a job would be appreciated.

I would apply for jobs. Go to job fairs. Speak to your school about employment support. Check your resume, etc.

- New Comment: Its all dependent on your luck. If you're graduating and don't have a job lined up, you should contact your professors for an unpaid volunteer position to stop unemployment time

- New Comment: Be aware of a company's fiscal year. They are far less-likely to hire in the end of their FY.

- New Comment: Even if he gets a job, no company would be willing to file a H1-B for a Marketing Position.

He can just work for a year on OPT, but then companies won't look to hire and invest in someone for just a year.

It's a tough road.

- New Comment: Apply for OPT as soon as possible and start looking for jobs before the program ends. If he finds a job

Reddit Posts

that will hire him to start on his opt start date, then he can always pay for premium processing while his OPT application is already pending to guarantee he can start on that day.

Alternatively, apply for OPT with a start date near the end of the 60 day grace period to give himself as much time as possible to get a job after he has earned the degree

- New Comment: I've read the tea leaves. Very interesting. But I'll need your bank account and routing number, then I can give you a most accurate probability percentage.

Title of the post: Will my father's travel history be used against me?

Body of the post: Hey, my visa interview is in about two weeks time and I just realized that my dad visited the States for tourism sometime in 2019 and when to meet his cousin. I have never met you the cousin plus I hadn't known of him till 2019.

Now I'm questioning if I should mention that in case they can see that. I'm wondering if I should say 'I don't have any immediate family, however, my father informed me that he has a third cousin who I have never met'

Comment of the post:

Title of the post: Regarding critical US F1 Visa situation

Body of the post: Hi! My friend got US F1 visa approval on 30th may 2024. Today his father was diagnosed with stage 3 leukaemia and now he doesn't want to go to US for his master and stay with his family and support them by joining family business. What should be the next step, whom should he contact about his status of not entering in US. Will his future visa application be affected with this step!! He needs guidance regarding this pls give advice if anyone was in this kind of situation.

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: He should let the university who issued the I-20 and the school DSO know
- New Comment: Your friend can simply not go. Getting a visa and then not using it is not a big deal.
- New Comment: Defer the admission to next semester. Then, reapply when ready
- New Comment: Let the DSO know and defer the admission & I-20 to next term or year
- New Comment: If he defers admission and goes to the same school in the future, the visa remains valid as long as it's unexpired.
- New Comment: Unused visa does not make a difference for future applications. The F-1 will stay valid for as long as it is - which is most commonly 5 years depending on country of citizenship. Contact the school and request for a deferred admission, or request to cancel the admission altogether. A deferred admission is a better option in the event minds change a few months down the road. Saves you an entire process of documenting and reapplying all over again.
- New Comment: Let the university know. They'll refund the tuition deposit too. It won't affect his future applications. He can apply anytime again.

Title of the post: Anyone who went to their home country on OPT after they got EAD but without a job

Body of the post: Basically the title. I have a few questions. So please DM if you did that and came back to the US

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: A few of my friends said they weren't asked for the offer letter but they had it just in case.
- New Comment: I did! Lmk if you have any qns
- New Comment: I went on a trip to canada and back without a job during unemployment period
- New Comment: Went home even before I got my EAD, after graduation. Came back after around 8 months. Lol. But

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that's 4 months of waiting for the EAD. Then another 4 months while I had the card.

- New Comment: Bruv, I left US for my home country without my EAD due to a family emergency.

AMA.

- New Comment: Why you do not simply ask the questions here?

Title of the post: F1 Visa appointment for June/July

Body of the post: Hey guys, my program starts in mid august, and my emergency request got denied, stating that slots for the summer will open up. Is there any Telegram/Social channel where I can get legit updates about slot availability?

Thanks.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Slots are opening every day, you should monitor more frequently. I heard they opened a total of 1.2 lakh slots last year from May to July/August. Reach out to agents if you can't monitor yourself, but they do open a few everyday - be consistent while searching.

I got my slot myself on day 3 of frequent monitoring.

- New Comment: Did they share any tentative dates?

- New Comment: Hey man, did you find any summer slots later? And how to do this emergency request?

- New Comment: If I cancel my appointment now and pay another mrv fee, can i have the option for the emergency again?

Guys I need help, my start date is Aug 13, but the date I have now is September 18.

I requested emergency when it wasn't 60days yet, I messed up for the first time.

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I don't know if anyone can help in anyway.

Thanks

- New Comment: Hey if you are comfortable then i can book for you basically i am not an agent or anything but i can book the slots for you for some charges (10k) if you are comfortable you can let me know. Slots will be for sure booked for the month of july coz its really hard to get june now.

Title of the post: I-20 expiration and DSO is MIA

Body of the post: I submitted my ext for my I-20 literally on April 15th, so 30 days ago (ends June 3rd).

The thing is my DSO went on "vacation" for 2 weeks on the 17th of April. I immediately called on May 2nd assuming she would be back. She was still away. I called back on May 9th. Still gone. So she's been gone a month.

Tomorrow is May 15th and my I-20 ends June 3rd. What the hell do I do?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This sounds super stressful! I'm sorry you're dealing with this, and I hope your DSO is okay and will be back and able to process the extension soon.

Is there only one DSO at your school? If so, there's probably not much that you can do right now. However, even if the DSO doesn't get back in time, all is not lost. The PDSO?which, if there's really only the one, would be your DSO?has a 15-day window after the Program End Date where they can still extend an I-20 in cases in which the request was timely submitted and not processed for administrative reasons beyond the student's control, such as an extended absence on the part of the DSO.

Even if that window is missed, it would be possible for a DSO to submit a correction request in SEVIS to correct the end

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date for the same reason. There's a bit more involved, since a correction request requires the intervention of a technician at the SEVP Response Center, but there shouldn't be a reason for them to deny a correction in the case of a timely submitted extension request that wasn't processed due to the DSO's absence or unavailability.

How did you submit your extension request? Was it by email, through an online system that would generate a record of the submission date, or was it a paper form of some sort? If there's clear evidence of the date it was submitted, it will be a lot easier to fix if the DSO is not able to process the extension before your I-20 expires.

- New Comment: Which school?

Title of the post: how cooked am i?

Body of the post: i'm a fall '24 aspirant going to a well ranked school in San Diego (always been my dream to study there and experience California). i started filling out the ds160 form and have been tensed and anxious since stumbling across the immediate relatives question.

my brother is a h1b visa holder working at a company in California, LA to be specific. albeit i wouldn't be living with him, it's possible that the visa officer would ask questions about my brother's status and everything. i know i'm not the first person to be in this sort of predicament. but, my question is would i be straight up rejected in this situation or do i stand a chance, if so what are my odds?

any tips and advice would be highly appreciated to bring me out of this spiral!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Well first off I hope you ticked Yes on that immediate relatives question because trying to lie would be stupid. In the interview just be honest if they ask don't give out more than required but be truthful. Try reiterate your Home ties and if it comes up make it an emphasis that you do not intend on living with your brother or being supported

Reddit Posts

by him financially.

- New Comment: One thing: Never lie. There are every possible chances of explanation and articulating your points. But, if you lie and get caught, there's no coming back.

- New Comment: You should be fine. Be honest and mention that your brother currently works as a xxx for the xxx company, really no need to mention the location unless they ask for it. If asked for why are you not living with your brother, say your campus is at a significant distance from his apartment and your priority is to get education and experience the college life there so you prefer living near/at campus. When asked for long term plans, mention your ties to home country that you would intend to come back. You could also mention that your brother also intends to come back in the ties to home country question provided he hasn't applied for his GC.

- New Comment: Take the admission result documents for other universities you have applied for. Also establish proof why you have to select this university. Any email thread between professor and you will be sufficient.

- New Comment: Whatever you do, please do not lie on the form or in interview. And don't be too stressed out because this is a normal thing.

- New Comment: Hey OP, was in the same boat as yours last year.

And to my horror, I had quite a long interview and questions were asked about my brother. Pretty basic questions, where he studied, where he lives now, where he works, visa status etc. Was scared but I just answered truthfully and the interviewer was super nice.

All the best though!

- New Comment: Don't listen to the folks who say "This will definitely lead to a rejection". You and your brother aren't even going to be staying in the same city.

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I know several folks who had siblings living in the same city as them, and still had their f1 visa accepted.

Don't lie to the officer, you should be fine.

- New Comment: welldone

- New Comment: UPDATE: I GOT MY VISA ALMOST 20 DAYS AGO AND THE INTERVIEWER DIDNT EVEN ASK ABOUT MY BROTHER

Title of the post: Am I getting kicked out?!

Body of the post: If I receive a full time offer from investment banking firm, which starts next july, but I graduate this december, can I not remain in the US despite getting a job offer with visa sponsorship?

Since there is a grace period for OPT as far as I know, and since I have 6 months between graduation and the start of my job...

Yes I can ask to start my job early but I heard that bulge brackets might or might not allow that depending on their needs.

Am I cooked?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can volunteer somewhere- counts in OPT

- New Comment: Yeah you gotta ask your employer to push your employment date earlier. Cause you gotta pick your OPT start date sometime between grad date and 60 days after that. And from that start date you can only be

Reddit Posts

unemployed for 90 days.

- New Comment: You can start your own business or volunteer in an area related to your major to stop the clock during that in-between period.

However, I'm not sure if you are eligible for the STEM OPT extension / how much research you've done on the H1B, but please note: just because your company is willing to sponsor a visa does not necessarily mean you will be getting a work visa next year. You should definitely have backup plans in mind if you aren't STEM OPT eligible.

- New Comment: Volunteer else where until your start date. Not very hard to find volunteer programs. But for a job that starts in July, there's a lot of volatility unless the company is someone you know/trust. They are basically over hiring and if they realize they don't need you, they will reject the offer letter any time. Point it to keep looking for jobs, give interviews, stay in touch with this company or ask them to let you work as a volunteer until you start the position.

- New Comment: You can also ask your professor for a volunteer research position in your department. I'm aware that some of the universities do allow that to stop the OPT clock.

- New Comment: I graduated in July 2022 and got an offer in September 2022 and didn't start until January 2023. I believe once you have an offer with a start date you should be fine. The start date does not need to be within the 90 days however you need the offer within the 90 days :)

Title of the post: Is international travel authorized while holding a transfer-pending I-20?

Body of the post: Hi all, I am a current, Canadian F-1 student graduating at the bachelor's level this week. After graduation, I am transferring my SEVIS record to begin doctoral studies at my new institution, MIT. This Sunday is my transfer release date, with a new program start date in early September this year.

I planned a trip to Europe this summer (three weeks from now), and my current institution's international student office (ISO) told me I can freely leave and re-enter the US during this next summer. MIT's ISO, however, told me over the

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phone and has a [website](https://iso.mit.edu/visas-and-travel/entering-the-u-s/entering-the-us-borders-as-a-first-time-student/#:~:text=number%20they%20provide.,Travel%20After%20Arrival%20to%20the%20U.S.,-Travel%20after%20arrival) stating that they cannot guarantee I will be able to re-enter the US after my trip. According to their website, this is because for "new transfer-in students," re-entry into the US is only possible under the following conditions:

1. I hold an "Active" SEVIS record (from what I understand [[reference\]](https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevis-help-hub/student-records/transfers/manage-transfer-of-f-1-sevis-record#:~:text=F%2D1%20Transfer%20Process%20Stages%20and%20Student%20Lists), my record will be "Initial" until the term begins)
2. The academic term has begun (after my start date)
3. I have a valid travel signature on my I-20

Additionally, an MIT advisor told me I could only enter the US after transferring within 30 days before my program start date.

I am very confused, because I thought I would have a "transfer-pending" I-20 until I begin my studies, when I would be re-issued a new I-20. With the transfer-pending I-20, the [Study in the States](https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevis-help-hub/student-records/transfers/complete-transfer-of-f-1-sevis-record#:~:text=Nonimmigrant%20students%20may%20travel%20outside%20and%20return%20to%20the%20United%20States%20with%20a%20Transfer%2Dpending%20COE%20(Form%20I%2D20)) website says that I would be free to travel and re-enter the US this summer, and many other university ISO's have similar guidance. Is it possible that by "new transfer-in students," the MIT website is referring to students who transferred before beginning their undergraduate studies? And has anyone gone through this process before who might know my chances of getting through CBP?

Reddit Posts

Thank you for your help. As an aside, I was considering canceling my transfer, requesting an "initial" I-20 from MIT, entering the US as a Canadian visitor, then exiting the US and re-entering on F-1 status within 30 days prior to my start date.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I am in the same boat as you! My SEVIS release date is set for 30th June and I had to travel back to my home country a couple of days ago. I am planning to return to the states 20 days before the PhD program at my new university begins in late August, and I am hoping to obtain the transfer pending/Initial I-20 before that. Cfbr, and I hope your question gets answered.

- New Comment: MIT is...wrong. Concerning coming from MIT. Your current institution is correct.

- New Comment: You can. Transferring this summer and doing the same!

Title of the post: New F1 visa

Body of the post: Hi, I currently just finished the spring semester of my first year. I am about to travel home and would need to renew my F1 visa as it only has a one year duration.

Problem is, my GPA for the spring sem is only about 2.7 (fall was 3.2). Would this affect my F1 chances?

Thanks in advance

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I?m not a visa officer.

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You need to ?be making satisfactory progress toward your degree,? and not be otherwise out of status.

Your GPA is perfectly fine, and as long as you?re enrolled full-time or have an authorized reduced course load endorsement on your I-20, if applicable, you likely won?t have any issues renewing. They probably won?t even ask you about your grades.

The whole ?presumption of immigrant intent? thing likely gets somewhat easier to overcome too since you?ve shown a willingness to come back home.

Ask your DSO if you?re worried but I don?t see anything in your post which could raise any flags.

- New Comment: You're fine.

- New Comment: You?re fine as long as you?re making progress towards your degree per your university regulations and meet the minimum required to graduate. You are only jeopardized if you enter academic probation for more than one semester. That usually happens if you fall below the minimum graduation GPA requirement for more than one semester. Depending on the program and school minimum required to graduate can vary from 2.0 to 3.0. 2.0 and 2.5 are common for most undergrad programs and 3.0 is the common for most grad programs.

From past experience - they do ask for GPA on your DS-160 but that is not brought up in the interview. What they really care about is whether or not you ever went out of status while in the U.S or otherwise violated the terms of your visa.

- New Comment: You will be fine. They don?t really care about GPA as long as you?re above the required minimum and making progress towards your degree. In your case, if they ask, tell its just one semester and its a downgrade from fall, so you can say something like seasonal sickness in winter since that is something a lot of international students experience. Though now with experience, you are better equipped to handle it

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Title of the post: What are my chances as a Saudi student?1

Body of the post: I have received undergraduate admission to ASU and maybe another university if all goes well. So my question is, what are my chances of getting a visa? I have graduated high school since July 2023 and have done literally nothing since then other than applying to universities.

I already received admission to ASU but had to defer my semester start date because I'm also applying for a fully funded governmental scholarship for which I haven't gotten an acceptance, but I have a good feeling I will soon.

I know I will look really suspicious to the embassy officer because I haven't done anything since I graduated so have nothing to prove my ties to my home country , but I'm wondering if this is a reasonable reason that I can explain in the interview.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Are you sponsored by SACM? If yes 95%+ approved just knowing that one fact.

- New Comment: I?m not a lawyer or a visa officer.

Ties to your home country can be (but aren?t limited to) some of the following:

- a job or job offer

- a permanent residence address

- real estate that you own or co-own (which you?d prove by showing the title or your country?s equivalent), especially if you live in it

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- family or relatives living in your home country; specifically your spouse, your minor children, your adult children, parents, grandparents (not necessarily in order of preference), especially if you live with them
- some governmental mandate that you return (e. g., deferred military service)
- loans taken out in your name in your home country, optionally with your assets as collateral

You absolutely don't need *all* of them, but at least some. However, it's entirely up to the visa officer which of these they'll consider to be sufficient.

As for explanations: you can explain if asked why you 'haven't done anything,' in your words, but imho that'll only get you so far.

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Relatives in US question during F-1 interview.

Body of the post: Hi all, just wanted to know how to tackle this question by VO during interview. My uncle and his family stays in US and I'm going for my MS in the same state but abit far away from them.

How should I navigate this situation in order to not show any immigration intent?

Will this be a red flag or can be avoided as I only got admit from universities in that state itself.

Please let me know if anyone has previously faced this issue.

Reddit Posts

TIA

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Uncle and his family aren't immediate relatives so I wouldn't overthink it. You don't need to lie about it but at the same time make sure the rest of your application is on point
- New Comment: Navigate the issue by answering truthfully. If they ask you about non-immediate relatives in the US then tell them the truth. DO NOT try and unnecessarily overexplain anything.
- New Comment: I believe everyone in the US has some kind of relatives. I would say just remain truthful and confident. Everything will be good. Make sure you know what you are doing, why you are doing and why in the US and not in your country. Make sure you have secured enough funds for your stay. Goodluck!

Title of the post: STEM OPT payroll

Body of the post: When is it recommended to start my payroll on STEM OPT since it is mandatory to show or have payroll running, even though I haven't received my EAD card yet? From STEM OPT start date or After received EAD Card?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Is this for a new employer or the same employer you were with during your OPT? You get an automatic 180 days extension if you've files for the STEM extension in a timely manner. If it's the second case, you can continue to work and receive your salary. If it's the first case, I'm not too sure about that.
- New Comment: What do you mean "it is mandatory to show or have payroll running"?
- New Comment: +1

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- New Comment: If an F1 OPT student is earning \$2,000 per month in Texas, how much in taxes will be deducted if the annual salary bracket is \$90,000?

- New Comment: Even I have the same doubt !!! I have an employer now but they told they won't run payroll, I'm changing to new employer and I'm gonna apply my stem opt through them. Will I get automatic 180 days extension ? And what if I got fulltime opportunity meanwhile during approval period. Kindly someone throw light on these things as well.

Thanks in advance

Title of the post: Legitimate question (possibly controversial) for VOA story

Body of the post: Hi everyone, this is Dan from the VOA Learning English program. I have been visiting this forum for at least a year looking for sources and story ideas. And here is what I see - lots of people want to come to the U.S. mainly for the chance to stay for their 3 years of OPT and hopefully catch on for a full-time job sponsorship. I am also aware that I'm the privileged American here and I don't have to worry about getting a work permit in the U.S. But let me ask this question:

Is anyone out there who came to the U.S. for school just for the sake of the cultural experience and education without having the end goal of getting a post-OPT job? If so, I'd like to talk with you about your experience. My sense is that the F1 program is officially designed for cultural exchange and not just to be a bridge for visa sponsorship (but all the complaints in this forum are about people not getting jobs after OPT). Has anyone done it for that reason and been happy and then gone back to their home country to live a content and happy life? If so, let me know. I can be reached here or at dfriedell@voanews.com(mailto:dfriedell@voanews.com)

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Thanks,

Dan

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >My sense is that the F1 program is officially designed for cultural exchange and not just to be a bridge for visa sponsorship (but all the complaints in this forum are about people not getting jobs after OPT).

Technically the J-1 is the culture exchange visa and as such comes with teeth requiring the J-1 visa holder to return home in many (but not all) situations before they could be eligible for an immigrant visa. This is the home residency rules most (but not all) J-1 visa category holders are obligated to.

The F-1 unofficially has a path to sponsorship, but it isn't as intentional or focused as it is in other countries.

- New Comment: Very easy. Put yourself in their shoes. If you come from an impoverished third world country, would you jump at the opportunity to study in America and figure out the immigration stuffs later or you plan ten years ahead to worry the immigration stuffs now?

The only people who come on F1 and happily go home after are rich af people or people from rich af countries like swisserland, Norway, Denmark or Japan.

- New Comment: > Is anyone out there who came to the U.S. for school just for the sake of the cultural experience and education without having the end goal of getting a post-OPT job? If so, I'd like to talk with you about your experience

Vast majority of them would not be on F-1 visas pursuing a full time degree. They would be on J-1 visa and come in as exchange students for one semester/year. Either that, or some from small but very oil-rich countries like UAE, Saudi, Malaysia, etc where their government pays for their college and in exchange they come back and work for the

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government (often a very comfortable government job). Or they're extremely wealthy (family runs a multi-million business and are influential and politically well connected back home). A US college degree for international students costs around \$50-100k.

> My sense is that the F1 program is officially designed for cultural exchange and not just to be a bridge for visa sponsorship (but all the complaints in this forum are about people not getting jobs after OPT)

It is almost always used as a skilled migration pathway into the US since there are no realistic pathways for skilled immigrants to the US. US offers some of the highest salaries for STEM and tech sectors, and American companies have a demand for skilled immigrants too. Even an ordinary middle class/white collar life in America is seen as very attractive in the countries that international students come from (unless they're from the above two categories I mentioned).

> Has anyone done it for that reason and been happy and then gone back to their home country to live a content and happy life?

The only people who would be are either citizens of oil rich nations whose degrees were paid for by their government (mostly from Gulf countries), or from very wealthy and well connected families in otherwise low/middle income countries like China, Mexico, India, Vietnam, etc.

- New Comment: Sorry, but for me this question sounds a bit naive. Well, to get a job in your home country you need to have work experience/ internships in your home country, plus connections and networking in your home country. If you spend X years studying in the US, you miss on all these and getting a job coming back is oftentimes more difficult than jumping through OPT/ H1B1 hoops. I guess if one comes from a rich and connected family with guaranteed employment upon return, such people come for "cultural exchange" but even then most likely for a semester not for the whole undergraduate/ graduate degree.

- New Comment: F1 is too expensive to be a mere cultural exchange program. Even at a public school, an international

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student has to pay the full out of state tuition, while back in the home country they usually need to pay much less (education is more expensive even for US citizens). My example: 80000 USD vs. 1500 USD for 4 years of undergrads, tuition alone.

This is too expensive to be an experience, a cost. Instead it is an investment. The best way to get the money back is working at US - the country that pays the most across the globe.

I believe there will be people out there coming to US for an experience. But I doubt how many.

- New Comment: The vast majority if my F-1 peers are aware of the fact that job offers during OPT / employers willing to sponsor a post-OPT visa are not guaranteed.

Some of them are unbothered by this fact (they are confident in their ability to succeed if they were to return to their home country, or they plan on pursuing another degree program in the US or Europe etc upon graduation), and some of them are hopeful and anxious (they are aware of the low chances but giving it their best shot).

A few things on this:

1) Most of the students I know who fall within the former category come from extremely wealthy families or other first world countries that are fairly comparable to the US, economically and culturally. (Daddy has a job lined up for them at his company / Daddy will pay for a masters degree in London if the USA doesn't work out / their home country does not have issues with gender equality, homophobia, racism, insurmountable class divides etc)

2) For students under the 'hopeful and anxious' category, the odds of securing an OPT job / work-sponsored visa have gotten exceptionally low very quickly within the last couple of years. When they were in high school and researching college programs abroad, the likelihood of getting an H1B work visa would have been higher; they heard success stories

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from friends and family & figured if they work hard in college, a job offer and subsequent work visa wouldn't be too hard to get. The H1B lottery entry rules changed a few years ago and those success stories are becoming increasingly rare, but it will probably be a few years before we see the impact of it in the number of international students coming to the US.

3) Is it worth it if a job offer / visa sponsorship isn't guaranteed? Well, you could ask the same question to the millions of US citizens graduating college each year (particularly 2020-2024 grads) who have just spent hundreds of thousands of dollars landing a degree that was supposed to help them land a cushy job, only to have them move back into their childhood bedroom and working at their local coffee shop. If they knew their liberal arts degree (or even their CompSci degree, considering the current state of jobs within the tech industry) might not land them a good job, would they still have gone for the enrichment and education alone? If they are unhappy with the lack of employment opportunities post-grad rather than focusing on their intellectual gains and enlightenment, are they missing the point of going to college in the first place?

- New Comment: The point is to write this 'on the nose' question because so many seem upset by not getting sponsorship after opt or even an opt job. But none of this is guaranteed, so I wonder if people are missing the basic point of coming to the US. Perhaps if people come with the correct expectation maybe fewer people will be upset. So I want to know how many people who came for the experience come away happy. Anyone?

- New Comment: Yes. I came here only for the degree with no intention of staying in the US for work OR the cultural exchange.

Title of the post: Very long wait times for OPT processing

Body of the post: Submitted my application on April 1st. This is the longest wait time I've seen in comparison to other posts here. I am supposed to start working on July 22nd. Should I be worried?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Nah, it usually takes 2.5-3 months. However, if you don't want to stress about it, premium processing. Guarantees decision in 30 days. I did PP last year, Aug 11. Got my EAD card delivered Aug 30.

- New Comment: If you're talking about just the initial, it doesn't typically take too long, from my experience and from what I've seen on this sub. If you don't hear back in a month or so, spring for the premium. You'll get it in a few weeks' time.

The STEM on the other hand is a nightmare. Waited 4 months before applying premium and got it in 10 days. So I'd recommend just directly paying that while applying.

DO NOT rely on the website. I got my approval, but it still says 4 months pending.

- New Comment: I applied early n it still took me 2 months. Yours seems like during the peak time. So I'd say 3-3.5 months

- New Comment: Yeah mine shows 7 months and I applied on march 9

- New Comment: I applied for OPT on March 08th, got the approval on April 24. Throughout this period the status was ?It is taking longer than expected?

A friend of mine applied on Feb 14 and got approval on March 18

And another applied on March 7 and got approval on April 19

- New Comment: Any update ? I applied on April 1st too and it has been saying « Application taking longer than usual » for like 2 months. My work start date was on July 1st so I'm stressed out

Title of the post: Weird situation with STEM OPT request and F1 Visa renewal

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Body of the post: Hey y'all, thanks for reading through this long text! Kinda stressed out about this situation and would appreciate any input.

I graduated last May and I have been working with my current employer since 06/11/23 on a post-completion OPT. This initial OPT expires on 06/12/24. My F1 visa stamp expires on 07/04/24.

I am leaving to my home country on 04/26 (this friday) and returning on 05/28.

Due to delays with preparing the i983 for my STEM Extension request, I might not be able to submit the I-765 request to USCIS before I leave the country. And AFAIK, you can only submit I-765 while in the US.

The sticky situation is that I have an appointment to renew my F1 visa stamp in India on 05/01. How risky is it to renew the visa while on the last month of initial OPT? Any horror/success stories?

Now I have 2 options:

- Cancel the visa renewal appointment and fly back on 05/28 (my planned return date). I will then submit the I-765 with Premium Processing as soon as I land in the US. My visa stamp will expire on 07/04 so I will have to fly back again whenever possible next year to get it renewed.

- Go ahead with the renewal assuming that they will not ask about the STEM OPT. I know that this is riskier but has anyone had success in this situation? Again, I will be submitting the I-765 with Premium Processing as soon as I land in the US

I am trying my best to submit the I-765 before I leave which would solve everything but I am still waiting on my company

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to fill out the form.

Does anyone have any advice on pros/cons with each option? Appreciate it!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Submit everything and see if there is premium processing. If u get ur ead card here ask someone to ship it so that u dont have any trouble justifying the renewal and also in the immigration when u come back. Not from india but i did that and everything went smoothly

- New Comment: Option 1.

It?s not recommended to leave the country while processing your STEM OPT.

- New Comment: Same boat as you with the STEM extension I-983 form. The form has not yet been filled. But I do not have my visa expiring as in your case.

Title of the post: Am I allowed to do this?

Body of the post: Hi! Currently on CPT doing an internship. I was wondering if we are allowed to earn money as a one time thing? Basically there?s this youtube channel that makes skits and they cast anyone who fits the prompt (similar to Jubilee if you are familiar with that) and I wanted to sign up because it seemed fun. I found out recently that they actually pay you ~\$100 if you get casted for the video. I was wondering if it?s a violation of F-1 if I take the money? I haven?t applied or filmed yet but I am considering it.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes, it's a violation of F-1 to perform any work (even unpaid, if it would have otherwise been paid) or earn any income (except passive investments) without authorization.

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Examples of authorization include CPT (only for the specific employer), OPT (related to major) or STEM OPT (only for employers that've filed an I-983).

- New Comment: Doing paid work even as an unpaid participant is a big NO with USCIS since it violates labor laws which can get you and your employer in trouble. Forget about doing the YouTube thing and focus on your internship if you want to stay out of trouble.

- New Comment: >I was wondering if we are allowed to earn money as a one time thing?

Only if it is listed on your I-20 under employers as part of your campus work, CPT or otherwise related to your major on OPT.

>I was wondering if it's a violation of F-1 if I take the money?

No. It is a violation when you engage in the work. The payment itself is not the specific illegal action. Payment or lack thereof does not determine if it is a violation.

- New Comment: Thanks everyone for the answers!

- New Comment: Have them pay you in cash with no credits in the video and delete this post.

- New Comment: Perhaps a related tangent: I was invited by the bakery section of a restaurant chain called Panera to taste test their food and write reviews. They offered me 30\$ in coupons to be applied when I order something there. Similarly, there are surveys by our uni and other unis in the suburbs to participate in their various studies where they wanted subjects for say e.g. a simulated game to understand human behaviour and paid like 20-30\$ in cash. Similarly, I received a few online surveys that paid me via PayPal similar amounts like 20-30\$. I just assumed these are not exactly "job" or employment situations. So, I didn't actually think whether these are violations of F1. But, it probably generated some value for the people who paid these tiny amounts. These are the only ones I ever received and participated. So,

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please tell me are these indeed F1 violations or not? Feeling a bit nervous. Thanks. ????

- New Comment: I heard something called we can take as many work permits as possible... Unable to phrase it properly.

I saw a yt video where some got multiple work permits. Ig it's multiple h1b. Is this true?

- New Comment: No one is gonna care if you receive \$100 lol

I did so much of this kind of stuff in college

Title of the post: Chance of F1 visa acceptance while father applied for political asylum

Body of the post: My father is in the us for eleven years and he applied for political asylum. He has work permit and he works in Uber. My mother is a house wife. I have managed a presidential scholarship which covers more than my full tuition fee over four years from a state university of texas. I didn't hide my father's info in my ds160. Some people suggested me to show my mom as my sponsor. So we have made a trade license for travel and tour agency on behalf of my mother.

What are the chances of my visa acceptance?

How should I answer about my sponsor?

How should I answer if I am asked about my father?

Should I hide my father's info in my ds160?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Low. Father is a political asylum seeker and you would be assumed to do the same.

Visa officer needs a strong reason why you would e coming back to your home country after your studies and with your dad seeking asylum, it?s going to be hard to prove.

- New Comment: It?s a good 50-50 chance. I had the same situation. Not asylum but similar.

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Be confident, don't bring up your father and keep the conversation on you and your sponsor.

Hope it works out!

I'll be graduating this spring.

- New Comment: Slime to none

Title of the post: Can an acquaintance provide proof of fund for i20?

Body of the post: I'm in procedure to get my loan, but it will take atleast 20days for it to get sanctioned. In the meantime, I wanted to get my i20.

My family/ immediate relatives doesnt have that kind of liquid fund. Would a letter and a bank account statement from an acquaintance work for i20?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes! That's what I did

- New Comment: Yes totally it will work

- New Comment: Yes. At the school where I work we have the "sponsor" complete a financial affidavit with the student along with proof of funding.

Title of the post: F1 Reinstatement after OPT Denial

Body of the post: Applied for OPT 10 days late from the DSO recommendation date on the I-20, after obtaining my BS. Did not realize the mistake and by the time USCIS denied my case it was already past the 60-day grace period.

So now I have applied, been accepted into a master's program at my undergrad university, going to file for reinstatement.

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Have heard from lawyers, others who have gone through the process to show that I'm a "good person" with volunteering/community involvement, career goals, and why it would be a personal hardship if reinstatement were denied.

I've been in the States for 9 years, would it be good to show establishments in that sense? The website was glitching and not letting me attach files when I was submitting my OPT, lawyer said that would be good to include as well. Any further tips on making a strong argument for the reinstatement?

Would also appreciate any insights on the approval chances of my case, processing time at the Texas service center, or tips on making a convincing case in the letter to USCIS. TIA!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I am currently experiencing a similar challenge as you. Unfortunately, my OPT application was also denied due to a submission after the 60-day deadline. I faced miscommunication issues with my DSO, which unfortunately cannot be proven as they have not acknowledged any misinformation.

I am actively exploring my options for reinstatement and have already secured admission to one university. I am awaiting a response from another university that has indicated they might assist with the reinstatement process. Additionally, I am in consultations with immigration attorneys to ensure I navigate this situation as effectively as possible.

Given our similar circumstances, I thought it might be helpful if we could keep each other updated through direct messaging. Sharing insights and potential solutions could benefit us both as we navigate this.

- New Comment: >Have heard from lawyers, others who have gone through the process to show that I'm a "good person" with volunteering/community involvement, career goals, and why it would be a personal hardship if

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reinstatement were denied.

The "good person" items have no legal weight. But an adjudicator may like seeing it personally, or not care at all.

>I've been in the States for 9 years, would it be good to show establishments in that sense?

For a non-immigrant status? No.

>The website was glitching and not letting me attach files when I was submitting my OPT, lawyer said that would be good to include as well.

Had absolutely no influence on the reason for your denial.

The ONLY argument you need to make is this:

Your OPT denial was caused by circumstances beyond your control. Because a condition of reinstatement is that "Circumstances beyond the student's control caused the status violation."

Applying late is generally not a circumstance beyond your control.

- New Comment: UPDATE-

Submitted a very thorough reinstatement case to USCIS by starting another degree. The current estimated processing is about 7~ months, but my case was approved with no biometric/RFE in 70 days!

I wish you best of luck if you are experiencing a similar issue, it is stressful and there are not a lot of promising solutions out there. I would be more than happy to share my experience further, feel free to DM me!

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- New Comment: Congratulations on your approval.

Can you please share your timeline? When did you graduate? When was your opt denied? When did you apply for reinstatement? When was it approved? When did you enroll in a new program? Before or after reinstate? Did you get a lawyer? What documents did you submit for your application?

Thanks in advance for answering these questions. I'm in the same position and I'm a little confused on what to do.

Title of the post: International student needs advice

Body of the post: Hey, I'm an international student junior in a United States college who just got an internship late May-early August but it is far away. The internship is in the country and there aren't bus stops for miles. I do not own a car and doing Uber for that period would cost as much or more than the money I make with the internship. I pay my own school expenses so I need to save up over the summer and can't spend all the money. Even if I could, the area is so empty that getting an Uber is difficult. I looked into motels, hotels, Air b and b's but they are more expensive than Uber since there's a river nearby. I have tried apartments but they do not lease for 3 months periods. I tried to find rooms for rent but I would still need someone to drive me since the closest one is 4 hrs away. Please tell me of any platforms to find temporary housing or possible solutions?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Try the Roomster app. You can rent a private room this way.

- New Comment: Rent a car or try fb subleasing groups for college nearby

- New Comment: Try looking for travel nurse rentals (these normally allow shorter-term leases). Other than that, look into Facebook groups.

- New Comment: Check the Facebook page of the town and maybe put a post saying you're looking for summer

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accommodation.

Check for nearby universities and their Facebook page, maybe you'll find something there.

Check Craigslist for that location and make a post saying you're looking for summer accommodation.

- New Comment: If possible, rent a car for 3 months so that you don't need to worry much about your accommodation location.

- New Comment: Start taking driving lessons asap. It will be initially expensive and a huge lifestyle shift, but will pay off exponentially.

- New Comment: You could try local churches or international groups in the area to see if someone in the congregation has a guestroom they would be willing to let you use

- New Comment: buy a bike on craigslist and buy to work

or get a boyfriend who will lend his bike to you for the summer, which is what i did in that situation

Title of the post: RFE on STEM OPT Extension

Body of the post: Hi everyone,

I wanted to reach out to the community regarding a situation my friend is currently facing with her STEM OPT Extension application.

She recently received a Request for Evidence (RFE) due to accruing about 93 days of unemployment. The circumstances leading to this were beyond her control, including a layoff and delays in the background verification process by her new employer, which caused a delay of about a month.

The RFE specifically requests paychecks and dates of employment. While we understand the process and its

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requirements, we're hoping to gather insights or experiences from anyone who might have gone through a similar situation.

While I understand that Reddit isn't a place for legal opinions, any shared experiences or advice on how to navigate this situation would be greatly appreciated. We're particularly interested in understanding if there's any possibility of making a compelling case for the STEM OPT to be granted despite the accrued unemployment days.

Thank you in advance for any guidance or support you can provide. Your input could make a significant difference in my friend's situation.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 93 days of unemployment on OPT means that she overstayed her visa. OPT has 90 days of unemployment. Was she employed at uni or any other positions during that time that she can submit?

Title of the post: How early can i enter USA on F1?

Body of the post: I will be starting Masters in USA with a start program date of (classes start date) of Sep 23.

Orientation date is Sep 15. With a F1 can i come to USA on Aug 17th? My brother is also coming to USA for a UG start date of Aug 26, so my parents want to come by Aug 20 with both of us, drop my brother then drop me at my college by Sep 5 and leave back for home (I am an international student). I don't know how to make this work. I will have accommodation from Sep 1.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: There is a section on your I-20 that lists your earliest permissible admission date.

- New Comment: You can arrive no more than 30 days prior to the program start date listed on the I-20. Note that is 30 *days* and not one month.

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- New Comment: You cannot enter earlier from the date mentioned under the column "earliest admission date" on i20.

Doesn't matter when is the orientation or actual study commencement.

- New Comment: Problem with getting two visas is that the embassy as a matter of procedure cancels any existing valid visas without prejudice

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: F-1 Visa Interview Slot Anxiety (Fall 2024 Intake) - Any Tips?

Body of the post:

Hey everyone!

I'm absolutely thrilled to announce that I got accepted into a US university for Fall 2024! Everything has been running smoothly so far - applications submitted well before deadlines, acceptance letters received... feeling super pumped!

But now I'm hitting a bit of a snag with the F-1 visa interview slot. It seems like everyone's talking about how competitive it is to get a slot, and I'm starting to worry. What if I don't get one at all?? This is the first time anything in this whole process feels uncertain, and it's stressing me out a bit.

Anyone else going through the same anxieties? Have any of you secured a slot yet? Any tips or tricks you can share on how to maximize my chances? Am I freaking out too early (it's still March, after all)?

Also, I came across a Chrome extension called "CheckVisaSlots." Has anyone used it? Is it worth the download?

Any advice or shared experiences would be greatly appreciated!

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Unsolicited advice- This is a start of your terrible experience with the US legal immigration system that will introduce anxieties of all kinds at every step. It's doesn't seem like it's changing anytime soon given the political partisanship. If you are from India like many of us here, I would rethink your move to the US. Money is certainly good. But when you earn enough of it, it doesn't feel worth dealing with away from family.

- New Comment: This anxiety will follow you throughout. Today its F1, tomorrow will be H1B and then for GC before you rest in peace. So chill out, you will get a slot soon. Just be active on telegram groups when someone posts that slots are available.

- New Comment: Everyone gets a slot eventually, chill and be aware

- New Comment: I went through the same hassle in 23. The extension does help, but getting on 2-3 of those telegram groups definitely helps. An agent is definitely not required.

Here's something that might make you less anxious. Last year the mass slot opening happened 2 times. May 15 -20 time and June 15-20th time. This info I got on telegram itself. I couldn't get all the documents before first opening and second opening was my only shot. The supposed slots would be for interviews starting July 15.

Anxiety got me checking telegram right from 13 th June. I would monitor it every 10 mins, into the night. When they didn't announce on 15th, the anxiety just kept growing. But finally they did around 23-24th. Although when it opened, it looked like it was only a lucky couple of spots. But later it opened freely and people were happily swapping slots almost 3-4 days into the opening. This means there was enough slots and time for everyone.

Don't listen to the agents trying to sell you those services. They have the same website but just more resources. You can easily get it even if you monitor 1-2 times a day.

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- New Comment: It's rare. I was in your situation. Anxiety and stress. You have few choices keep your eye on website, hire an agent. I hired an agent for my appointment. Sometimes it shows in midnight as well(heard somewhere).

- New Comment: Hi. I am in the same situation as yours. Have you received your I20 yet?

Are we eligible for an interview waiver if we hold a valid US visa? I have my apprehension for an interview waiver as I have heard that you will eventually be called for an interview if you are applying for F1 the first time, which ultimately takes away a lot of your time and peace.

- New Comment: Can relate this to a whole another level. Any luck in booking the slot yet?

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Don't worry. There will be bulk slots opening up starting May 20, 2024. This has been posted on US Embassy's Official Instagram page. I don't think you should be facing slots availability issue post May 20. However, if you still do, there's an option to request for emergency appointment 60 days prior to programs's start date, with some conditions.

As for the Chrome extension you're talking about, it's pretty accurate but not very much helpful as you need to manually check the slot availability unless you buy their premium version. There are also paid Telegram groups that are useful that my potential roommate is part of. Let me know if you want to know the details, I can ask him and share it with you.

I can understand your anxiety, but it's not in your control. I'd recommend you to be patient until third week of March.

Again, please don't worry. Let me know if you wanna talk in DM's and vent it out. Happy to help.

- New Comment: Hello! I've also got my admit from a uni and am looking for visa slot WhatsApp & Telegram groups to join. If anyone here has any leads, pls share. Thanks ??

- New Comment: Do you know when the bulk slots are opening up for july24?

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- New Comment: hello so I have my visa interview on July 23 rd what if I get rejected is there any way for me to get another slot in July for fall semester

Title of the post: Is SEVP down?

Body of the post: For students on OPT, how are you reporting employment? SEVP portal is down for a couple of days.

I just secured an employment.

Note: I already reported to my DSO for the mandatory ISP reporting but can't update my SEVP portal. My 90 days of unemployment is approaching in a couple of days.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: We would also like to draw your attention to the upcoming update to the SEVP Student Portal. SEVP has released the following information:

Due to the complexity of the system upgrade planned for the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) Portal on Friday, March 15, the SEVP Portal is now unavailable through midnight, 12:00 a.m., Saturday, March 16, EDT.

During the outage, users do not have access to the SEVP Portal. Any changes to Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) student records will upload to the SEVP Portal once it is back online. SEVP will not send a follow-up email regarding system availability.

NOTE: When students log in to the SEVP Portal for the first time after the system upgrade, they will need to change their password. There will be a notification on the SEVP Portal Sign In page explaining the outage and password reset requirement for students.

- New Comment: Is it still down? I need to update my address

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- New Comment: I have weird issue I submitted my stem validation report on Feb to my DSO and I did check it I says submitted in the portal however after update of the portal now it says ?PAST DUE? and also I got email saying the same . I called the SEVIS directly and they said as per their it is indeed submitted and ask me to ignore it but obviously it was bothering why it is show past due and also emailed my DSO to check on his SEVIS account what he is seeing ..did anybody face this issue ?
- New Comment: It's 3 pm PT, still down. I'm assuming it should be back online tomorrow (Monday).
- New Comment: I had the same issues I couldn't log in to my sevp portal but when I used chrome with incognito mode I was able to login.
- New Comment: i can't log in is it still down or is it just me??

Title of the post: Help!My sevis fee was chargedback,and missed last payment date

Body of the post: I'm a Chinese who plan to study in the United States this year. I got the offer and i20, but I got stuck on the Sevis fee. Since I don?t have a visa card, I had to find an Chinese student who studying in Australia to pay the sevis for me. It's paid on 1.16. I also got the payment confirmation that day. I thought it was done.But later I received an email on 2.6 saying that my sevis fee was returned to the cardholder at the request of the cardholder. Then I went to the i901 confirmation page to check, and it was indeed unpaid. The email also said I have to pay it again before 3.10 otherwise my sevis status will be cancelled, and my name will be sent to ICE and CBP. And because there are too many scam emails in my Gmail mailbox, and I don?t check my mailbox often, I noticed this message on 3.13. And it was already three days past the time limit, but I asked the guy who paid for me and he said that he did not ask for a refund. I thought I was scammed at first, but then he sent the money back to me. , I checked again, and found out that it was because it was detected that the "agency" paid it for me, so the sevis was chargedback, but this was not the biggest problem. The most important thing is that they said they would sent my name to the immigration bureau and customs. I'm really afraid that I'll get stuck during the visa interview and customs. I want to know if this is serious and what impact it will have? Also, I have to use Western Union to pay sevis. I don't know how to do it at all. I checked online. I?m still confused about

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it. I hope someone can give me some guidance, and I'll be appreciated for it.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Reach out to your DSO, you might need a new I20.

- New Comment: Hello i also missed the payment date ...

what happened after that.. Did you Able to to solve this

Title of the post: Use up STEM OPT first or go directly to Master's? Got accepted but unsure if I should

Body of the post: TL;DR: I am a F-1 student on OPT (first year) contemplating if I should go to grad school this Fall, or use up my STEM OPT first (extra 2 years) then reapply to grad school.

Full:

I graduated undergrad May 2023 with a degree in industrial design and am almost through my last few months of post-completion OPT, and got an offer for a MSc in biomedical engineering at a highly ranked school for Fall 2024. My goal for the MSc is to have a better chance at a good R&D job in medical devices, so entirely professional oriented. Now I'm unsure if I should go this year is because I barely have enough funds saved up for grad school (I have just enough to cover tuition and rent), and I think 2 extra years of work experience is more beneficial than a Master's degree title.

Pros of going to grad school this year:

\- potential of career advancement, potential of salary raise??? (not sure, as I know of people who graduated master's but end up with bachelor's new grad salary)

\- meet new people from the industry (not as much as meeting people at work though)

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\- job market for tech might be getting better after I graduate in 2025?? (no guarantees)

Pros of keep working and use up my STEM:

\- keep savings, no student loans taken out (so I'm better prepared for emergencies)

\- I'll have 2 more years of work experience which might be more valuable than a MSc degree?

\- I won't waste my STEM OPT

Questions I'm wondering, that I hope people who are on the same boat as me would have some answers to:

** - When applying to jobs, would companies rather see a candidate with a bachelor's + 3 yoe, or a candidate with master's + 1 yoe?**

\- For those who worked a bit between undergrad and grad, do you feel that a grad degree contributed to your job search afterwards? Was it easier? Did you get a higher salary?

\- For people in the tech field (SDE, SWE, DS, DA, UX, etc.), do you think a grad degree helped you perform better at your job?

Thank you!

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Companies would rather see a bachelors with 3 years of work ex than a masters with 1 year of work ex, especially when you're an international student. The US work experience will really help you in your post masters job search. Work for 2 more years, save up for your masters expenses and then go do your masters. You'll be a much more valuable candidate then!

- New Comment: Get experience then do masters. It will give you few advantages. You will save money, gain expletive which you will need in the future as SWE is getting very competitive, and last it will give you time to apply for H1B as it is 10% acceptance rate now, time to understand if you want to live in the US, and to see if you actually want to be in the field. Getting into masters isn't the difficult you can always do it.

- New Comment: I have a masters in biomedical engineering. For something like R&D in medical device , experience is the most important especially if it can be related to R&D , quality or design etc. That's why many people if unable to secure a role in R&D from the jump , may choose a quality engineering role as an entry point and then internally try and switch to R&D.

I tried going for R&D positions with Masters + grad student research and I wasn't successful but the same may not be for you but I'm sharing information I've learned over the period speaking with other BME's that have worked in the job market.

What I would do in your position is to use up my STEM OPT then go to grad school giving another 3 years of work authorization.

- New Comment: I am in the same situation as well but i'm in SWE, currently in my second year of OPT/STEM OPT. Can't offer you much advice but i think it's a good advantage. You can have 3 years of saving up money, and also a bit of time to look for any international student's available scholarships and research assistantship, although they're usually rare for foreign students. Who knows job market will be by then but having 3 years of US exp plus a master can definitely help.

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Title of the post: Parents visiting during graduation ceremony

Body of the post: Hello Community,

My parents wanted to visit me during my graduation ceremony, but I feel little anxious as I don't have any job, vehicle, small room and this is my final semester. Will it be a good idea for them to visit now

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It's ok. They know all that.

If they can afford tickets, i guess yall can afford some Uber? If not, take the train if your parents can walk.

Congrats on graduation ?

- New Comment: I see how this is a very difficult situation for you. You feel responsible and inadequate but this graduation is a very important part of your life and you don't want your family to miss this. I know someone in a very similar situation did not invite their parents and they regret it a lot now.

- New Comment: You came to study first and foremost. If you did well academically your parents will want to be here to celebrate

Don't ever choose to battle the world alone if others are willing and able to

Give you support

- New Comment: It was the same with me when I graduated in 2016. My family came from Europe for three weeks. They had never been here so they wanted to make the most out of flying so far. They rented a car and we had a little road trip. Also, because life happens, they haven't been able to come since and are planning this year. You never know that that next best time may actually take place.

- New Comment: I almost made this exact mistake back in December. But being far away from home is already

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emotional and graduating with your family is an amazing feeling. They get to be there with you in one of the most important days of your life. They probably already know your situation but they are still willing to come! They probably just wanna share your joy with them. Since I couldn't apply for my mom's visa on time she never made it and i regret it to this day but my sister has a visa and managed to come and I am so glad she did!

- New Comment: I am in the same situation as you! My parents have booked tickets, they're going to visit me and be here for like 20 days, I know it's a big thing for them and me but right now not having a job in hand and having them over feels weird and not something i am proud of!

- New Comment: I'm sure your parents have carefully considered their decision. As the saying goes, there's never a perfect time, but you can always find ways to support them in the future.

Congratulations!!

- New Comment: Hi OP! my parents visited me last year. i also did not have a car and was living in a small studio. they had to sleep in an air bed cause i only had a twin bed and no couch. we used public transpo everywhere. We were fine and had a blast!! It will be okay :)

- New Comment: I was in the exact situation couple months ago. Most universities allow you to defer your graduation ceremony till the next semester. And no, you're not graduating late. You graduate on time, just delaying the ceremony. That way you get time to look for jobs and be somewhat stable before they arrive. Hope this helps.

- New Comment: Of course

Title of the post: EAD cards timeline

Body of the post: I am in the process of applying for the OPT EAD, what is the timeline looking like for people who have applied recently? I gave a start date with my employer of July 8th, do you think it's possible for the EAD card to arrive in time? Should I use premium processing to start with?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Apply 2.5-3 months before your graduation. Many people tend to apply 1-2 months before their graduation, so the process slows down gradually if you apply late.

So yes, if you apply now, you could expect to receive it by April.

- New Comment: I applied 2 weeks ago. And today it says estimated time for my case is 2 weeks.

- New Comment: What's your graduation date? You can't apply more than 90 days before that. As long as you apply within the first 2 weeks of the first allowed date, you should get it within 2-3 months.

If needed, you can also file for premium processing (for 1500\$). Or you can even convert the regular processing into premium processing if needed later, hope that helped.

- New Comment: Apply as early as possible. That way if there's a mistake, you're not screwed.

I graduated in December 2023, Applied in October 2023 and got my EAD card and got it just before thanksgiving, November 2023. I noticed a mistake on my EAD card, used the e-service tool to report it and sent it back in December 2023. We're in March 2024, I have not revived my new EAD card.

- New Comment: I applied in the first week of December and was approved end of January. I've heard it taking the full expected duration (~ 3 mo) or a couple of weeks for a lucky few. I'd place the median time to somewhere around 2.5 months.

A pro tip I received was: Use the Lawfully app to follow the applicant processing times in a +/- 2 week window around you. That should give you a fair idea of when you can expect to be done. Good luck!

- New Comment: Shit! My start date is May 13th and I'll be applying on the first week of March. Should I go for premium processing?

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- New Comment: i applied on feb 5 and got the standalone approval by feb 23, the card should take another 2 weeks to produce

- New Comment: Applied on December 24

Card produced on Feb 29

Expecting to receive it by March 15 (worst case)

- New Comment: You can apply upto 60 days before your date of graduation. I applied as soon as I became eligible, and took me 2-2.5 months

- New Comment: Thanks for the replies, it calms my anxiety knowing that mostly they show up in 90 days.

- New Comment: I submitted mine around last week of November, then got the approval notice within the last week of January. Finally received my EAD within the 2nd week of Feb.

- New Comment: Apply as close to possible to the 90 days prior to program completion as you can. For the vast majority of students, there is no reason to cause delays by choosing to delay your own application. Be prepared. Apply as early as possible. That is the best way to reduce your own stress by then having to ask and worry about all the time USCIS processing times. It is also your best way of avoiding later needing to pay the extra \$1685 fee to have USCIS expedite your application. Expedite it yourself for free by taking action to apply in a timely manner.

Prior to 2023, students were much better at applying close to the 90 days. Then suddenly last year some group-think seemed to suddenly result in students waiting (for what bad reason/internet advice I have no idea) until the second half of their final term to apply. Don't be part of this. Apply as close as you can to the 90 days that USCIS allows you to apply prior to your program completion date.

Title of the post: Company requiring export license [F1 CS graduate]

Body of the post: I recently received a job offer as a software engineer from a big tech company. But during the hiring

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process they sent me an email that says I need an export license to work for them. They asked for some documents to start the process and apply for the license with the government. Getting this license can take at least three months. I am currently on F1-OPT and my unemployment days are accumulating.

It was shocking news to me. Has anybody here heard about this thing or has experience about it?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Are you from an embargoed country?

- New Comment: >Has anybody here heard about this thing or has experience about it?

Yes, it's fairly common. It also takes 3ish months to obtain. You seem to understand so... Not sure what your question is.

You understand your situation.

- New Comment: I would try and volunteer in the meantime so that you don't accrue unemployment days.

Title of the post: Drivers license while stem opt in process and current opt expired

Body of the post: Has anyone gotten their drivers license renewed(based on the automatic 180 days extension) while they have a stem OPT form in processing with USCIS and the current OPT ended?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Drivers license renewal processes are 100% state dependent. Some states care about your immigration status deeply, others don't care at all.

- New Comment: I tried in Illinois. My Opt was ending in 4 weeks but I had that 180 day extension. They didn't even look at it. They said they only look at the EAD - so I had to renew again once my stem opt EAD arrived

- New Comment: Been to the DMV and they gave me 6 months extension as per the notice. Thanks for the inputs

Reddit Posts

everyone ?

- New Comment: California allows for a 3 month temporary extension.
- New Comment: In Georgia, it's only until EAD expiry
- New Comment: I was allowed to renew based on the automatic extension in North Carolina
- New Comment: I did mine in Chicago Lexington DMVc they gave me temporary 90 days extension based on STEM OPT Receipt notice and told me to come back with new EAD for renewal
- New Comment: I first went to a private DMV thinking it was going to be easier. They did not want to renew my license because I did not have the original receipt letter, and had printed out one from my USCIS portal. The lady told me that since it was not the official letterhead, she could not accept it.

I then went to a real dmV. They approved me right away, and asked no questions at all. I used the same copy of the letter that I had printed from my portal. All it takes is one person who knows what they are doing, versus a power trip official that wants to give you a hard time for nothing reason?

- New Comment: Succesfully renewed mine in IN with the Receipt of Notice. Not sure if this varies from DMV to DMV and / or from staff to staff.

Title of the post: Does summer count in the 1 year CPT limit that makes me ineligible to OPT?

Body of the post: I am having an internship soon that will make me exceed 1 year aggregate on CPT. My DSO is saying that the summer doesn't count towards the 1 year that makes me ineligible for OPT. Is this true? I just cannot find this information elsewhere.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >My DSO is saying that the summer doesn't count towards the 1 year that makes me ineligible for

Reddit Posts

OPT. Is this true?

Not even a little true.

One year of full time CPT makes you ineligible for OPT. Full stop, the end. No special exceptions for summer.

Part time CPT has zero impact regardless of length

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevis-help-hub/student-records/fm-student-employment/f-1-curricular-practical-training-cpt>

"One year of full-time CPT eliminates a student's eligibility for OPT."

- New Comment: It didn't count for me. I had to stop.

Title of the post: Pros and Cons of Premium Processing for STEM OPT

Body of the post: Hi all, my initial opt ends on the last day of May and I am planning on to send in my stem opt extension application in the first week of March. I would love to hear your thoughts on paying for premium processing, given the current 3.5 months processing time. Or should I apply first and file for PP a month or two later?

Doing PP: Guaranteed max 30 day processing time, a piece of mind, and adequate time to respond to any RFEs or unexpected situations. However it is expensive (\$1500)

Not doing PP: 180 days of automatic extension from day of application receipt should be enough turnaround time. However, if case gets denied outside of grace period time frame then it's GG. Can't renew drivers license without valid status (I'm in MO, not sure about other states).

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Applications generally spike during summer as more people graduate so assume time for processing would be a lot higher than 3.5 months. If you don't have any travel plans outside of the US you should be okay with no premium processing.

- New Comment: Just apply 90days (if it is allowed 180 days then use 180) prior to your expiry. And you get additional 180 days automatic upon filing in time.

This is good enough time for you to get approval.

No need to waste your money, but that tension lingers. If you can hold that's great. Also you can switch to prem anytime while it is pending.

- New Comment: The one con I can think of is that you'll lose some money.

Back in 2020 I missed out on about \$11,000 because I was out of work for two months while waiting for my OPT (I'd already had a job lined up). So sometimes it's worth the money.

- New Comment: Thanks for all of your input. I think I will end up doing Premium processing for that piece of mind.

Title of the post: F1 OPT signature is 10 months old

Body of the post: I fly back to the US in a few hours. My I20 OPT signature is 10 months old. I just found out that for reentry into the US on F1 OPT the signature needs to be less than 6 months old.

Unfortunately it's already the weekend and I reach on a Sunday so there is no possibility of getting the signature anymore.

I am panicking right now. Does anyone know what happens in this situation?

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Is canceling the flight an option ? If so, don't board the flight. You can go next week. Your college should give you a new travel signature by then.

- New Comment: Check if your university has an emergency number for this stuff ? I know mine did (you called Public Safety and told them you were an international student with a border issue and they'd put you right through, I grabbed someone over a Christmas break weekend back in the day).

Good luck! If this pans out, you can get a valid I-20 PDF ASAP, go find a printer someplace, and you're good to go.

- New Comment: Heyyyy!!! I would try to get in. I did not know mine was over 8 months when I travelled around in the middle of the year and I was able to enter the US. However, I am not sure if my situation was lucky

- New Comment: Can't you apply for the travel signature online ? and then print, sign it while returning.

- New Comment: I did this 4 weeks ago and the border patrol didn't even look at the date. Got pulled into the back room to answer some unrelated questions so they even took a more proper look and still didn't mention the date

- New Comment: You just need to have a valid travel signature when you return to the states. Your DSO can sign and send it over to you electronically.

- New Comment: The I-20 signature is fine as it reflects the day you got the document. The signature on the second page is what you're referring to?. Do your best to get travel signature electronically before your return. If you don't get it for whatever reason out of your control then don't panic. I entered in August without a signature at all.

- New Comment: You shouldn't worry. Travel and don't think about it. So long as your I-20 is valid. I used mine with was 11 months old and travelled with no issues at all

- New Comment: I was always under the impression it's 12 months not 6 for the travel signature?

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Title of the post: Do I need a new F1 visa for a different university?

Body of the post: I spent an undergraduate semester abroad as an F1 student at A university last year (Spring 2023). I now want to start a PhD program at B university this fall. I am currently outside of the US.

My F1 visa from last year for A University is valid until 2027.

My question is, do I need to apply for a new F1 visa for B University? Or can I simply travel on my old valid F1 visa from A University? Of course, I will be needing a new I20 from B University regardless.

What's confusing me is that my old valid F1 visa mentions A University's SEVIS ID. When I get a new I20 from B University, its SEVIS ID from I20 won't match the SEVIS ID on my visa.

I hope any DSO can comment on this. u/codetornado?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hi, I am in a similar boat here and this was the reply of my exchange student supervisor.

"Since you have only studied at XXX in 2022 and your SEVIS record was automatically completed 60 days after you finished your program, unfortunately, it is no longer possible to transfer your SEVIS record.

In order for you to return to the US for a new program of study, you would need to obtain a new SEVIS record (Form I-20) with a new SEVIS ID number.

In regard to your F-1 visa, it is best to check with your local US Embassy whether you are required to obtain a new F-1 visa stamp or if you could use the one you already have, if it's not expired yet. In most cases they would suggest that

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you obtain a new visa stamp if the break in between your study was substantial (more than one semester). "

- New Comment: No, you do not need to apply for an F-1 visa. Per regulation only the initial (first use) I-20/SEVIS ID and F-1 visa information should match. After that, a valid visa is a valid visa. I advise my students there's always a risk when traveling regardless, and there's also a risk with renewing your visa. The choice is yours, but I don't recommend applying for a new visa if you don't have to.

- New Comment: If your SEVIS ID number will be changing, then you should get a new visa even if it's not expired. I have seen students be admitted with a different SEVIS ID on their visa, but it's a risk, so we don't recommend it.

- New Comment: Why is your Sevis changing when you are doing a Sevis transfer from one university to the other?. I have been to 3 schools in the US using the same SEVIS number. Transfer is done from one DSO office to another without you doing anything or making any visa changes.

- New Comment: Can someone educate me on why SEVIS is changing when you're only doing a release of your record from one school to another?. And paying the Sevis fee only once!.

- New Comment: >My question is, do I need to apply for a new F1 visa for B University?

No. Not at all.

>can I simply travel on my old valid F1 visa from A University?

You can because you have previously activated this visa with your past I-20.

>What's confusing me is that my old valid F1 visa mentions A University's SEVIS ID. When I get a new I20 from B University, its SEVIS ID from I20 won't match the SEVIS ID on my visa.

Not a problem. That information is for initial entry. I have had hundreds if not thousands of students over the last decade

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in this situation and have had few if any issues directly related to this situation.

This is how the process is expected go and is as rules intended.

Title of the post: Changing Uni after getting an F1 Visa

Body of the post: Hey guys, I unexpectedly received an early admit. I am extremely grateful, but this school isn't my first choice. My top choices aren't going to be giving admits until mid March. I want to know whether going ahead with Visa slot booking and starting the process with this admit would be something prudent to do ? with the possibility to change later on. Or is that something stupidly complex that I should simply wait? Thanks :)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: As there is a lot of time in suggest you go with the original choice univ to attend visa

- New Comment: You are risking your history with the consular service.

Either you stick with your admitted school, or wait until you have admission from your choice school.

- New Comment: Hello, You can go ahead and once in the US you can request transfer of sevis from this univ to the other univ from which you have an admit.

it is a very easy process hardly takes 1 week.

- New Comment: No problem all the very best.

- New Comment: Wait till mid-March. Any university issuing an I-20 will require some sort of commitment from you, academic and financial. Also, you need to report to the original school to get your SEVIS activated before they can transfer it, so it is an unnecessary hassle.

I'm assuming this is fall admission? Don't worry, lots of students come in fall, you should be able to get interview slots.

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Title of the post: Leave and re-enter the US with a new Sevis

Body of the post: Hey folks,

I am on an F-1 visa and I have transferred to a new school in my semester.

Did anyone find themselves in a similar situation? Were you able to cross the border successfully? Was the interview with the immigration agent intensive? One of my friends told me I could not travel to my home country during the summer and advised me to leave the US and re-enter Mexico with a new school's I-20, SEVIS number, which I have already received. I have never engaged in unauthorized work, and I have no criminal record. I am so stressed that the agent won't let me in the US due as I have changed my school.

Did anyone find themselves in a similar situation? Were you able to cross the border successfully? Was the interview with the immigration agent intensive?

Did anyone find themselves in a similar situation? Were you able to cross the border successfully? Was the interview with the immigration agent intensive?

Thanks

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'm confused, why do you have a new SEVIS?

- New Comment: If you have a valid visa and passport along with a valid I-20 from your school (in your case provided by your new school, you will be fine) no need to take any stress.

Just remember to take a travel signature from your DSO.

- New Comment: If you have a valid visa and the new i20 for your school with the same SEVIS record#, all you need is the travel signature and that's it. I had switched schools from A to B in between doctoral studies and used my original visa with school A on it, but with the updated i20 with a valid travel sign. I'd done it multiple times during the period that the visa was valid. No questions asked.

- New Comment: How was it? Did you travel? What questions were asked and what documents did you show?

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- New Comment: Do you have a valid visa? If no you need to go for visa stamping
- New Comment: You're fine. It might lead to some confusion. But they will stamp it and write down the new I20 number.
- New Comment: Okay, after they write down my new I20, I can travel to my home country and come back without any problem right?
- New Comment: Why didn't y just transfer the sevis?!
- New Comment: If you have a valid visa and the new i20 it should be fine. I don't know why your friend asked you not to travel during the summer and re-enter in Mexico. I switched schools and had a new i20, I went to my country during the summer and came back with no issues. My visa still had the name of my old school and it was fine. They asked me no questions.

Title of the post: URGENT STEM OPT QUERY

Body of the post: I have been on OPT since almost a year and now its time for me to apply for STEM OPT. However, the everification has gotten me super stressed. In the beginning of my hiring process, I had asked my employer if they are everified and they said yes. Now when I requested the EIN number and Everification number, they are providing me with a third party HR company that we receive our paychecks from (Insperity). All this while I thought its just a time tracking website to keep a record of our hours and PTO. Now when I looked it up, turns out it is a third party HR and staffing company, apparently my employer.

I looked up the updated rules on USCIS and it seems like now they have allowed F1 students to file STEM OPT via the staffing company. However, I am not being supervised or trained by the third party company but rather my employer at site who I work for. I dont know if that makes sense. Also, I am confused with what is **bona fide employer ? employee relationship.**

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If someone has been in this shoe, please guide me and I would forever be grateful for this.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This will depend on your institutions interpretation of the USCIS guidance.

Here's our interpretation:

1. The e-verified company must provide the direct training and supervision.
2. The e-verified company must complete the I-983 and be be the official signatory
3. The e-verify employer must be listed on the I-765.

To summarize, if the third party company is your employer, paying your check, providing direct supervision, is e-verified and is completing the I-983, then a bona-fide employer-employee relationship is established. The site or company which you are located will not be an issue for us.

My advice: apply as early as possible so you can try and work out any wrinkles.

- New Comment: I was on a similar situation, working as a contractor for Adecco, as an Engineering Technician at Applied Materials? My Adecco recruiter filled and signed the I-983, if you want, DM me and I can show you the I-983 I uploaded to request my STEM OPT (was approved without problem).

- New Comment: Did you get your OPT extension?

Title of the post: F1 Visa Renewal Dropbox Timeline!

Body of the post: Hello! Since I was pretty stressed out about the timeline of the F1 visa renewal interview waiver/dropbox timeline, I thought I would share mine for those who might be anxious about when they will be getting their passport back from the embassy!

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December 15th - Dropbox appointment in New Delhi VAC

December 19th - CEAC website shows application received

December 22nd - CEAC website shows application approved

December 26th - Passport ready for pickup at New Delhi VAC (I opted for pickup instead of delivery)

Taking into consideration weekends and Christmas Day, for me the whole process took about 6 days!

Feel free to comment or DM if you have any questions about the process :)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I was one of the people who submitted in Chennai in the last week of November (28 November), and I picked up my passport today. For those who are interested:

Dropped off: 28 November (IN VFS Chennai center, in person)

Application Received: 1 December

Approved status: 21 December/22nd December (don't remember exactly)

Issued status: 22 December

Ready for pickup (in person, Chennai): 26th December, evening

Picked up: 27 December.

Reddit Posts

Hope this helps and gives some idea of what the timeline can be for some folks as this process can be very stressful.

Good luck everyone!

- New Comment: Sharing my timeline here for Nairobi interview-waiver F1 renewal:

-01/22 -> Dropped off passport and other docs to approved DHL location (with embassy doc for DHL)

-01/23 -> DHL tracking shows ?Delivered?

-01/25 -> CEAC website shows ?Application Received?

-01/26 -> CEAC website shows ?Approved

-01/29 -> CEAC website shows ?Issued?

-01/30 -> Received DHL tracking email

-01/30 -> Ready for pickup

- New Comment: i submitted my f1 visa application in Kolkata VAC on 3rd May 2024. I had a dropbox situation. In my appointment letter, it is chennai VAC. i was wondering about the recent timelines of getting F1 visa approved. I am really worried. Please let me know.

- New Comment: i?m happy for you bro. i submitted mine in chennai VAC on dec 15, application received on dec 19 just like yours. its still on that status till now. i hope to receive mine asap tho! cuz my classes start on jan 8

- New Comment: How did you know if it?s ready for pick up

- New Comment: Hey how can we choose dropbox for f1 visa renewal?

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- New Comment: OP, to confirm between 15-19th Dec was the status on CEAC showing as ?No Status??

- New Comment: My timeline:

Dropped off my passport at kolkata vac on 24 Jan, 2024 for Chennai consulate. Status still saying delivered to post on 5th February, 2024. Anyone also in a similar boat?

Title of the post: Questions Related To Being Laid Off While on a Holiday Outside of US

Body of the post: Hi Reddit community,

I'm currently on my first year of Optional Practical Training (OPT) as an F1 student in the U.S. and I have a situation that I'm hoping to get some insights on. Next month, I plan to visit India, but there's a lingering concern in my mind.

The possibility of getting laid off while I'm abroad is something I can't ignore. This brings me to two crucial questions:

1. Re-entry to the U.S. if Laid Off:

If, unfortunately, I get laid off while in India, can I re-enter the U.S. without informing the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) about my employment status change? What are the implications of this?

2. Unemployment Days Count: Another aspect that's unclear to me is about the count of unemployment days. Does the 90-day unemployment limit under OPT start counting while I'm outside the U.S., or does it only apply when I'm physically present in the States?

I'm aware that maintaining legal F1 status is crucial and I don't want to inadvertently jeopardize it. Any advice, experiences, or resources you could share would be immensely helpful.

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Looking forward to your responses and thanks in advance!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 1. As long as you have remaining unemployment days, you are legally allowed to return to the US -- though CBP may give you extra scrutiny.

2. Unemployment days absolutely do count regardless of whether you are inside or outside the US. In fact, CBP has sometimes assumed that OPT individuals who spent extended amounts of time abroad (90+ days) are not in fact employed in the US, have run out of unemployment days, and refused them re-entry.

- New Comment: I am not a legal expert, but I can offer some general guidance. It's crucial to consult with an immigration attorney for advice tailored to your situation.

1. ****Re-entry after Layoff:****

- If you are laid off while abroad, you may face challenges re-entering the U.S. The CBP might question changes in your employment status. It's typically advisable to have updated documentation supporting your status when returning.

2. ****Unemployment Days:****

- The 90-day unemployment limit usually starts counting when you are physically present in the U.S. Days spent outside the U.S. may not count towards this limit. However, maintaining continuous employment during OPT is essential.

Remember, immigration policies can be complex and subject to change, so professional advice is essential.

- New Comment: >1. Re-entry to the U.S. if Laid Off: If, unfortunately, I get laid off while in India, can I re-enter the U.S. without informing the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) about my employment status change? What are the implications of this?

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So long as you have valid documents (passport, visa, I-20, EAD Card) and have unemployment days left, you can enter.

CBP may ask you questions about your employment.

>2. Unemployment Days Count: Another aspect that's unclear to me is about the count of unemployment days. Does the 90-day unemployment limit under OPT start counting while I'm outside the U.S., or does it only apply when I'm physically present in the States?

The 90 days are a ticking clock that only stop if you are employed 20hrs a week each week. As soon as that is not true, it starts running. Doesn't matter where you are.

Title of the post: Got an email saying ?your SEVP portal account will close ?

Body of the post: Hi everyone ,

I need some help on this ? I got an email saying my opt authorisation had ended and will close the portal in June 2024 but my EAD doesn't end until Feb 2025.. I was selected for H1B second round but not sure what happened. Please help

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you are selected for H1B, then it might be that your h1b filed through your employer might be approved

- New Comment: Have you contacted DSO?

- New Comment: This just happened to me as well, a day after my H1b application status changed to "Premium Processing Clock Was Stopped For My Case".

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While I am not sure, I believe this is a sign that our h1b COS got approved, and the USCIS status update is delayed because of the holiday.

Did you get any updates?

Title of the post: Re-entry on unexpired post-completion OPT after STEM OPT approved but without

Body of the post: Hey all. I have upcoming travel to Poland (Thu Dec 21 - Mon Jan 8), and I seem to be getting conflicting information about whether I need the new STEM OPT EAD card for re-entry even though my original, post-completion OPT EAD card will be valid when I re-enter. Right now, the application is pending but I anticipate it will get approved either right before or after my departure.

Essentially, I'm worried about the following situation: I depart the US on Dec 21, STEM OPT gets approved and EAD card gets mailed to my US address, I try to re-enter the US on Jan 8 and the CBP officer denies me entry because I don't have the new STEM OPT EAD card, even though my original OPT card is valid until Jan 21. Is this something that could happen? Would I even need the (not-yet-valid at the time of re-entry) STEM OPT EAD card to show to the CBP officer on Jan 8, or am I worrying about this for no good reason because the fact that I have a valid original EAD card at the time of re-entry is sufficient? My reasoning is that since I would be entering on a valid post-completion OPT, the status of STEM OPT is irrelevant because it would not yet be in effect at the time of re-entry.

EDIT: I reached out to my company's immigration lawyers. They said I should be fine, since my current post-completion OPT card will still be valid at the time of entry. They said the only issue could be if USPS tries to deliver the EAD card but no one is at home, which would result in them returning it to USCIS. This should not happen, however, as EAD cards are sent without delivery signature requirement, and if you live in an apartment complex, the card will be securely delivered to your mailbox and waiting to be picked up by you whenever.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: same situation
- New Comment: As long as you have a valid post completion OPT card, you're good.
- New Comment: Same situation
- New Comment: I remember they didn't check my ead, only my i20

I think the problem will be i20, as your i20 will likely say employment pending?

- New Comment: You need a valid I20 with endorsement! If your stem ead is in process your school must have issued you a new i20 with travel signatures valid upto 1-2 more years.
- New Comment: To all commenting: thanks. I have a valid I-20 with a travel signature that says STEM OPT has been requested, that's not the main concern. Let's also assume that once STEM OPT gets approved, I can get an updated I-20 that says "approved" next to STEM OPT.

My question is specifically whether the new, *not-yet-valid* STEM OPT EAD card would be needed to re-enter the country.

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: Can I travel out of the country while on CPT?

Body of the post: Im on CPT for the entirety of this semester and renewing the next. I intend to travel out of the country for around 20 days and return before the start of the spring 2024 semester. The nature of my work is remote and my employer is completely okay with me travelling and working remotely. I also have a travel endorsement signature on my CPT I20 from my schools DSO if that has any effect. Was hoping someone who has been in the same shoes could shed some light if I need to do anything or submit any additional paperwork.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes, I don't think this will be a problem. I also have travelled internationally while on CPT and remote employment.
- New Comment: Yes, you are fine. Remember, your visa needs to be valid to return in most cases.
- New Comment: Yes
- New Comment: Make sure the F1 is valid when u return not expired
- New Comment: Hay asking for an update. Did you travel and come back? If so, what did they ask at the border?

Title of the post: is there any students who their visa got cancelled at the airport the first time in US

Body of the post: What happened to them? Why they got deported / visa cancelled

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Last year I heard a lot of people were sent back because they didn't pay their tuition fees before coming here. Generally you are allowed to pay the fees once you are in the US but some really had a bad day.
- New Comment: This is exceedingly rare. 1 in 10-50,000 type of level of rare.

As for reasons? There are hundreds of things it could be. Mostly illegal items. Drugs, unauthorized work, etc.

- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: I heard a few Chinese students with this experience due to their ties to military. Don't know true or not.

Title of the post: Got an offer but I need sponsorship

Body of the post: Hi guys, I hope everyone is doing well.

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So I got an offer from a bank as an engineering developer intern for summer 2024. While filling out the application, I answered no to visa sponsorship question and they didn't ask me that question during the interview.

Now I have a scheduled call to formally accept the offer letter but i'm assuming they'll ask me that question.

I'm a junior and I have 2 years left on my CPT, and then 3 years left on my OPT, and in the midway I will most likely be married.

Should I say yes to I need sponsorship at this point? If i say no, i will have to ask for a letter for CPT, will they get to know that way?

I would really appreciate your advice and guidance with your experiences.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I had this situation. I told them I am planning to get married during my OPT and I will apply for the GC once that happens. They accepted my CPT and I will start working there with my OPT once I graduate. I think that you should explain your process and how your 3 years of OPT will give you time and that you will be ok. They shouldn't have a problem with CPT at all.

- New Comment: This question is probably one of the most asked on this forum. Don't bring up anything regarding F1 during the call. If they ask you if you need sponsorship. Just say No. Nothing more nothing less. If they ask you if you're authorized to work in the US. Say yes. Nothing more nothing less. Telling them you're on F1 is the best way to get your offer rescinded. On the first day just give them your valid I-9 documents. They're legally required to accept any valid document at onboarding. Since it's an internship you'll have work authorization to cover you the entire duration of your internship.

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- New Comment: >I'm a junior and I have 2 years left on my CPT,

You don't need sponsorship for CPT.

>Should I say yes to I need sponsorship at this point? If i say no, i will have to ask for a letter for CPT, will they get to know that way?

You are an Intern, they don't have expectations you need sponsorship for an internship.

You can say yes or no during CPT. You need to answer correctly for OPT.

- New Comment: You currently don't need sponsorship so technically you didn't misinform anyone. I say once you apply for OPT be open about wanting sponsorship. Idk why everyone here says they won't sponsor you. If they like you they absolutely would if they are not against immigrants

Congrats with marriage plans - I personally suggest you to work on your status yourself. Sounds like you don't ask for sponsorship because you plan to married but something unfortunately may go wrong in the relationship. If I were you marriage would be my plan B

- New Comment: Nope! Because they will not sponsor you!

Title of the post: Return to the U.S. on F-1 OPT Status

Body of the post: Hi all,

I completed my studies in May 2023. I am currently on my F-1 post-completion OPT status. After completing my studies, I left the U.S. in late May. At that time, even though I had applied for F-1 OPT and received my EAD card (starting in late

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August, still within the 90-days unemployment period), I did not have plans to return to the U.S. to continue my OPT.

Recently, however, I was approached with a competitive job offer in the U.S. This unexpected opportunity has prompted me to reconsider my initial decision. I am now exploring the possibility of returning to the U.S. to continue my OPT.

I am aware of the five-month rule concerning the absence from the U.S. while on F-1 status. Unfortunately, I think I won't be able to return before October 26, which marks the end of the five-month period since my departure (5/26). However, I am hoping to return before my allowed unemployment period exceeds, which would be in late November.

Could you please provide guidance on whether re-entering the U.S. between October 26 and late November would still be valid?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I think you should reach out to your school's international student office. Sounds like a fairly specific and situational question that would be best answered by someone who can offer the most informed answer.
- New Comment: If you graduated in May, the latest your OPT could have started is July. Your 90 days of unemployment would get completed sometime in October. You no longer have valid OPT after that.
- New Comment: Well, you are under the interpretation of port of entry officer's purview. Try but also have a plan if you are not allowed to enter.
- New Comment: Hello. I graduated in May, travelled back home on the 12th of June, and came back to the US three days ago. My OPT began counting on July 3rd, I activated it through voluntary remote work in September and I will begin formal work on November 1st.

When I arrived to the airport I was sent to secondary check, I got asked a couple of questions and then accepted into

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the country (quite simple).

I agree with previous comments, are you sure your OPT is still running ? Before the maximum date for it to begin was July 16th in my case. Guess it depends on when you graduated, my commencement was May 17th.

Title of the post: Re-entry to the US on OPT

Body of the post: I'm planning a trip to Thailand in December to see my family again for the first time since I came to the US. I graduated this year and since been on OPT and employed. From research, I know that I need these items for re-entry:

- * I-20 signed for travel by an international student adviser
- * EAD card
- * Valid passport
- * Unexpired F-1 visa (unless returning from a short trip to Canada, Mexico, or the Caribbean)
- * Evidence of employment in your field of study (letter of employment, written job offer)

I have all of these except the unexpired F-1 visa, which expired since November 2020. My question is: how do I renew the visa? Do I schedule an appointment at the US embassy at Thailand? How long will it take and is it risky to leave the US at all?

Thank you in advance and I appreciate any advice or help!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You will need to renew your visa based on your EAD. Prepare pay stubs and all needed employment evidence and documents. Best of luck. The Thai us embassy/consultants can be quite busy this time of year.

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- New Comment: Unexpired F-1 visa is CRUCIAL! Schedule a visa appointment and get your visa renewed (based on your EAD, like other user mentioned) before trying to come back into the US.

I came to the US back in 2014, got my visa on my passport and got my BA & MBA. By the time I graduated with my MBA my visa expired, but was on the extended STEM OPT. I had an EAD card, paystubs and proof of employment.

When I traveled abroad to get my H1B visa stamp I was going to come back in with my student visa (OPT) since the H1B visa date was not valid till 10 days prior. They didn't let me board the plane cause my student visa was expired even though I showed them all the proof. Thankfully I had the H1B, which is why I could come back to the US.

Good luck!!

- New Comment: How do you have an F-1 visa that expired in November 2020, but you only graduated in 2023?

- New Comment: You can check visa appointment wait times here.

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/global-visa-wait-times.html>

- New Comment: Make an appointment to renew your visa before exiting the United States or you could get stuck.

Title of the post: On Opt, have 5month left, no sponsorship. What would you do?

Body of the post: Hi, I am currently working with Opt with B.A. degree, and my company doesn't seem to plan to sponsor my visa or do anything about it. I was thinking maybe apply to Master's degree, but my gpa is low (about 2.96?) so I might not be even able to apply. Plus back then i was mentally struggling and barely made it to the minimum gpa, so I don't have any close professor, close classmates or anything. Mental counselor was my best friend. Making it to graduation was to best I could do at that time so no regrets. Anyway, what would you do if you were me?

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Marry an american
- New Comment: Take GMAT, it will help your application.
- New Comment: As someone who went through what you're thinking of doing:

I worked for 3 years on STEM OPT, then I ended up at a mediocre school (well known but not for what I studied which was computer science) due to my low GPA for undergrad. I can almost guarantee you will be admitted somewhere as long as you apply to some really mediocre ones as safety schools because they basically will admit anyone for the money.

I enjoyed my time, did an internship, earned a 4.0 GPA, but am now just less than 5 months away from having to go home from not being able to find a job. I'm 10 months into being unemployed (extended OPT by volunteering/starting my own company). It's been absolutely soul crushing. I think I've only been able to get through it so far because I live with a supportive partner.

If you're going to do it, know that you will need to work hard. Hopefully the job market will be better for you, but I regret not finding a more competitive internship, building more complex projects, and doing more research with professors. The job market for DS, IS, and CS is relatively tough right now.

If I could do this all over again, I would just go to Canada, or basically any other English speaking country with relatively high pay.

- New Comment: You can still go to grad school in the US/Canada with a good essay about your mental health and how determined you are.

- New Comment: Depends where you came from, having an education and experience from the U.S. would do you great! Most companies really appreciate that. They may pay you more and transfer you to their American branch.

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But if you really wish to come back just start working on a good application for your masters degree. The GPA may not matter as much if you have the relevant experience. Or go back and plan to do your masters.

Your mental health is the most important. So take the route that's the least stressful

Title of the post: Initial OPT denied

Body of the post: Hello everyone,

I graduated in May and recently got OPT Denial notice because I failed to submit my application within 30 days from the DSO sign date. What do I do now? I am freaking out. Please help. Am I out of status now?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Contact your DSO. It's past the 60 day grace period so it's likely your record will have auto completed. If this is the case, you will need to leave the US asap.
- New Comment: Best person to talk now is your DSO
- New Comment: Check your last i20, when does it say the last date of classes was?

Is it been 60 days since? If not, immediately apply for another i20, and restart the opt application process.

Reach out to you DSO to accelerate the process.

So there are a few rules, 30day rule is your application should reach USCIS within 30 days of your i20 date.

60 day rule is you should apply for OPT within 60 days of your program completion date.

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- New Comment: Here is the update for my case for those who are stuck in the same boat. I applied to a new university using a new SEVIS record as the previous one was completed. I had two options of either reinstatement or re enter USA using a new SEVIS record. I have a valid visa till 2026 and hence it was not something to worry about. I re entered USA via the mexico border at Brownsville, TX. I am currently studying and all is good! Also, please contact the DSO before enrolling in any universities because if you enter using a new SEVIS, not all universities will allow you to work on CPT from the very first day. In my case, I will be eligible to work on CPT after a completion of two semesters.

- New Comment: Hello all ,
my opt got denied last year because my sevis got terminated and now i came back to usa on new sevis and done with my masters so i am planning to apply opt so in my previous uscis account showing denied so do i need apply in same account or need to be create diff account and apply please let me know your answers are really appreciated thank you

Title of the post: I might miss a chance of a lifetime

Body of the post: Hello everyone!

I'm an international student from Romania who is seeking help!

On August 1 I got accepted to New York Institute of Technology, Computer Science BS. I got awarded a merit based scholarship of \$21,000 per year for 4 years, but that only covers about 50% of the tuition fees. Since I got accepted I tried to apply for scholarships and loans, but most of the deadlines have passed and to apply for a loan now I need a cosigner, but I don't have any acquaintances in the US.

The fall semester starts on 6 September and I didn't even get the I-20 form for my visa, because I need to send an Affidavit of Support with the amount of \$43,190.

So I don't really know what to do...

My parents can't support me, I can't get a loan, I'm pressed by time, I can't pay my tuition fees and I can't get my visa.

This is a once in a lifetime chance for me because I live in the mountains and work in my dad's small farm. And that is just hard and I hate it. I have dreams for a better life, but now it seems impossible for me. If anyone can give me a piece of advice on what to do I will be grateful forever!

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Thank you! ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This isn't a chance of a lifetime anymore than me getting a discount to to visit and stay on the International Space Station for only \$100,000 is the chance of a lifetime.

You still owe 50% of the tuition and 100% of the living expenses. Which apparently is \$44,000 PER Year. Which to be honest, sounds like bull shit. The cost of living near campus is MUCH higher than 20k per year.

To give you perspective, with the discount your cost to study there is the average cost of a Public State University. In fact there are MANY cheaper options.

What I mean is that this isn't really a amazing deal. I can get a new car for cheap in Romania, but the cost to pick it up and bring it back to the US means it isn't really a deal.

If you have been accepted there at NYIT you can continue to apply to other schools and try to get more financial support from them. You can apply for scholarships offered by your country to study abroad. You can apply for more scholarships.

However work limitations as an international student in the US mean working to pay for your cost of living and your 50% share of tuition is not viable.

Use this as proof that you CAN get accepted and CAN obtain financial awards and continue to apply.

If you choose to ignore the above:

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Visa processing time is 7 days or so in Bucharest.

Schools starts September 6th.

So you have just over two week to find and obtain a loan for \$44,000, obtain an I-20, apply for the visa, and travel to the US.

You also need a plan for the other ~\$150,000 you will need for years 2,3, and 4.

- New Comment: You could defer if they let you keep the scholarship and so you have a year to maybe work and save, or apply for other scholarships/loans for next year!

- New Comment: Hmm, have you thought about applying to somewhere else like Georgia Tech? NY is a very expensive city so imo taking out a loan is not a good financial decision, especially because you will have to repay it with interest. I know it sounds very alluring, but trust me, it's not a good financial decision at all because, unless you get a good paying job right after graduation (over 100K/year), you are f'ed. \$21k for 4 yrs will almost amount to 84K by the time you graduate (if they dont increase their fee), and its in a city where the average rent for a studio is over 1.5K per month (and then there's utility and food) of you are lucky. If I were you, I would apply to a cheaper school (Georgia tech is an attractive school for programmers), study there for a sem or 2 while working on research projects. During that time you can always re-apply and you may even get a full ride if you have a good resume. I would strongly suggest against taking out a loan to study there because you can get the same degree from another uni (potentially on a full scholarship).

- New Comment: If you're on a tight budget then drop the idea of the US completely. Unless you're wealthy it will never work out. Instead look at the EU, tuition is either non-existent or a few hundred in fees a year. You'll get a top notch education and many course offerings are even in English. A Romanian colleague of mine went to Germany for his PhD and is very happy there, had to learn the language but there are plenty of courses for that as well.

- New Comment: Mod dropped the best advice. Sorry OP, stay strong

- New Comment: how about a program in a country like the netherlands which should also offer a very good education but also be cheaper? then maybe u can get a post-grad degree in the usa after that

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but also keep searching for a sponsor / scholarships fs

- New Comment: Why don't you study in EU so you can work? NYIT doesn't have day 1 CPT(no decent public schools do) so you can't work off campus.

Even Canada and UK allow part time jobs in Starbucks or a strip club. US doesn't at all.

- New Comment: Talk to the University and tell them you have no money. Many times they can find ways for additional support from endowment funds. You are not able to pay for school from 20ht a week job, besides, you need to study. A job Will make you money to feed yourself and maybe not even that in NYC. You need a lot of money.

You should have applied to different schools and other cities. NYIT is not that big of a deal and there are so

Many universities in the IS that can give you more money and provide you with full scholarships. What NYIT have you it?s pretty much nothing.

Good luck and try other places or talk to them and see.

They won?t get their \$hit together by the time the school start anyway.

- New Comment: Apply to cheaper schools.

- New Comment: I think you can get much cheaper and equally good education in Europe than US.

I was at your place some years ago. From family of pot-makers and couldn?t afford education in US.

I wanted to do undergrad in US never in a lifetime I could afford it.

I applied for masters later (programs are much cheaper). Got in Ivy League. Decided not to go due to high fee and joined a cheaper Uni with hood research I was interested in.

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Education and life is still expensive but I got part time job to cover expenses (only few people got it). Luckily I got a well paying co op (again only few people got it). Still it's not easy it's a struggle.

When you go to a expensive country, you not only have to cover your expense but you also want to fit in socially with well off people.

I would suggest looking for universities in Europe.

Title of the post: Changing jobs while STEM-OPT application is pending approval.

Body of the post: I am planning on changing jobs while my steps while my STEM-OPT application is pending approval.

Aside from requesting a new-i20 from my university, is there anything else I am required to be doing?

Am I required to report this change in employment by submitting a new I-765 ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Follow

- New Comment: You'll need to submit a new i983 with the training plan from your new employer.

Title of the post: URGENT HELP! The earliest available date for f-1 visa is august 7th should I book

Body of the post: URGENT HELP! The earliest available date for f-1 visa is august 7th should I book that and reschedule try get a earlier date or not book this one and wait for a earlier slot to open? I'm scared that august 7th might not be available tomorrow. PLS HELP THANKS

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'd book it. You could try to reschedule for an earlier date after by checking each day. You don't want

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to miss the chance by waiting for a better date.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: Different consulates have different rules. Mine says that you should make a regular appointment first, and then call them to see if you qualify for an emergency appointment. It can be nerve-wracking, as you will only be considered (key word is `_considered_`, not `_given_`) for an emergency appointment if your program starts within a week.

- New Comment: New slots are going to open by mid-may according to the US embassy. If I were you, I'd book the available slot and wait for new slots to come in, and quickly reschedule.

All the best!

- New Comment: Did the slots release already ?

- New Comment: Take that one and you can request emergency appointment if your program start date is within 30 days.

- New Comment: book it, they go fast and you don't know that an earlier one will pop up

Title of the post: OPT finished, no money? don't know what to do next. Any advice, please?

Body of the post: Hey, my OPT finishes in 2 days, I don't know what to do, I really want to be here ?legally?. I know I could pursue a higher degree but I don't have the finances, what routes can I take to remain here, legally? Thank you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: OP if you don't have the finances, your chances of staying are quiet slim. For you have to join a university you still need to show the finances to get an I20.

- New Comment: The honest truth is based on your description of your situation, your options for remaining legally in the US are slim. Remember you have a 60 days grace period after you complete your OPT. The following are some options

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you may have.

- Further education (I know you mentioned you're running out of money so this may not be an option for you.

However, you always try landing a scholarship or some sort of grant or something along those lines.

- Asylum (If you're in danger of persecution in your home country on the basis of religion, political opinion, race, membership in a particular social group, this might be an option for you. If that is the case seek counsel from an immigration attorney)

- Marriage (If you're genuinely in love you can also go this route)

- New Comment: Make sure you do leave now, so you don't have any overstay on your record! Take some time back home and consider your options carefully.

- New Comment: What about PhDs? Doctorate students usually get full ride and about \$2,000 stipend per month. In some universities you can do masters and PhD at the same time, if you only have undergraduate degree now.

- New Comment: Asylum and marriage are the likeliest routes

- New Comment: Community colleges have associate level courses that you can take. Relatively cheaper

- New Comment: Join university and sign up for payment plans, that way you would have six more months to live here legally.

- New Comment: One thing that people can tend to overlook is if they have been the victim of a crime that is U visa eligible, and have helped police with it.

https://www.ilrc.org/sites/default/files/resources/proseuvisamanual_english.pdf#page=9

There is a significant backlog, but it can be a path.

- New Comment: If you wanted to pursue PhD/MS (assuming you are a BS holder) you should have applied for degree programs with stipends/tuition support like...last year. You have no choice now.

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- New Comment: Marriage for sure! You still have like 2 months.

Title of the post: Is Working a few extra hours on your on-campus job gonna be a issue when apply

Body of the post: I'm an F-1 visa student working on a campus job and recently went through a emergency surgery for which to cover the bills I have taken up a few extra hours on my job (Yes, I know you're allowed to work 20 hours a week) But it's a temporary measure though as after I'm done paying my bills I'll work for 20 hours again. (I'm working upto 25 hours/week right now)

My question is will this affect my H1-B application in anyway? will they see it as a red flag when I apply for H1-b or a green card in the future for that matter.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: That is a direct violation of F1 status and can get you F1 revoked let alone future potential visas/filings

- New Comment: You can only work more than 20h during school breaks, so unless that's what you did, that was indeed a violation. I understand medical bills in the US can be a huge burden, but a lot of hospitals will offer payment plans so you do not need to pay it immediately - reach out to their financial assistance department and ask if they can help you with that.

Another option you have is the economic hardship off-campus work authorization, but that is hard to get approved, and still subject to work hour limits.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: >I'm an F-1 visa student working on a campus job and recently went through a emergency surgery

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I'm sorry to hear that.

>...for which to cover the bills I have taken up a few extra hours on my job (Yes, I know you're allowed to work 20 hours a week) But it's a temporary measure though as after I'm done paying my bills I'll work for 20 hours again. (I'm working upto 25 hours/week right now)

Congratulations. You have severely violated your F-1 status and this can and will be used against you at any point in the future.

My question is will this affect my H1-B application in anyway?

Yes, this can lead to a denial and revocation of your H1B. Because if your F-1 status wasn't valid then your change of status was also not valid.

>will they see it as a red flag when I apply for H1-b or a green card in the future for that matter.

It would be an instant rejection if it was noticed as your F-1 would be terminated and thus your conversion would be denied. At a consular interview, you have documented you cannot follow the rules and would likely be denied.

How do you fix it? A time machine. This is pandora's box you have opened.

- New Comment: Like other people have said it's a direct violation against F1 visa. Your status can be terminated any minute now...

What is your on-campus job? Did you actually submit your timesheet with 25 hrs/week during a long period of time? I'm surprised that your manager/supervisor didn't stop you from doing that provided they know you're an F1 student.

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What you must do now is to stop what you're current doing and go ask your supervisor if there's anything you can do to undo provided you have only done it within a couple of timesheets.

- New Comment: Thank you everyone for your advice , for clarification I've not started working overtime yet (Although I was seriously planning too) And my manager did verify that I couldn't work above the 20 hour limit although he did offer me to work up to 40 hours during the summer break instead.

Title of the post: On platforms like handshake, what did you answer to the two questions 1. Are you

Body of the post: Im on an f-1 visa and I feel like this might be a dumb question but I wasn't sure what to answer for question 1. I don't have cpt/opt now but I've heard from people that since I could technically be working legally with cpt/opt I can answer YES, but others told be NO since I can't start working now right off the bat(until I obtain cpt/opt).

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Say yes for the first question. The second question I often say no but how your employer react once they find out about your status really depends. For example the company I'm working for doesn't accept international students for my position. I said no for future sponsorship and got the job. My employer was fully aware that i was international and still put me through H1B lottery even though its somewhat company's policy not to sponsor H1B for my roles.

- New Comment: Hypothetically let's say you have your EAD. You should always answer Yes to the first question. If you don't have an EAD card or even a valid I-20 with cpt on it, I'm sorry to say but you are not allowed to work anywhere. It's different if you are in the process of applying for your cpt but you will of course need to make your (future) employer aware.

When it comes down to the sponsorship question, I'm not going to lie to you. If you are not a U.S. Citizen or Permanent

Reddit Posts

Resident (Green Card) answering Yes will almost always guarantee that they will not reach out to you. I'm not saying all companies would do that, but more often than not; that is the case.

- New Comment: This is not a dumb question at all. It is perhaps arguably the most asked question among international students in the US when it comes to employment.

The first question...."Are you legally authorized to work in the US?" Is the straightforward one. The answer YES....even if you're still awaiting your physical documentation whether CPT/OPT. As long as you can legally work the answer is YES.

The sponsorship question however, is the tricky one. For internships, I always advise F1 students to always answer NO. For post graduation roles, some F1 students have answered NO where able to get hired and even successfully negotiate sponsorship others have answered NO and it ended up backfiring as the employer never took any action and allowed their work authorization to expire after they've worked for 1 year. I will say for the sponsorship question it's up to you to assess the risk and benefits and make a decision. However, keep in mind that answer YES to the sponsorship question, especially in this economy will cause your applicant to be rejected without ever even reaching a recruiter in the overwhelming majority of job positions. Wish you the best.

Title of the post: H1B

Body of the post: Hello, I recently got selected for H1B, currently I am on stem OPT, unfortunately I got my first dui in the state of Massachusetts, I've already worked with my lawyer too and I do not have any other charges except that one dui, will I have any problem getting it stamped?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: So?you're not completely fucked, but this is gonna lead to a lot of unnecessary stress.

Getting a visa is gonna be a massive pain in the ass. Not impossible, just super annoying/stressful.

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- New Comment: Should have thought before driving when drunk. Be thankful you didn't kill anybody
- New Comment: Sorry for the unrelated question but how many tries did it take you to get the h1b? Didn't get selected this time and im sad..

- New Comment: <https://www.immihelp.com/forum/usa-student-visa/718619-opt-approval-and-f1-visa-renewal-after-dui-arrest>.

From 2016 any non-immigrant visa arrests or citation will lead to automatic VISA revocation.

- New Comment: Yes, it will be a fairly lengthy process.

Title of the post: Volunteer work on OPT

Body of the post: Hi everyone,

I graduated in Dec 22 and my OPT period has started recently. I am aware that one can do volunteer work which will help to avoid using up unemployment days.

I wanted to ask what all work is counted as volunteer work and what all documents are required in order to show that one is involved in a volunteer work

Any help would be appreciated

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You need letter which mention that you will work as a volunteer and make sure you work 20hrs/week.

- New Comment: <https://webapps.dol.gov/elaws/whd/flsa/docs/volunteers.asp> p)

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"In administering the FLSA, the Department of Labor follows this judicial guidance in the case of individuals serving as unpaid volunteers in various ****community services****. Individuals who volunteer or donate their services, usually on a part-time basis, for public service, religious or humanitarian objectives, not as employees and without contemplation of pay, are not considered employees of the religious, charitable or similar ****non-profit organizations**** that receive their service."

​

You will want some form of tracking your employment hours and/or a letter stating your work hours.

Title of the post: Voice of America journalist looking for International Students

Body of the post: Hi, I'm Dan, a writer for Voice of America's Learning English program. I'm always looking to speak with international students for my stories. I hope some of you can contact me here or at dfriedell@voanews.com if you might want to be interviewed about your experiences. My current story is about international students getting "extra" life experience by doing public-facing work while they are studying here. For example, did you work at a coffee shop or rec center while studying in the U.S. How did this help you learn more about American people and culture? I know many international students come here with teaching or research assistant positions as a way to defer some tuition costs, but I'm more interested in learning about students who did work that one might not consider "academic." Perhaps you worked at a dining hall or selling tickets at a sports stadium?

My second story is about students in tech fields who are about to graduate. Are you worried about all the tech job reductions happening in the U.S. as you come to the end of your studies? I know it is important to have some OPT work lined up if you are graduating soon. I'd love to hear from you! - Dan

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Dan requested and was approved to post this.
- New Comment: Abt culture - my belief is it's influenced by public policy so I read about Barack's book on Hope (forgot the title.) Second - read some redemption stories like Pete Rose, and America's sports/fan industry.

Most satisfying source are memes and reels.

- New Comment: F1 students are only allowed to hold on campus jobs. Like working in the library, dining hall, RA, etc? I think you will need to prove extreme hardship to be allowed to work off campus jobs.

- New Comment: Hi everyone, thanks for your help, here is the recent story I wrote. Thanks!

<https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/international-students-also-learn-outside-of-class/6934588.html>

- New Comment: I worked at a food place on campus, if that works for you? Reach out if you want more details about anything to see if I'm a good fit for what you're looking for :)

Title of the post: Leaving the US with expired VISA

Body of the post: I'm on post completion OPT right now and employed. I want to leave the US for like a week and then come back for work. But my f1 visa has already expired. I don't think re-entry is possible with only the EAD. Do I have any other options?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you only visit Canada or Mexico (or certain Caribbean countries) you can re-enter with an expired visa using automatic visa revalidation. Otherwise, though, you'd need to go to a US embassy/consulate to get a new visa stamp.

P.S. ?visa? is not uppercase.

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Title of the post: F1 visa refused

Body of the post: I recently gave my F1 Visa interview and got rejected. I wasn't 100% prepared and didn't expect in depth questions related to my choice of study, I had only prepared generic ans(Big mistake). I'm hoping to reapply since I have a good college for industrial and systems engineering (University of Alabama Huntsville). I was hoping for some advice from people who have similar experiences. Also I'm looking to reapply immediately since my start date is 6th Jan. Thanks you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I think one pitfall is that people think they need to change something for the second interview. That?s not necessarily the case (unless there?s some serious deficiency in your profile). Visa officers often disagree on borderline cases, so you could get an officer this time who thinks you qualify. In any event, it?s important to give the second officer NEW INFORMATION that supports approval and didn?t come up in the first interview.
- New Comment: Where did you apply for it? What is your your nationality?
- New Comment: Not to my knowledge. I got rejected cause i answered poorly.
- New Comment: When i was waiting for my interview there were plenty of people for whom it was their second or even third attempt. Every visa officer asked them ?what has changed since your last attempt for your F1 visa.? So do prepare to answer this
- New Comment: is it true that the visa decision is predetermined?

Title of the post: Stem opt extension help please :)

Body of the post: Hi all,

I'm currently on STEM OPT Extension(expires June,2023). I plan to terminate OPT early on Dec,2022 and fly out of US on Jan,2023.

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How many days can i stay in the US after my STEM OPT is terminated ?

If anyone has an idea ,please let me know . I've googled but most of them are answers for Stem expiration .

Thanks in advance !

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: There is no grace period for terminated/abandoned OPT/STEM OPT.

Leave first then notify your school.

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: What if I couldn't get my OPT within 60 days after graduating?

Body of the post: If I couldn't get my OPT within 60 days from the end date of college, must I leave US?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: As long as USCIS _recieves_ your OPT application while you are still inside the U.S. in F-1 status before your grace period ends, that extends your F-1 status stay in the country while your application is pending. If they approve it, that extends your F-1 status stay throughout your OPT authorization period as long as you continue to meet your requirements.

If they approve your application more than 60 days after your program completion, you will get less than the full 12 months of OPT.

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This is because the government has a rule that the post-completion OPT has to end no later than 14 months after your program end date.

Example:

Program end date: December 15, 2022

60 days later: February 13, 2023

14 months later (from program end date): February 15, 2024

Latest possible _requested_ OPT start date: February 13, 2023

So if a student in this example applies for OPT on February 10, 2023, and USCIS approves the application on March 10, 2023, the actual OPT dates would probably start on March 10, 2023 and end on February 15, 2024 which is less than the full 12 months.

- New Comment: If you submitted your OPT application and USCIS received it no later than 60 days after the end of your program, you can stay while USCIS is processing it.

If you fail to submit it within 60 days, you must find another status or leave.

- New Comment: OPT approval was pretty fast. Just 2 weeks in our case.

Title of the post: Travel Reinstatement to Regain F1 Status

Body of the post: I lost my status recently due to under enrollment of courses. I had a talk with my university ISSO and

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was provided an initial I20 with Spring 2023 start date. Many people suggested to cross mexican borders as they are the easiest options for travel and re-entry. The issue is initial I20 doesn't have the travel endorsement from DSO. Can I successfully cross mexican border and re-enter really even without a travel endorsement?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Since you have a new, initial I-20, you do not need a travel signature from your DSO. Travel authorization is for students with active I-20s (your new I-20 will be activated after reentering and reporting to your school). Keep in mind (1) you can enter the US up to 30 days before the program start date on the I-20, (2) you need a valid visa (in your passport), and (3) depending on your home country there may be visa requirements to travel to Mexico.

ETA: Don't forget to pay the SEVIS I-901 fee for the new I-20.

<https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html>

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Its pretty risky but considering you have all the required docs, you should be good. Keep us updated!

Title of the post: Going back home in the middle of the semester?

Body of the post: My mom's really sick and there's almost no chance of recovering so I need to head back home. It's a weekend so I'm not able to contact Office of International Services. Is it legal to leave the country during the semester for two weeks and come back?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The travel signature on your I-20 doesn't give you any excused absences from your classes. In the U.S. educational system, only your individual professors in each of your courses can excuse your absence from each of

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their courses.

You can always leave the U.S. The U.S. government doesn't restrict you from departing the U.S. at any time.

To return to the U.S. using your I-20 and F-1 visa, you have to be academically eligible to continue study in the program of study listed on the I-20. You then need to ensure with your instructors and your academic advisor that if being absent from your university during the term that you will still be able to be academically successful in that term's study. If you get academically dismissed from your study due to not meeting the academic requirements for study, that results in needing to very quickly transfer to another U.S. school or depart the U.S. after being dismissed from study.

So you would need to check with your instructors to ensure you could still be successful in those courses in your absence. And you need to have a valid travel signature on your I-20. You may also wish to carry statements of permission for absence from each of your instructors in case CBP upon your requested reentry about your absence during your term of study.

- New Comment: The international office can send you a new copy of the I-20 with updated signature. Some professor may have the option to complete the necessary exams online but email and virtually meet the professors. Worse comes to worse you can get an incomplete On your current classes and join next semester. Depending on the length of the absence, your dso, university course structure and policies and length of your absence, you may need to reapply for the visa once you're ready.

If I were you I would let your advisor, professors and dso know through an email and ask for a virtual appointment and go see your mom.

Good luck ?

- New Comment: I left in the middle of the semester for 3 weeks to go back home for my dad's surgery (in january). I didn't email my professors for an excused absence. I didn't have any problem coming back to the US. With the valid

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travel signature you got in April, I don't think you'll have any trouble coming back in!

- New Comment: Try your DSO's phone number if there is one. At my school the DSO had a phone number that international students could call in cases of emergencies even during weekends. Make sure you go and obtain a travel signature from your international student office before leaving if you don't have one already. If you can't contact them in the meantime, I would recommend you show up there as soon as they open on Monday.

Family always comes before school, work, etc.... and even more so in situations of life and death. Praying everything goes well with your mom and your family.

Title of the post: Success Story: Renewing F1 on STEM OPT

Body of the post: This sub has helped a lot during my F1 journey, would just like to share my recent success renewing F1 while on OPT in my home country to other students considering the same!

I was not eligible for Dropbox, so booked an appointment slot. Entire interview took maybe 5 mins max. Questions asked:

- where did you study
- what did you study
- where will you work (role & company & location)
- what will you do after OPT ends

The officer only looked at my passport and I20, not even EAD or employment verification letter. It was a lot less stressful than I imagined. Had I known this beforehand I would've gone back home earlier :?) obligatory YMMV, happy to answer any questions

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Hi i am so happy for you, im having my interview in 3 days, (we have the same situation) where did you get your interview done? and do they let you know right away if you are approved or denied?
- New Comment: How long did the process take and which embassy was it?
- New Comment: why werent you eligible for Dropbox?
- New Comment: What did you say when the interviewer asked ?what will you do after OPT??
- New Comment: I?m on OPT and planning to go home (around December; South Korea) and renew my F1 visa. My opt will have eight months left until expired August, 2023. Any advice or tips before I make a final decision to go home or not?
- New Comment: May I ask what was your response to the last question: what will you do after OPT ends?

Should you mention about intent to get H-1B as it is also non-immigrant visa. I am asking as I have less than 4 months left on my STEM OPT and according to my offer letter, my job contract ends in 2024. Thanks

Title of the post: Two Jobs at the same time in STEM OPT

Body of the post: Hello Everyone,

can we work 40 hours a week for two employers simultaneously in STEM OPT?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes, as long as each employment is full time (at least 20 hours per week) and related to your field of study. You?ll need to submit a separate I-983 for each employer and get an updated I-20.
- New Comment: Yes you can but you will have to submit an I-983 form for both companies, both has to be paid and

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both companies have to be E verified.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Is it important that I have to inform both the companies that I would be working at another place?

- New Comment: As long as both are related to your degree, both employers provide I 983 training plans, then it should be possible. Best confirm with DSO.

- New Comment: u/Codetornado

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Is there anyone who graduated in the US during 2020, and had to return home bec

Body of the post: Or it's just me?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I have students that this happens to. They can find a job or volunteer position but it isn't what they wanted so they leave.

Or

They cannot find a job at all.

We do provide extensive support for resume/cover letter and mock interviews for students which dramatically increases job placement.

- New Comment: I think most people either find a job or ways to extend their stay until they find something worthwhile.

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Title of the post: Visa status says refused but the passport tracker says its being processed for del

Body of the post: So is that it? Has it been completely denied or am I missing something?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Dropbox appointment? If yes, they have likely called you for the interview.

Title of the post: Applied for OPT online but did not include scan of passport ID page

Body of the post: So I applied online, receipt notice May 16th, and the documents I submitted: photo of my US F-1 Visa, I-20 with OPT rec, i-94, and a passport-style picture of me. I misunderstood the "travel / identity document" proof requirement and submitted a picture of my US visa (there's a pic of me there) instead of the passport ID page? do you think they're gonna take longer to process my EAD??? Or even send a request for evidence (RFE)???

Please help!!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Add the passport photo to the file online and you'll be fine, I forgot to sign my I20 and uploaded the wrong photo initially and added in the correct ones 3 weeks later and it didn't take any longer to process it, normal timeline even with the additional docs added

Title of the post: visa processing time after interview?

Body of the post: How long after the appointment do people generally get their visas approved? I'm from India and just a little stressed as my course begins in mid August.

Since slots upto mid July are full, I will likely get a slot post that.

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: You will get to know if your visa is approved/rejected immediately after the interview. Your passport and visa should be delivered in a week or so after the interview ig
- New Comment: Gave the interview on 11th May. You get to know then and there from the officer whether he has approved your visa or not. If he approves it he will keep the passport. I received mine back via speedpost on 14th may.
- New Comment: Similar situation and equally stressed. Hope everything works out !
- New Comment: how long did you end up waiting to get your visa after your interview?

Title of the post: Domestic travel / within US

Body of the post: I have a valid F1 visa and passport. I'm planning of going to another US state(within the US), I was wondering what else apart from passport, I-20, I-94 do I need?

Do I need travel signature on my I-20?

I do have my vaccination card and health insurance card also always with me

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I have a driver's license so I take that instead of the passport as losing passport is way more detrimental than just losing a driver's license. Real ID's work for internal travel. Carrying health insurance is a good idea but I generally have a photo in my phone but if you want, that is absolutely okay. Don't stress too much it's okay to travel around. We're here to study and visit. No point worrying. I have never been asked to show anything except my ID in TSA Checking. You can also pull your I-94 up online in the 0.000000001% of cases if you need it. Have a great time and enjoy your trip!!

- New Comment: Domestic travel is much more casual than international travel. You just need some form of ID on you.

I would encourage you to get a state ID (you can get a non-driver ID for like \$10 if you do not want to or cannot get a

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driver's license). It's not wise to carry around your passport everywhere.

You do not need a travel signature on your I-20. It's advised that you keep your I-20 with you, but I usually don't take it when I travel. I do have a digital copy with me. Idk if that's enough but I've never been asked for it. I've never been asked for I-94 either.

I also keep my vaccination and health insurance cards with me all the time in my wallet, I think that's just good practice regardless of whether you're traveling.

Enjoy your trip!

- New Comment: I will even highly discourage travelling within the US with your passport if you are an international student because losing it could be a serious problem. Especially if there is still a valid visa in it. For domestic flights, all you need is your ID (A driver's license will work just fine which is what the vast majority of domestic travelers use). Travelling within the US is so much more casual than travelling internationally. I've never heard of someone being asked for I-20 or I-94 for a domestic flight.

- New Comment: > Do I need travel signature on my I-20?

If by "going to another US state" you meant to include the US territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, the US Virgin Islands, or American Samoa, (*Edit: or the state of Alaska*) then I guess perhaps.

Those are really the only semi-plausible cases where a domestic flight could potentially have airplane problems causing a landing in a foreign country (a "returning to the United States from a temporary absence of five months or less") thus requiring "a current SEVIS Form I-20 ... properly endorsed by the DSO for reentry".

[https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-8/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-214/section-214.2#p-214.2\(f\)\(4\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-8/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-214/section-214.2#p-214.2(f)(4))

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But even in such an 1-in-50,000 emergency case, I imagine the CBP officer upon arrival in the US would simply give you Form I-515A, requiring follow-up action afterward.

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2013/01/what-form-i-515a>

> I20

If your Form I-20 has a "wet ink" signature (as opposed to having been sent to you electronically and that you printed), I don't necessarily think it's a good idea to bring it and risk losing it needlessly (no matter how easygoing your DSO is), instead of just bringing a photocopy of it and having photos of it available on your phone. And even that would only really be for the highly unlikely event you were to wind up stopped by law enforcement in a jurisdiction that even allows them to inquire into immigration status.

The same goes for carrying a passport instead of a driver's license or state ID card and photos and photocopies of each page of your passport, including the F-1 visa and admission stamps.

- New Comment: You don't need anything other than your ID. Driver's license or Passport. Don't carry your i20 but keep a digital copy if you find yourself in any legal trouble

Title of the post: The international office is understaffed and won't process my request for an OPT

Body of the post: I graduate may 15, I accepted a job that starts on may 16. I wanted to apply for OPT by feb 15 since that's the maximum time before graduating I can apply for OPT. However the international student office says they are short staffed and won't be able to get to OPT recommendations till mid March. And even worse for my situation, my

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DSO is going on a break for the next week.

It sucks they are understaffed, but is there any thing I can do here that can convince them to prioritize my situation? If not what are my options so I don't get in hot water with my employer?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You should contact the director of the program and state how processing time is normal, but 4 weeks is not normal processing Timeline.

If the director won't fix it escalate to the school's Ombudsman office.

Immigration is time sensitive and they need to figure out how to triage items based on their time frame.

- New Comment: I would email the director of that dept. They need to get it done.

- New Comment: I submitted my application on Jan 28th and this morning they told me my card has been produced (less than 3 weeks). You might just be fine if you applied in mid March!

- New Comment: I applied online on Nov 4 through USCIS after I received the okay from my International Office, I got my OPT EAD by the end of November ?21 for a December 15 graduation. It's supposed to be in testing but it's being processed much faster than the processing centers. But usually, expect a 45 day turnaround time after you apply and send your documents to the processing center and don't stress too much about when your DSO hands it over. Apply online to save time and believe me, employers know about the delay and they'd be okay with changing your start date!

- New Comment: You could return home and get a job there

Title of the post: Anyone went from F1 OPT to Canada PR?

Body of the post: My OPT expires this June and I am planning on starting grad school in Canada this August.

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I am excited but also very scared for this change. As I have spent all my "adult years" in the States, everything and everyone I'm familiar with is here.

Would love to connect with people who went through or are going through this transition as well.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I attended an informational session on this yesterday. You need to look into Canada express entry (hopefully it opens soon), roles with LMIA, understand international mobility program if it's offered at your place of work currently and Canadian experience class & provincial nominee program.

I don't think you have much to be worried about. Embrace change and make the most of it.

- New Comment: Piggybacking on OPs post (sorry lol), F1 students who moved from US to Canada with years of US experience and a solid degree just because of no PR. Did you have to face the "Canadian Experience" stuff?

Ik OP is doing grad school there so they might not deal with it. But how about express entry candidates, any experiences? Would love to find out!

Anyone not familiar with the term "Canadian experience" just a quick google search will tell you all!

- New Comment: Where are you from and what are you studying? If you wanna share

Title of the post: Does product management (at tech company) qualify for STEM OPT extension?

Body of the post: I was wondering if product management (at a tech company) would qualify for STEM OPT. I'm a computer science major (bachelor of science)??

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I may be wrong, but I believe the STEM extension has more to do with your degree as opposed to what job you're doing. If your degree qualifies for a STEM extension, you'll be able to get it.
- New Comment: Anything qualifies as long as you can justify it to your degree
- New Comment: Job is irrelevant. Degree determines eligibility then if your degree is eligible you look to see if the job matches.

Look at your I-20. Find the major it has a name and a 6 digit code XX. XXXX Google STEM CIP codes and see if your major is on the list.

Title of the post: Does the 10 day reporting guideline on OPT mean reporting to your DSO or SEVIS

Body of the post: I'm currently employed on Post-Completion OPT but did not receive access to the SEVP portal. Since there is a 10 day reporting requirement, I updated my university's internal portal with the employment information. However, they responded saying it may take up to 21 days for them to process this request and enter the information in SEVIS.

In this case, is the 10 day reporting requirement for it to be in SEVIS, or for me to have notified my DSO? I'm not entirely sure how I can get the information into SEVIS without going through the online process which could take much longer than 10 days.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Both.

You cannot backdate in the SEVP Portal.

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Your DSO can ALSO not backdate more than 10 days in SEVIS.

> they responded saying it may take up to 21 days for them to process this request and enter the information in SEVIS.

This is why the SEVP portal exists. If a DSO caused a delay they can request a data fix if it is their error and not yours.

Title of the post: Is it legal for me to have an onlyfans account on f1 visa?

Body of the post: I started an onlyfans account in my home country and I've attached my home country bank account. Is it legal for me to still have the onlyfans account(if new subscribers are joining while I'm in US on f1 visa)? Or should I just deactivate it?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If your feet are in America and you create, post, modify, or manage your account that would be a violation.

If you are active in any way it would not be passive income. This has been clearly defined in the law since the early 80s

- New Comment: As far as I know no. You are not supposed to have a YouTube channel either legally

Title of the post: F1 visa overstay by 10 days and problems in obtaining an F1 visa later.

Body of the post: I attended a US university on an F1 visa with a valid I20 in 2016. My program end date on I20 was on 18th May 2018. However, while I was busy preparing for my thesis and aiming to graduate in the following Summer, I failed to request for an I20 extension with my DSO due to sheer negligence on my part. I managed to get a job during this period as well. But I realized later that my SEVIS record had been terminated since I had exceeded my grace period

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of stay of 60 days. A negligence on my part led me to prepare to leave the country as soon as possible.

So, I left the US on 28th August 2018, after talking to my academic advisors and multiple visits to the DSO's office and talking to an immigration lawyer since they said I had no chance of getting reinstated on a valid F1 and trying to apply for a reinstatement would only accrue unlawful presence on my F1 visa.

I am now planning to apply to another graduate program in the US and am hoping to get admitted for the next Fall Session(2022). I would like to know if my previous record of overstay is going to affect my chances of getting another F1 visa. What advice would you offer to me in this scenario?

I am worried that my overstay record will deny me further opportunities to pursue graduate schools in the US.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You not only overstayed, you violated your F-1 status. If your program end date on your I-20 was May 18, 2018, and you didn't complete the degree program or extend the I-20 by May 18, 2018, you violated your status at the end of the day on May 18. Your authorized stay in the U.S. would have ended a on May 18, 2018. There is no 60 day grace period earned in that situation. A grace period is only earned by those who complete the degree program of study by the program end date listed on the I-20. If successfully completing the degree requirements by the program end date on the I-20, the F-1 grace period begins only with the date of degree completion.

One doesn't earn a 60 day grace period by violating ones F-1 status. There was no 60 day grace period for you.

Therefore, if you didn't depart the U.S. until August, you overstayed by months, not days.

Not only that, but you worked without authorization after you had already violated and (according to DHS) lost your F-1

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status. That's another serious violation.

That all being said, students who violate and lose their status as you did are often able to return to the U.S. in a new F-1 status. All you can do is try. If you get approved, great. If not, you tried. No one can tell you in advance whether it will work or not.

But it's important for you to know going into it that you didn't simply overstay by 10 days. You violated and lost status in May 2018 with a continued stay of months in the U.S. with no F-1 status. You then violated U.S. immigration again by working after that without any U.S. immigration authorization that would allow you to do so

- New Comment: Update?

Title of the post: STEM OPT extension (I-765) with wrong I-20

Body of the post: hi my opt extension got denied for one reason. my school did not provide me new I-20 on time so submit my application with the old I-20.

my EAD card expired november 29,2021.

is there a chance I can reapply or appeal the case and submit the right I-20??

Final results:

Quick update opt extension get approved after filling a new application with a cover letter from school admitting their errors.

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Since your STEM OPT application was denied after your EAD from the initial OPT expired, you won't be able to reapply for STEM OPT.

- New Comment: >my school did not provide me new I-20 on time so submit my application with the old I-20.

Then you didn't follow the process and thus you were denied. You MUST have the STEM OPT I-20. Full stop.

If your EAD card is expired that is the end. Time to go home unless you have been accepted and are transferring to a new school and starting in the next 4 months.

- New Comment: You had a 90 day window to request the I-20 and get it to USCIS for a valid OPT extension application. How many days before your OPT expiration date did you submit to your school the request for the I-20 and all the requirements for receiving it (completed I-983 for eligible job)?

If you didn't have the OPT STEM extension recommendation in SEVIS (the new I-20), you weren't eligible to apply.

You could apply as early as 90 days prior to the end of 12 month OPT end date. Application eligibility for the extension expires when the EAD expires.

Your OPT expired nearly a year ago (November 2020) and you just received the denial?

So much seems wrong here.

A school wouldn't even be able or eligible to make the new I-20 after the initial OPT expired.

Edit: OP originally said the post-completion OPT expired November 29, 2020.

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Title of the post: How do f1 visa students earn money from youtube if it's illegal?

Body of the post: They are also promoting products on there videos.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: They aren't doing it legally.
- New Comment: It?s definitely unauthorized employment, so a violation of status. Maybe they don?t care. Maybe they don?t have long term plans in the US. USCIS is not gonna look at their tax returns unless they have some sort of application pending (think OPT or AOS) so they see it as a way of making money hoping not to get caught until they finish their degree and move back home. Or maybe they?re hoping that it will go unnoticed and fall through the cracks. Either way, it?s not good. There are tax records since youtube sends their own copies of 1099, or whatever form they issue, to the IRS; so there?s definitely paper trail and it?s a ticking time bomb. Or maybe they?re planning on marrying a USC which in that case, unauthorized employment is excused
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: Clearly they record their videos while on summer break outside the USA and then have their mums post Bryce videos while they are in school in the USA.

/s

Title of the post: Visa rejected under 214(b)

Body of the post: Well my visa is rejected under 214(b).

VO: why you choose this university.

Me: I choose it because the university is accredited by AACSB and HLC. And, have good student to teacher ratio. The professors in the university are so experienced and skilled.

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VO: where did you learn your Bachelor's!

Me: in xx university in Ethiopia

VO: how long did you live in Thailand.

Me: I have been here since August 2016

VO: what do you work?

Me: I work as an Expat Liaison Officer in an international hospital

VO: For Ethiopian Expats?

Me: No, for all International expats living in Thailand.

VO: show me a proof from your work?

Me: (gave him my work certificate and contact which shows my monthly salary too)

VO: why do you want to study MBA

Me: I want to study MBA because I want to develop my business managerial and administrative skills and go back to my home country to help my businessman dad to run the business more effectively and to start working on import export business in the long run.

VO: you're not eligible, I am rejecting your visa.

So sad ?

I have got acceptance to more than 6 universities, to all the universities I have applied to.

Shall I apply again using another university? Or shall I try to apply next year? Or just quit my dream of going to USA?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Same thing happened to me two days ago!

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It is because you are considered a third country national and they don't know enough about your home country.

I applied in London where I live and work ATM and was denied. I got accepted in a great school in New York and was awarded 50% scholarship but didn't even get to it.

- New Comment: I think the problem is that you are from Ethiopia and have been living in Thailand for a long time (if I got it right). So that shows no ties to home country and to your new country but shows willingness to move for work. Also I would imagine that both countries have a high immigration rate so they are watched more closely. Before you try again you have to find ties to a country to prove you wouldn't stay in the us: house, loan, family. Something you can't walk away from.

- New Comment: What university did you get accepted to?

- New Comment: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/visa-denials.html>

- New Comment: work on the last question connect it to ur career aims not ur fathers

- New Comment: Have you reapplied recently? I also got rejected under 214 (b) a week ago.

Title of the post: **EMERGENCY VISA SITUATION**

Body of the post: Hi everyone, as many of you im waiting for my urgent visa interview notification, mind the fact that my appointment date is 20 october, the earliest available, and im hoping i can get interviewed through urgent request before the star of school (20 august), but, i do still have a valid non expired f1 visa form my previous school which i havent attended in 1 year, do i still actually have to go through the interview ? looking for some clarity and hope.

Edit: I am transferring to a different school

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can travel on an unexpired F-1 visa with a new I-20 from a different school. You do not need a

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new visa.

- New Comment: You only need a new I-20, you can still travel on the unexpired visa. This is not a violation of immigration laws and you are fine. As long as you have either transferred your SEVIS/returning on an initial I-20 from your university, you are fine.

This is confirmed by many DSOs

- New Comment: DSO here. Can confirm a valid visa is a valid visa. Should be able to travel with the new I-20 without issue, but you always run the risk of getting a new border agent or just one on a bad day. A new visa is nice, but not necessary

- New Comment: my girlfriend is in a similar situation and have been getting mixed messages as well. Have you been out of the states for more than 5 months?

Title of the post: Finished my undergrad with F1 in May 2021, starting a PhD next month in the same

Body of the post: I qualify for all the eligibility questions, except I am a little confused about one. The website says:

"For F, M, or J visa holders and their derivatives:

Must meet all other general criteria as listed above;

I am a regular student and did not drop out of status for 5 months or more (principal F and M);

I am continuing my participation in the same program at a different institution (F, M, and their derivatives);

I am attending the same institution in a different program (F, M, and their derivatives);

My SEVIS number has not changed from the previously issued visa (J and their derivatives)."

Now does starting a PhD with same major count as same program or different program? The major listed in the I-20 from my new institute is the same as the major listed in the old institute (Mechanical Engineering 14.1901), only the Education Level in the new I-20 is Doctorate and in the old I-20 it is Bachelor's. My current visa expires in 2022. My

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SEVIS Number is the same. My F1 status expires in 2026.

And in case i am eligible for interview waiver, is it wise to drop off my passport at the consulate when my flight is just a month away? Or to rephrase, is there a chance it will take longer than a month to get my passport with the new visa back?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If the university is different, you are not eligible for an interview waiver
- New Comment: Unrelated but I thought you need to get a masters before a Phd?? I didnt know you can take phd after undergrad
- New Comment: I am in the exact same situation as you (but my F1 just expired), and although the embassy said I was eligible, after sending all of my documents to them, they told me to schedule an appointment anyway.

Hopefully, you are luckier than I was since my embassy has no appointments until April 2022 and I'm kinda stuck now.

Edit: keep your current I-20 until next year when all of the corona backlog will be over and you can get a new one in a timely manner.

- New Comment: I renewed my visa and interview was waived. I had to answer some questions while filling the online form. Then, I went to CASV(Brazil) to leave my documents there. I remember the staff told me if is all ok they would send me email to pick up or a interview could be scheduled. But it can happen to have interview. I had renewed visa for same school and same program that time.

Title of the post: OPT ONLINE successful

Body of the post: Has anyone applied for OPT online and received their EAD cards yet?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >The online application has not been active long enough to have approvals. It will be July before we see them starting to approve Online applications as we get near the 90-day window.

https://reddit.com/r/f1visa/comments/o5rkou/online_opt_cool/h2o5zom/

- New Comment: april 26 online filing approved. I did submit an expedite request

- New Comment: expedite request submitted May 27, evidence asked on June 10, faxed evidence June 15, approved june 23

- New Comment: When did you apply?

- New Comment: I applied for post-completion OPT online here is how it went with the data logs from USCIS. I received my SSN in the mail on July 24, 2021.

July 20, 2021: Card Was Delivered To Me By The Post Office

July 21, 2021: The Post Office picked up mail containing your new card.

July 20, 2021: We produced your new card for your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization.

July 16, 2021: We are producing your new card for your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization.

April 18, 2021: We received your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, and sent you a receipt notice.

Good luck everyone!

- New Comment: I remember the application said we just needed 1 Validated Passport Photograph for the application if

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done online. Is this correct? Because when I submitted mine I didn't get any errors once I submitted the one photo. What did everyone else do?

Title of the post: Concerns requesting EAD correction to receive full year of OPT authorization

Body of the post: Hi everyone. Do any of you (students or DSOs) have any experience with the process of obtaining an EAD correction in order to receive the full year of OPT, if less than the full year was originally granted?

On February 26th, USCIS announced covid-related flexibilities, and they implemented a change in protocol so that all OPT applications approved will now receive the full amount of OPT time that was recommended by their DSO. In other words, the expiration date of the one-year EAD (for those who received a recommendation for a full 12 months) is no longer capped at 14 months after the graduation date, but rather 14 months after the EAD approval date.

The announcement contains the following:

>"Beginning today, USCIS will approve applications for post-completion OPT with validity dates reflecting the same amount of time originally recommended by the designated school official (DSO) from their school on the Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status.

>

>F-1 students requesting post-completion OPT who receive an approval of Form I-765 for less than the full amount of OPT time requested (not to exceed 12 months) due to the requirement that the OPT be completed within 14 months of the program end date may [request a correction](<https://www.uscis.gov/green-card/green-card-processes-and-procedures/employment-authorization-document>) of the EAD due to USCIS error. USCIS will issue a corrected EAD with a new end date, as requested, to cover the full amount of OPT time recommended in the original application."

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In my case, my program end date was May 2nd (2020); I received an EAD that is valid from 8/20/20 to 07/02/21. I would like to request a correction so that my initial EAD expires on 08/20/21, to recover those 1.5 months of lost authorization, but I'm very concerned about the amount of time I have left on my EAD and any STEM-OPT-related risks of requesting a correction.

I submitted a USCIS Service Request for a correction, but I was quoted a response time by ****June 22nd!**** I am concerned that if at that time I'm told to mail out my EAD and then wait several weeks for a correction to go live, I'll miss out on my window to apply for STEM OPT altogether. I'm also concerned that if I request a STEM OPT recommendation right now, I will lose my window to correct my initial EAD, and completely miss out on 1.5 months of employment authorization that USCIS is now willing to grant.

The generic EAD correction instructions state the following, and the section about "no longer having any basis for applying for an EAD" is extremely concerning, especially in the event that my correction request is not approved before my original expiration date of July 2nd:

>If your EAD contains incorrect information ****because of a USCIS error****, we will make the appropriate correction at no additional cost to you. In these cases, you do not need to submit a new Form I-765 or a filing fee. Instead, you must submit:

>

>The original card containing the error,

>

>A detailed explanation of the card error, and

>

>Supporting documentation on the correct information.

>

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>Submit this information to the [service center](https://egov.uscis.gov/office-locator/#/serv) or [National Benefit Center](https://egov.uscis.gov/office-locator/#/nbc) that approved your latest Form I-765.

>

>In either case, if we receive your application or request for a replacement EAD and you no longer have any basis for applying for an EAD or employment authorization, we will not return the card and will notify you that you do not have a current basis for applying for an EAD or employment authorization.

How would you advise me to proceed?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The same happened to me!! Hopefully someone who has been through this situation can help

- New Comment: I have the same question

Did you happen to find a course of action?

Title of the post: Most likely late for STEM OPT Application

Body of the post: My initial EAD expires on 05/30. I have manage to get an offer early this May. Not until last week that the employer finished enrolling the E-Verify program and gave me the E-Verify employer ID number. I filed a request for my STEM OPT I-20 to the DSO as soon as I got everything. I have emailed to get my request processed ASAP. This week I have also met with the DSO through Zoom meeting to ask again. The DSO replied that she has already flagged my request to get it done on Thursday 05/27. Now, as of Friday 05/28, last business day of the week, I still haven't received my I-20. At this point, I think I'm done. Is there anything that I can do?

I know I could have apply earlier but getting a job isn't easy.

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: You can send in your I765 application online, your receipt will be generated immediately (provided you get your I20 today)

- New Comment: If possible, call your DSO now and explain nicely if you don't get this job it will cause severe economic hardship, and also your future to be ruined (which is true)

And it's true that with online application, theoretically you could apply even on the last day. But risky though

- New Comment: Worst case scenario - I'd suggest to submit without i20 and with help of your DSO you can send your i20 in a day or two.

Title of the post: How long did Administrative Processing (221g) take for you to be approved?

Body of the post: I have been in 221g for 38 days now and was wondering how long does it normally take to get the visa after being in 221g? Also, has anyone been denied a visa after being placed in 221g?

Thanks.

[View Poll](<https://www.reddit.com/poll/nisc8y>)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: @People who got declined after 221g. What was the reason?

- New Comment: Which country? I had my interview on 04/23 and still waiting?

- New Comment: did you get it?

- New Comment: Has anyone had any experience with 221g L1 visa's? It's been over 3 months and I haven't heard

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anything

Title of the post: Initial OPT still pending. My job starts on June 7th. I'mma lose my job. How did you

Body of the post: My application was received March 24. Money order was cashed March 30. My job starts on June 7 and my application is still received status.

It's not even 2 months so I'm definitely not going to call USCIS or expedite the process. I got the job offer late so I applied late. that's on me.

But I need to prepare how I'm supposed to ask my company if they don't mind delaying my start date. How did you approach your company? This is a program position so I highly doubt that they'll delay the start date just for me. So I'm just freaking out right now and whatever I'mma say is gonna come off as unprofessional/childish. Please help. Thank you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I feel that if they were aware that you would be on OPT and still gave you a job offer, they would be open to accommodate potential delays in your start date.

I told my company about potential delays and they said they were happy to move my start date if needed though in my case it's a full time position. My application was received on Mar 26 and start date is late June for your reference.

Judging from the OPT case tracker, it's also possible for your application to get approved before then.

- New Comment: Define "program position" what do you mean by that?

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- New Comment: If they know you're an intl student just tell them USCIS is having delays due to covid. You really have no other option but to be honest. And the sooner you know if they won't be flexible, the sooner you can focus on applying to other jobs. Just tell HR or whoever is the hiring person.

- New Comment: There is some hope it will be on time. Lots of people around your date getting their card now. Check out opttimeline.com

Title of the post: NIE for students returning for summer from banned countries

Body of the post: Do people know if we need to apply for NIE or it is already given by default for people who are continuing their program? Asking for India as it is not clear. Also there was a new update that students who entered after March 2020 for the first time cannot be fully remote summer onwards. So looks like one needs to figure out the NIE soon.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: That was not a new update.

The rule on remote studies has been in place since July 2020. You cannot start 100% remote.

Additionally, if you are from a country with a travel Ban due to covid-19.

>"I am an F/M/J Student. Do I qualify for a National Interest Exception?

Students who already possess a valid student (F or M) visa and who will begin their studies on or after August 1, 2021, may travel to the United States without further action from the Embassy or Consulates in India.? Direct?travel?to the United States from India with a student visa may begin no more than?30 days prior to the start date of a student?s classes. **We are unable to facilitate travel for students with a program start date before August 1, 2021, including whose who have already been issued a visa.**

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Students with a program start date before August 1, 2021 should contact their respective educational institutions to discuss their options."

- New Comment: Following

- New Comment: Some details are here:

<https://in.usembassy.gov/visas/national-interest-exception-frequently-asked-questions/>

But it still has some ambiguity.

- New Comment: Following

- New Comment: I'm on F-1 stem opt. Came to india last month. Does travel ban affect my entry to US?

- New Comment: F1 students cannot travel until July 1 minimum. Anyone who wants to travel now, could enter the US after spending 14 days in a 3rd country. Mexico, for example, is a viable option.

- New Comment: Hi guys, I was able to enter the United states on an F1 visa on 13th July. I am a continuing student who joined in 2019 if that helps. I hope this clears things up. Please feel free to DM if any returning student has any questions or concerns.

Title of the post: Applying as a Third-Country National

Body of the post: I was admitted to a US University to begin in Fall 2021. However, the embassy/consulates in my country (Brazil) have been closed for more than a year now. The closest interview date is only December.

I was studying the possibility to apply as Third-Country National (basically applying to the F1 visa in another country). Is any country accepting it? Has anyone had any success? If yes in which country?

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Some people in this sub are going to Panama for the interviews. You could look into that.
- New Comment: That could work but make sure you have a good reason and tell them the reason not applying from a third country. If you have residency or relation to that country that has us embassies open it would make it easier.

Title of the post: Will I regret it?

Body of the post: Hi everyone,

I haven't been doing well the past few days and needed to write this somewhere. My F1 visa was rejected last year, so I deferred my offer to this year. As many of you know, you usually need to show some change in your application for it to be reconsidered. Last year, I took out a huge loan?I'm not sure what I was thinking at the time, but I was so excited and didn't want to be a burden to anyone.

This year, my family has been more supportive, and I've saved up some money, but they would still have to cover all of my tuition, which is around \$8,000 per month. They're not wealthy, and everyone is really pushing their limits. Because of this, I've decided not to go.

Unfortunately, I'm not eligible for scholarships, and I couldn't find any financial assistance from my country. It's an Ivy League school and great program, but it's just too expensive. I have a decent job that I like, but I'm uncertain about the future. My program director offered a small discount and a support letter, but it's still not enough to make it feasible.

I'm not young, but I would love to complete my master's before turning 35. Oh well, I guess this is life.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Do not worry, maybe it is for the best. Right now the job market is bad in the US and so is the economy. Coming to the US will only profit the government and no one else.

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- New Comment: As someone who is leaving US because it's too expensive and I don't want my family to feel like I'm a burden I could recommend you to look into programs in other countries.

Depends on what you are interested in there many different good schools in other countries

- New Comment: Go to a different school that offers scholarship

- New Comment: Go to a cheaper school

- New Comment: Looking at your history it is Columbia. Do your research OP. Just because it is Ivy League it doesn't mean it's good. Especially Columbia looks more and more like a cash cow program these days and a lot of intl's are finding it difficult to get jobs after graduating from there.

Get the cheapest program that meets your goal. Unless you plan on writing a thesis, I wouldn't worry too much about Columbia.

- New Comment: Can you go to another Uni? I got admission in UPenn in 2022 but decided to go to a more affordable Uni due as I could not in light years afford Penn. Sometimes I regret not going to Penn as research at Penn was better but I worked hard in research labs, did TA, did a Co-Op and now got a job. So, not much regrets.

- New Comment: Hey Op just checking...\$8000 per month?

Title of the post: Renewing F1 visa on OPT

Body of the post: Hi I'm an international student from India, currently on F1 OPT. I recently graduated with a PhD, got my OPT and started working but my visa has expired. I plan on traveling to India and visiting my family but given my educational background, I am concerned about higher risk of rejection of the F1 visa. If you've been in a similar situation and can share your experience I'd greatly appreciate it. Thanks!

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: What's wrong with the educationally background
- New Comment: Did you not get interview waiver?
- New Comment: Is your background in STEM? You might get stuck in administrative processing.
- New Comment: I totally get the anxiety around renewing the F1 visa on OPT. When I was studying in Canada, I faced similar challenges. If you're considering more options, maybe look into Halpit really helped me extend my study permit and secure a post-graduate work permit. Having access to a free immigration lawyer made a huge difference for me. Hope you find the best way forward!
- New Comment: Your reddit account and this story doesn't make any sense. Are you lying something?

Title of the post: SEVIS Terminated Help!

Body of the post: I went to college in Spring and failed my Chemistry class. At the end of the semester I asked for W and later got an email saying that I was out of status because I was below the 12 credit guideline. I am trying to go to a university and everything is done other than my SEVIS needing to be transferred. My college emailed me saying that my SEVIS had been transferred to the university then later today I got email stating that SEVIS was terminated and I needed to apply for reinstatement. Is there anything that can be done so I can still go to my fall 2024 semester? Is there anything I can do to stay in the country and start in Spring 2025 possibly? My visa is expired but that was okay because my I-20 was valid while applying to my university. I just know because my visa is expired I cannot get back into the country if I leave. Please let me know anything I can do, I appreciate it.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: What made you being out of status was that "W". Don't ever withdraw from a course when you barely have 12 credits. It's better to fail a class and retake it next semester than to fall out of status.

As per your question, I don't think you can do anything but to get a new sevis by applying to a different school and

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getting out of the country and reentering. Might have to take a sabbatical.

- New Comment: Hi, all you need to do is to file for reinstatement or your travel and reenter the country with a new SEVIS if you do have valid visa. I was in the same situation some months back.

- New Comment: Why do you want to switch schools now ? Try not switching. Then apply for reinstatement (look at the center that has less processing time like Nebraska) get reinstated. You can study if you have applied for reinstatement. As you are applying for reinstatement of student status. You being a full-time student helps!. Don't stop going to school. But your visa not being valid can be a huge issue here.

- New Comment: It's better to fail a class, you can always retake a class than to withdraw and lose your status.

- New Comment: >At the end of the semester I asked for W and later got an email saying that I was out of status because I was below the 12 credit guideline. I

This is a university policy question. That W may under your University's rules put you out of status.

>I am trying to go to a university and everything is done other than my SEVIS needing to be transferred. My college emailed me saying that my SEVIS had been transferred to the university then later today I got email stating that SEVIS was terminated and I needed to apply for reinstatement.

You can apply for reinstatement but you won't be at that school. You could get a new I-20 from the new school and leave and return if your visa is valid.

>Is there anything I can do to stay in the country and start in Spring 2025 possibly?

Apply for reinstatement or exit and reenter with a valid visa or leave obtain a new visa and return.

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Honestly contact your new school and see what they advise.

- New Comment: I?m in the US!

Title of the post: B2 to F1

Body of the post: Do i have to stay in legal status while applying for change of status? Or is it fine if i have submitted the I-539 form before my B2 status expiration date and then i can wait for the decision and it won?t be considered illegal because i submitted the form before my status expiration right??

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can stay in between, yes, but you cannot start studying until your change of status to F-1 is approved.

Title of the post: Is it okay to travel on opt without job offer?

Body of the post: How has your experience been?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I did this last year and had no problem. To be safe, I prepared evidence of being in several recruiting processes, but wasn?t asked

- New Comment: No! Wouldn?t recommend it unless you?ll re enter with a job offer

- New Comment: Is it okay to travel if i am doing unpaid work at a company on OPT ?

Title of the post: Question regarding international to Domestic flight in the USA.

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Body of the post: I have to fly from India to Chicago. I had booked a flight from India to Miami as it was 1,400 dollars cheaper.

Now I will have to book another domestic flight from Miami to Chicago. I have the visa and everything. I don't know what type of flight I should book and the luggage rules that'll follow.

I'll be bringing in luggage according to the emirates guidelines but I don't know what it is for the domestic flights in the US.

I have also heard that United airlines is partnered up with emirates so how does that play into the equation?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can book most of the domestic airlines. Just make sure 1 personal item and 1 carry on is allowed.

You have to buy 2 checked bags anyways, it might cost you from 70\$ to 100\$ usually.

Prefer Delta, AA, JetBlue.

- New Comment: Book Southwest and you'll be all good with luggage. I prefer Southwest Airlines over others. If you book it with any other airlines (American/Alaska, Delta or United) make sure to purchase additional baggage online which is usually cheaper. Avoid Frontier and Spirit at all cost.

- New Comment: CBP might ask you why you're at miami if your school is in chicago btw, be prepared to coherently answer that.

- New Comment: Get ready to hop on greyhound buddy ?

- New Comment: You wouldn't generally have baggage restrictions (2 check in bags) if you would have booked the entire trip under one ticket. Given that you are booking separately you will have to pay for baggage. Only southwest airlines provide free baggage. Most other carriers charge approx \$100 for two bags(frontier and spirit will charge way more)

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- New Comment: You'll have to book a domestic flight coz your ticket most likely is not joined. The best option for you with you coming with an international airline with full luggage is to book southwest.

Coz they fly with first 2 bags free .. 23kg full two bags just like an international airline.

- New Comment: You can book any domestic airline. Make sure you are within the baggage limit for that flight. As a word of caution- anecdotally, I've heard of F1 students having a hard time with customs if their port of entry is far away from their university, so keep that in mind and plan accordingly.

- New Comment: You can book a domestic flight. Keep in mind extra charges for luggage. Also, you will need to get your luggage from the carousel (flight india to miami). And check them in once again (since you'll be flying with different airlines and booked tickets separately), passing through TSA in miami.

- New Comment: Just go into Expedia and search the domestic flight. Generally they allow 50lbs for checked bags, a carry-on, and a personal item (backpack, purse, etc). The fee depends on the airline tho, some start at \$30 and the second one \$70, and it goes up to how many more you bring. So if you bring two checked bags, be prepared to spend at least \$100.

- New Comment: You can book most of the domestic airlines. Just make sure 1 personal item and 1 carry on is allowed. You have to buy 2 checked bags anyways, it might cost you from 70\$ to 100\$ usually.

Prefer Delta, AA, JetBlue.

Title of the post: Is it safe to apply for OPT with 2 passports?

Body of the post: Hello everyone! I will be graduating May 2025 and was looking to renew my passport in advance this winter. As far as I know, it should be perfectly fine to travel with both passports (new and old one with Visa). However, I am also planning to apply for OPT in February as soon as I am allowed to submit the application. However, I am worried that having two passports will somehow cause confusion for USCIS. My plan is to submit the new and old passport page along with the visa time stamp in the old passport as part of the application.

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Are there any risks or considerations when applying for OPT when having two passports?

Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Your plan is exactly what I advise. Your new passport is valid. The old passport has your previous details and visa.

This is not a concern and you are approaching this correctly. No concerns at all.

This will cause no issues for OPT.

- New Comment: As long as your details match between the two passports you should be fine. OPT is not dependent on your passport but on your I-20. It's less of an issue than you think as there are a lot of people who probably go through this. However, when you travel you will need both passports and the U.S government will not move visas from one passport to another (something I wish they would do but alas they do not)

Edit: I just saw that you commented that your passport won't expire until 2027. If that's the case, Renew is later. You only need to renew it when you have <6 months until it expires. Renew it during the first year of OPT or during your STEM (assuming you have)

- New Comment: u/Codetornado would appreciate your thoughts! Thank you

- New Comment: I renewed my passport this January, received it a month later in February, and applied for OPT first week of March submitting only a photo of the new passport page and the visa page in the old passport. That is, I didn't submit the old passport page or indicated that I had a new one anywhere else. Got my EAD by the end of April.

- New Comment: I had no issues

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- New Comment: Note: my passport is expiring in 2027, but I wanted to renew it earlier to avoid potential headache of renewals in case I stay in USA post Opt or move to another country for employment. My main passport page is also starting to show signs of tear and has been progressing

Title of the post: Stopping the clock

Body of the post: Just received my EAD tonight. It was approved August 6th. My original start date was May 15th when I applied for the card on April 9th. Now the start date is August 6th, which, according to my DSO, means I'm accruing unemployment days without the card in hand. That doesn't seem to make a lot of sense. I have an offer that I'd like to use to stop the clock, but how do I retroactively get back those unemployment days?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: My understanding is that you cannot retroactively get back unemployment days. Once the days have started adding up, they keep doing so until you receive a job offer or until 90 days have accrued. If you already have a job offer in hand that is for at least 20 hours/week and that is in your field of study, I suggest reaching out to your DSO and your employer as soon as the card arrives so that the clock can be stopped.

- New Comment: You have 90 unemployment days during Post OPT- they stop the day you actually start working. You can't stop unemployment based on an offer.

- New Comment: Poor you !! Our DSO strongly recommended us to apply for OPT before graduation itself and now I see why he said that.

Title of the post: Stuck in F1 administrative processing for more than 14 Weeks

Body of the post:

Hi everyone,

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I went for my second F1 visa interview on May 3, 2024, after a previous 214b rejection. My visa was approved, and I was told to wait a week for delivery. On May 8, I received an email requesting 12 years of travel history, my residential addresses, telephone numbers used, and my name. I responded immediately. On May 14, I received a message saying my visa documents were delivered to DHL.

After picking up my documents, I found a 221(g) letter stating that my case was under administrative processing, and I should follow up after 60 days. On day 72, I reached out and was informed that administrative processing typically takes 90+ days and to be patient. Today is day 104, and my case has not been updated since May 14.

Has anyone experienced a similar situation or have any advice on what to do next.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I was on AP for 3 months, from a country considered not friendly to US. I got my university involved, sometimes telling them you'll reach out to a congress member might move stuff. They likely forgot about ur case. They never checked any of my documents and they asked for them 3 times.

- New Comment: I know people who were in the Administrative Processing for 11 months lol. I was in the Administrative Processing for 5 weeks, but as soon as I didn't hear from them the first 3 weeks, I kept calling them every other day. Try that it might help

- New Comment: Unfortunately you just have to wait it out. I have had students stuck in admin processing anywhere from 7 days to 24 months.

- New Comment: I'm sorry terrible to hear. I'm also on AP. I never heard anyone being in AP this long other than lone cases where people were from either Russia or Iran.

What was the explicit reason for the first refusal? Funds or family ties back home? Did they keep your passport the 2nd

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time?

I would suggest contacting the embassy again and saying it's past 90 days. Also try to contact your university and appointed DSO to see if there's anything they can do

- New Comment: Initially I got admitted to University of British Columbia Canada but I got refusal citing my funds was small I need to top up before I reapply within one year less than 2 months I applied for us where they asked my rejection in Canada.

During my second interview they asked my denial in Canada and I answered them properly and he approved my visa.

I am From A region in Kenya where there are terrorism I think that is the issue.

Title of the post: Visa renewal

Body of the post: I am starting my 3rd year of collage in the US. My visa was only given to me for 3 years and I need to renew it next year in August. I am taking 12 credit hours per semester so it will take me longer than 4 years to finish my degree.

Will this be a problem when I try to renew my visa?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You might want to talk to your DSO at your school about this but I assume it would be fine with your visa renewal. Just be aware of the OPT process and timeline for that if it takes more than 4 years to finish your degree. Another thing would be you could try to take more credits...but it depends on how packed your schedule is and how hard your degree is. I took at least 16-18 credits per semester plus summer classes with double majoring and 3 minors in order to finish it within 4 years?However, this shouldn't affect your visa renewal but definitely check with your international student office.

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- New Comment: DONT DO IT!

I was in a similar situation. I enrolled in a PhD program that was a 5 year program. I already had master's and inquired with my advisor if it would be possible to finish in 4 years but the department insisted that it's a 5 year program and they wanted students to stay that long etc.

I said ok, I received my offer where it explicitly stated that it's a 5 year program and it has funding for 5 years and possibly a 6th year. But the school issued me an I20 where the stated end of the program was 4 years. I inquired with the university and the department and they told me it's not an issue. As long as you have a valid student status (meaning you're in good standing), we will issue you new I20s with new program ends etc.

When I went for a visa appointment, naturally the visa was ending in 4 years as the I20 stated a 4 year program. I inquired with the university again and they told me it's not an issue, there give extensions and I could re apply and it's not an issue at all. Visa renewals are easy.

FAST FORWARD to now. My visa was expiring in July and I came to back to Europe to renew. I went to the embassy, was told I was approved on the spot but just needed some extra time for screening. They kept my passport and told me in writing (the embassy emailed me) that they are hopeful to have a reply soon. Well, since the interview (07/12) until today (08/15) there have been 0 updates. I found out that the "extra screening" is administrative processing which is a very risky and nebulous process. I have to change my plane tickets and delay the semester since I doubt I'll have my visa within the next 10 days.

So I suggest to not risk renewing, especially if the delay comes from you. For most people it goes fine, but what if you are the one that gets stuck outside the US or worse that has the renewal rejected? If you have a valid status you can stay in the US with an expired F1. The visa only matters if you leave the US. If I were you and I WISH I KNEW back then

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to do the same, I would stay in the US until I graduate. Once you have your diploma in hand, you can think of next steps.

Good luck!

Title of the post: opt denial

Body of the post: hey I'm having a lot of trouble with my opt

I applied back in December before graduating un December and I was denined because I applied 1 fay late

I applied in April when I was told about my denial and I have been getting my I290B sent back to me 3 times now saying

1. I did not pay the correct fee

which I was told was 800\$ so I sent it the next time in a money order and It was sent back again saying I can not appeal with the I290 B

I have spoken to numerous agents and most say send it again and one recommend me to apply for my opt again but my visa has ran out and my i20 is done

I am lost and do not know what to do as I do not know how to apply again after graduating pass the grace period and I just wanted to apply to receive an OPT visa asap

someone please help me

thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Get ready for some very bad news. I am going to be very direct as to ensure you understand the situation as you have described it. I do not want you to have any false hope.

You lost OPT eligibility. I'm sorry.

If you were denied because you applied outside the application window (either the 5 month OPT application window or

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the 30 day window from OPT I-20 creation) you are completely and fully without question ineligible for an I-290b.

I-290b requires you to with motion to reopen or motion to reconsider.

For a Motion to Reopen: You must offer some new facts to your OPT petition demonstrating eligibility.

You applied late. There are no new facts about your case that change your eligibility. You missed the deadline. You lost OPT eligibility.

For a Motion to Reconsider: You must demonstrate that the decision was based on an incorrect application of law or policy, and that the decision was incorrect based on the evidence in the case record at the time of the decision.

You applied late and missed a deadline. That was not improper or an incorrect application of the law. You lost OPT eligibility.

>I applied in April when I was told about my denial

Were you even eligible to apply for OPT at that time? Unless you have a February or March graduation date it is unlikely you could apply in December, be denied, and still be eligible to reapply in April. If you just mean the I-290b, you were never eligible for that. You have lost OPT eligibility.

>I have spoken to numerous agents

Why haven't you spoken to your school? The ones who can submit your OPT recommendation? You must have their recommendation for OPT. Speak to your school. They will confirm that you lost OPT eligibility. None of these agents

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have any ability to help or support you in this OPT I-290b application. Those agents are not there to advise on immigration law or eligibility for any specific items. They are there to explain administrative processes on submission of documents not immigration law interpretation.

>one recommend me to apply for my opt again

This is not a thing and was not possible. You can only apply for OPT if your school approves it. Why are you not speaking to your DSO? Speak to your school. They will confirm that you lost OPT eligibility.

>I am lost and do not know what to do as I do not know how to apply again after graduating pass the grace period

You cannot apply. Your OPT is gone. You lost OPT eligibility. This entire process the last few months has never been possible. You lost OPT the day your denial happened beyond the application period. You lost OPT eligibility. You will need to obtain a new degree to be eligible for OPT. You have lost OPT eligibility for this degree.

>I just wanted to apply to receive an OPT visa asap

OPT isn't a visa. It is an extension of your F-1 status connected to your I-20. Your I-20 expired. You missed the application window to reapply for OPT. You lost OPT eligibility.

That denial was the end. There was absolutely never was any chance of you obtaining OPT for this degree after that happened. You lost OPT eligibility. You can obtain a new degree and apply for OPT for that degree. However for this most recent degree with the completed I-20, you lost OPT eligibility.

I'm sorry.

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You can leave the US, obtain a new I-20 for a new program, obtain a new visa, and return 30 days before that program start date. Then study at least one full academic year and apply for OPT based on that degree.

But again, for your most recent degree, You lost OPT eligibility. I'm sorry.

- New Comment: Accept it and move on.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: You have lost your OPT, my recommendation would be to either move back to your home country or start a new degree with day 1 CPT, where you might not have to shell out too much money and can also work. Whatever you do please understand this is just a minor set back and not the end of the world. Good luck and godspeed.

Title of the post: OPT Approved...? or what

Body of the post: Hi, I received an email 6h ago that my OPT got approved but when I log into my USCIS account, approval status doesnt show up. It says that "Case Was Changed To A Premium Processing Case" instead of any approval note. Is this normal? My receipt number, mailing address and what not that are written in that email are all correct info. I don't know whether it's a scam or not. What happened to y'all when you received an approval letter from USCIS.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If the email ends at ice.dhs.gov, then it's legit. It'll probably take some time to reflect on the portal, but if the email is from the address that ends at what I mentioned above, then yours got approved.

- New Comment: It takes a couple of days to be updated on the portal.

- New Comment: That happened to me too, for over a week it didn't update (if I recall correctly). I got so confused after a

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few days I called and waited about 2 hours on the phone, where I had a discussion with a very sweet operator that informed me my card has been sent to manufacturing! When the card shipped (if my memory serves me well) the case got updated. I received it in about a week after talking to the nice operator in USCIS.

- New Comment: congrats

- New Comment: Hi OP, just had the same thing happen to me a few days back. Got the approval notice via email some days earlier and then my case status just changed today to reflect the approval decision.

- New Comment: How long did it take to get the approval?

Title of the post: People between the ages of 18 and 19

Body of the post: Is it true that younger people (18-19 years) have more chances than older people ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No

- New Comment: No idea. Probably depends on the context. 18-19 year old from the Philippines applying for a language course institute would probably elicit scrutiny. Vs going to high school or college from a less risk country.

I was 14 turning 15 when I got my first F1 and I imagine being a minor was in my favor since a minor can't realistically become a self sufficient unauthorized immigrant in the US.

Title of the post: Would companies know if you have 1 year OPT (Non Stem) or 3 years STEM OPT

Body of the post: Would companies know if you have 1 year of OPT or 3 years of STEM OPT?

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My boyfriend just graduated from a 4 year college majored in finance. He is an international student and only got 1 year of OPT. He got an offer from a company but is scared that it will be taken back because he said that he has 3 years of work authorization when he only has one. His exact words were "I don't need sponsorship until the next 3 years?" (implying that he has a STEM OPT but he doesn't). He got the offer, and now waiting on a background check running from his SSN.

I noticed in the EAD Card, for all stem OPT and non Stem OPT, the end date is all a year from the start date.

Would the company know? It's really hard getting a job in this economy and anyone would do anything to get one.

Share your thoughts down below. Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Well an experienced HR manager would know which majors are eligible.

- New Comment: You get two EAD cards. First one is only OPT and valid for a year. Then you get a second one if you apply for STEM OPT which says that on the card and depending on how long you want it valid for eg. One extra year or the full two year extension. So yes when they ask for his new card next year they'll know he lied

- New Comment: They won't know. But your bf burned down his opportunity for sponsorship with that company. Even if they didn't notice that he is not stem opt. He will need sponsorship in 12 months. That company that hired him saw something in him that decided to take him on even with the handicap of eventually needing an sponsorship in 3 years. That means that there is this strong possibility that the company would have gone the sponsorship route in 3 years.

Now that I work closely with the hiring manager. Once a manager/hiring manager decides that they want a candidate. It

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is likely that they will do anything in their hands to hire them/ keep them. I am certain that if your bf would have said. I need sponsorship in 1 year. They would have done it. Now that your bf lied to his employer. It is unlikely that they will do something. If I were the hiring manager, I would keep your bf but would not sponsor since he betrayed my trust by lying.

- New Comment: [deleted]

- New Comment: not 100% sure but i don?t think so

- New Comment: If they get very suspicious they can have a look at his i20 and see if it?s stem eligible but 99% the HR won?t think or bother.

Title of the post: 2 I-20s one OPT pending and one Initial I-20 Change of Level requesting Transfer !

Body of the post: Hello Guys, I really need some help or some calming because I am really freaking out.

So i graduated on April 20th this year with a master's, i applied for OPT before graduation, and then on May 9th i received a Rejection notice because of payment issue, long story short i decided not to file again but pursue another program anyway because the market is not good. so i went to my DSO and i told her i want to enroll in another program, same level but differ major, she said ok and issued me an I-20 on May 21st. Fast forward 2 months later and i get admitted to a different school with a better program, so i contacted my DSO Last week to initiate the Transfer process. Then i get an email from her that My sevis record shows two things, once is Active but it has OPT PENDING, and the second is Initial I-20 for change of level, so it looks like there was a miscommunication between SEVP and USCIS, since my application was already rejected while i was in grace period and enrolled into new program while also still in grace period, so now my DSO initiated a help ticket to Cancel the new initial I-20 for change of level and then bring back the record to active for the old one since the OPT was already rejected.

The only thing I'm afraid of is that my status looks like it's in a limbo, i did everything correctly and I'm face with this problem. When i called SEVP they told me this is an easy fix just tell your DSO to do a correction, but my DSO did a

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help ticket and after 2 days SEVP requested more information such as transcripts and acceptance letter, etc.. she just sent them today, now I'm waiting for the results, I'm really freaking out here, i can't sleep !!!!

Any advice would be much appreciated !!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yea, either you misunderstood your DSO or your DSO made an error and isn't explaining it well. Your record cannot show active pending OPT and initial.

>she said ok and issued me an I-20 on May 21st.

Does this I-20 have the same SEVIS number as your OPT I-20? If not, then your DSO made an entirely new SEVIS record instead of updating your record. That would be an initial I-20 instead of an updated I-20.

>Then i get an email from her that My sevis record shows two things, once is Active but it has OPT PENDING

If this number matches the original SEVIS ID and is active, she can just transfer that record to the new school. You are lucky that SEVIS didn't update correctly. This is a quick fix and will get your record to the new school as soon as the next day.

Title of the post: How do F1 students get caught if they do off-campus job?

Body of the post: Suppose, I started working at a local grocery shop using my SSN and driver's license. I did not tell them that I am an international student and did not show my passport. How will they find out?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Doesn't take a lot for a jealous colleague/friend to report you.
- New Comment: School might not find out. But you gotta do taxes eventually and that will show in the US government. Why did you risk it? You probably be making slightly above minimum pay (from where you live) at the grocery. You could earn minimum wage working at the rec or library. So you screwed up your legal status for extra 2 dollars an hour? Picture yourself having to explain that to your parents/sponsoring party for you to come to study in the US.
- New Comment: Your SSN says not valid for employment without DHS approval. You would need a secondary ID for your I9
- New Comment: You asking this question is stupid. Why tf do you even wanna work off campus using your SSN?
- New Comment: Your SSN is not the same as the SSN of a citizen or a permanent resident
- New Comment: Bro screwed over his whole student status for what ?
- New Comment: Life as an international student can get tough and that pushes some people to try to work off campus without authorization. I went through a difficult time financially and almost did what you are asking. But after giving it serious thought, I figured out it wasn't worth it. If you plan to be in the US, illegal jobs will jeopardize your status and will pop up for sure at some point. If you are pressed for funds, reach out to friends, church or try to apply for loans to support yourself. My church was able to help me with \$2,900 that I used to pay for my tuition balances.
- New Comment: You are basically asking ?will I be caught if I do illegal things.? No one knows. But you really shouldn't ask that. IRS or USCIS can come after you
- New Comment: You asking this question is stupid. Why tf do you even wanna work off campus using your SSN?
- New Comment: Friends.
- New Comment: Don't do it. Not worth it. Apply for dept funding. Speak to your department , department chair, and seek funding , fellowship via international student office.

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- New Comment: It is supposed that your social security number has a restriction, it is weird that the supermarket wasn't able to see that when they did their verifications. At least here at my state there are not a lot of companies that doesn't do a second verification. But tbh you screw yourself when you have your real social security number, pray for your DSO doesn't go to the store or they do a random check or a inspection at your store, there are a lot of people that get screwed over for having fake SSC or working illegally. I know that having an F-1 visa is hard and specially the economic part, but I would try to quit and find at part time job at school.

- New Comment: There are dozens if not hundreds of ways this could come out. Several formal, but a lot of informal. Ways happen and in every time I had to terminate a student for unauthorized work it was because of these informal ways of finding out.

For my H1B and green card students, it was also a lot of informal ways.

Title of the post: Can you apply for EAD card after OPT start date has passed but within 30 days from

Body of the post: Same as title!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Just apply for a new I-20 with a new OPT start date, and re-apply as long as you're within 60 days of your graduation

- New Comment: I am so confused. When did you graduate?

When you apply for OPT, the latest start date you can choose is 60 days after program end date.

- New Comment: What do you mean? OPT is what gives you EAD. How can OPT have started but you haven't applied for EAD?

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Title of the post: I20

Body of the post: My student visa for ucla got rejected twice and now I'm getting ucla deferred for year as their deadline for deferral is August 15th. Will my I20 be terminated if I get the deferral as I'm going to take a chance again and my visa appointment is tomorrow on 30th August.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: First off. Why were you refused? Has something changed about your application if not than applying again will just get you denied again

- New Comment: Hello, your sevis number will be active but they terminate your I-20 form as soon as you informed them about deferral. Please advice your school international office and tell them you have scheduled upcoming visa interview and contact with your department about deferral deadline! Hope they can help. Sorry for visa rejection, hope you can make it!

Title of the post: When will my OPT application be approved?

Body of the post: Hi, I filed my application at the beginning of May and received my receipt notice on May 6. My account page told me I would receive my decision within the month of June, then at the end of June I received the "your case is taking longer than expected to process" status. Just today, my homepage changed the status to an expected decision in 4 months.

My job was supposed to start within the next two weeks, and I am wondering if there is anyone is a similar situation? If you filed around April/May I'd be curious to hear when/if you got a case decision and what the timeline was between the decision and receiving your EAD card.

Also, I am Canadian and I travelled home after graduation (stupid, I know, but I didn't have the means to remain in the

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US while waiting for my case decision). Is there anyone who has left while OPT was pending, then successfully re-entered the country?

Thank you!!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I applied late May and as of this morning, it says 5 weeks. You'll probably get yours mid-late September. If it's at the cost of your job, you should pay for pp

- New Comment: Those estimates are not accurate. Better file for premium if you have a job lined up.

Title of the post: Is it mandatory to opt in health insurance while on OPT

Body of the post: Im currently working on OPT in the state of TN.

Tennessee residents are not required by law to opt-in health insurance.

Is it the same for F-1/OPT workers?

I am wanting to not opt into health insurance but want to be sure before I don't opt-in and get penalized.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You really wanna take a chance with American health care costs?

- New Comment: Not mandatory. But you may end up paying a penalty while filling your state taxes depending on the policies of your state

- New Comment: I don't have the answer to your question.

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That couple hundred dollars you're trying to save off your pay check can quickly turn into tens of thousands in one night.

Can throw you into debt real quick.

Wouldn't advise.

- New Comment: That's good to know it's an option in some states. I would also prefer not opting in. I've been paying for that without using it once. I would prefer to pay that money for eating organic food and setting up a home gym and leave us and get medical help if necessary. It would be cheaper.

Title of the post: Got my EAD approved and then had to file I-539 running out of ead time ead days.

Body of the post:

I had my EAD approved in June, also in June I found out that I am out of status and filed my I-539. It's been more than 50 days. My Ead days are running out. USCIS is not being helpful in any kind. Should/can I get a attorney now? Or wait??

Anyone with similar experience please help me.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Purdue University indiana

- New Comment: How did you find out you were out of status?

Title of the post: OPT- Premium Processing

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Body of the post: Hey everyone. First I am really glad to find a community for f1 visa on Reddit.

Secondly, I am in a fickle situation right now. I have received an offer on 08/1 and immediately applied for pp for I-765 for my post completion OPT. I had been 10 since since I have applied and I haven't received an update from USCIS. I was hoping to get an approval email on Friday but I didn't ?

I have told the employers that I am expecting to received my EAD by next week. They might delay my start date by a week at max. I am getting more anxious everyday

The point of my post is to know more about other's timeline of getting EAD who recently applied for PP so please do share it. I would really appreciate it.

My timeline so far-

05/23- USCIS received my application form I-765

08/02- I applied for PP

Update- 08/16

Received my approval mail today couple of hours ago! I am relieved to say the least. I am hoping that I receive my EAD soon.

Thank you to everyone who commented- I really appreciate it!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It's just 10 days. You will very likely hear from them within next few days. Be patient. Mine got

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accepted in 12th day.

- New Comment: Mine took about 2 weeks. But I feel like the nationality plays a big part.

One of my friend is from India and it took more than 2 months.

- New Comment: I got back my approval in 5 days. Anyways, even if you get approved, you can't start till you receive your card. That's another 2 weeks right there. I think more than approval, you should be worried about shipping

- New Comment: Hey guys!

An update- I called USCIS. Spoke to an agent- she said that there hasn't been an update as of 08/14. She also said to wait for two more weeks before contacting USCIS.

I honestly don't know what's going to happen and why my application is taking this long.

- New Comment: My timeline last year was:

06/02 - USCIS received my application

08/18 - applied for PP

08/22 - approved

08/30 - EAD card delivered to me

Talk to your employer to delay your start date. From what I've read in this sub, this year it is taking longer to get approved even under PP.

- New Comment: For me it took 12 days for an approval, it looks like now it'll be another 10 days to get it physically.

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Title of the post: Should I quit to my program? O&G opportunity

Body of the post: I came to the US to pursue a PhD, but I've encountered some serious challenges along the way. My principal investigator doesn't seem to take his and my job seriously, and he's been disrespectful to female students (not sexual harassment, but still problematic). Despite this, he keeps telling me I'm his best student.

Given all this, I'm seriously considering switching gears and completing a master's degree instead, as I already have enough credits.

I recently received a job offer from an oil & gas service company that's willing to wait for a year. This seems like the perfect escape from my current situation, as I could work for them under OPT and leave behind these poor conditions. However, with the upcoming elections, I'm a bit concerned about potential changes in the oil & gas sector.

Should I take this job opportunity and leave my PhD program, or should I stick it out?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Is the company SLB? If so they are notorious in laying off engineers whenever oil price goes down.

To answer your question, I'd at least aim for a publication or two before you leave. This would position you better for a EB2 visa in the future.

- New Comment: Ensure the working conditions for this job is not worse than your phd. Jobs can be extremely toxic too

- New Comment: Yes!!!!

Title of the post: Entering usa with valid f1 visa but with different sevis id and University

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Body of the post: Hiii my visa is approved for University A last year and transferred to other University And went to usa but haven't enrolled for classes in University and returned back to India. Now I contacted transferred University B they said I can come to usa because I do have valid f1 visa. But my doubt is my visa approved on University A and to enter usa I need to show other University i20 which is different from my visa ? What to do in this situation? Shall I again go for visa interview or just follow the university instructions and can come with different University i20? Is there any chance of deportation?

(Note:- I already entered usa once)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Follow your school's instructions. I believe they deal with a lot of cases like yours. I was in the same situation as you. The school told me I don't need another visa interview. I entered the US without a problem. I went to secondary screening at CBP. They need to double-check some info but confirm I am okay to enter.

- New Comment: You must enter initially with the I-20 associated with your visa.

You can then transfer after that.

Or you can obtain a new visa.

- New Comment: I got my f1 visa stamp with "university A" and got into the US with that f1 visa stamp. After a year, I transferred to "university B" and got a new i20 with "university B." That same year, I traveled to Europe for summer vacations. When I re-entered the US, I had my valid F1 visa saying "university A," but my i20 was from "university B." I went through without problems.

I guess I was too ignorant about this. But I've never even worry about this kind of things. Now that I've joined this subreddit, I see a bunch of students worry about these little things that, in theory, make sense to worry. But it is all

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nonsense oneself builds in their heads. (Most people that worry about this thing are students from india).

- New Comment: [deleted]

Title of the post: I deferred my admission due to a visa denial and the school has approved it. How

Body of the post: After my F1 visa application was denied, I deferred my admission to next year. However, since I still have an I-20 with this year's program start date, I was planning to attend another visa interview with the hopes of passing it this time and getting a new I-20 next year.

However, since I've already been rejected once and the official letters from the school indicate that they approved my deferral request due to a visa request denial, I'm wondering if it's better to attend the interview next year with the new I-20, instead of this year.

If I get the visa this time and don't go this year, will there be a problem next year? If so, what are some ways to circumvent it?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: With your deferral, your I-20 is likely longer be valid.

Attending the F-1 visa interview with an invalid I-20 will guarantee a denial.

You should go for the F-1 visa interview with a valid I-20 reflecting your deferral, when your university is ready to provide it.

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Title of the post: Re-entering the US with old valid visa but new i-20 and new SEVIS because of tra

Body of the post: Have anyone experienced this? Please share.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Per 8 CFR 214.2(f)(1)(i)(C), the name of the school needs to match only if it's an "initial admission."

But I'm not sure of the exact definition of initial and whether a new SEVIS changes things.

- New Comment: I haven't experienced this personally, but you might want to check in with your prospective school's international office for guidance they're usually really helpful with visa questions. When I transferred to a Canadian university, I used Halp for admissions guidance and visa support, and their team made the whole process a lot smoother. Definitely recommend finding a good support system!

- New Comment: I've not had that exact experience, but I can relate. When I was studying in Canada, I needed to transfer and extend my study visa, which was a headache. Thankfully, Halp had my back with a free immigration lawyer and step-by-step guidance, making the process smooth and stress-free. Highly recommend getting that kind of support!

- New Comment: What you mean old valid visa ? Is it valid or not ?

Title of the post: Minor mistake in DS-160, would it be a problem? What should I do?

Body of the post: I have already scheduled both appointments and they're in few days, and also submitted my DS-160, but I noticed a minor mistake I made while filling out the DS-160 form.

I have been rejected once before, so on the DS-160, I ofcourse marked 'yes' to the question about prior rejections, but in the description box, I mistakenly entered the date October 3rd, 2023 (previous VAC biometric appointment date) instead of October 4th, 2023 (previous consular interview appointment date).

Essentially, I mixed up the dates. Will this be a problem? Could this mistake be significant enough to lead to another

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rejection? And what should I do?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No one will even notice. The important part is listing that you were refused in the past.
- New Comment: You can fill a new DS160 and carry both the old and new one(just the confirmation page) to your biometric appointment and tell them that you want to change the DS160 associated with your application. They'd do it in a minute or 2. I've had a similar problem and did this!

Title of the post: Am i banned from USA for 10 years?

Body of the post: I went to the USA on a F1 visa in 2015 for a bachelor's degree. Later, I changed my status to TPS. In 2018, i returned to my home country without making any advanced parole papers. I didnt complete my studies while in USA . I was never unlawful and was on my TPS status. I didnt make parole papers while returning to my home country. Now i have completed my bachelor's here, I want to apply to the to the USA again for a master's degree. Am i banned from USA for 10 years for not making parole papers? Also, i applied for U Visa while in USA because i was robbed and that case is still pending. can anyone answer what my chances are of getting F1 visa for my masters? I have a really good bachelor's grade.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 0% chance you're getting a U visa for getting robbed. They'll give you parole, maybe, to be present for the duration of the case.

When you left the US without advanced parole, how did you re-enter the US? Because you lost your status as soon as you left without permission.

- New Comment: I can only smell richness in this post ? how can you keep making the trip to not even complete a

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degree and return back just to want to come back to study. Apologies, just a curious question as to how you could afford it

- New Comment: I don't see any reasons for you to be banned

- New Comment: Probably no 10 year ban, but getting that f1 visa will be challenging as you showed that you wanted a green card and wanted to stay in the US multiple times.

Title of the post: EAD applied on 31st day from the updated i20 generation date

Body of the post: I procrastinated too much and forgot that my updated i20 was about to expire. My program end date is Aug 3. I got updated i20 on July 9. I applied EAD on the 30th day, Aug 8th. But the EAD application shows received on Aug 9th which is the 31st day. There's a chance my EAD gets rejected because I didn't adhere to the 30 day window. I haven't received any suggestion from the DSO yet. Pls suggest me what's my best option now.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I think you have to withdraw the OPT first before your DSO can produce another OPT I-20 for you from SEVIS. Make sure to contact your DSO on Monday cause i could be wrong. After the OPT is officially withdrawn from USCIS, then you can re-apply but make sure you don't exceed your 60 day grace period.

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: >But the EAD application shows received on Aug 9th which is the 31st day. There's a chance my EAD gets rejected because I didn't adhere to the 30 day window.

The chance is nearly 100%

Step 1: Withdraw the application. (this takes 4-8 weeks)

Step 2: Obtain completely new OPT recommendation after withdrawal is processed.

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Step 3: Wait.

- New Comment: Hi. Can someone please mention the exacts of applying for OPT?

So the DSO can apply 90 days in before your last class? but what do they need to apply? How do you inform the DSO and how's it vetted?

Then the DSO will generate i20 opt and then within 30 days we are supposed to apply for it where?

Title of the post: SEVIS transfer issues

Body of the post: My SEVIS record was recently transferred to another university as I am starting my PhD. I was on STEM OPT for about 5 months (Jan 20-June 11). My last day at work was June 11th, and the transfer took place on June 25th. However, because of some miscommunication with my DSO (the transfer was supposed to happen on June 15th), my last day wasn't reported in the SEVP record. It basically just says that my OPT was terminated on June 25th (the day of the transfer). Also, my DSO said that since my OPT was being terminated the final STEM OPT evaluation was optional. I submitted it to them anyway but my SEVP portal doesn't reflect this. My DSO says they can't make these changes now, and neither can my new school. Will this be a problem later when I apply for OPT after my PhD?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This is a non-problem.

- New Comment: u/GRRWorld u/codetornado what do you think?

- New Comment: Your DSO probably can't make the change because you transferred out. But isn't there a USCIS website that you can use to report change in OPT employment ?

Title of the post: Need advice for F1 visa interview!

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Body of the post: I think I've spent way too much time on Reddit reading about visa refusals and now a week before my visa appointment I'm super super nervous. I'm supposed to go to northwestern university in September. Any advice or pointer I should keep in mind? Help this anxious (almost) masters student!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Be straightforward, dont be suspicious and it?ll be done quickly

Its really not that big of a deal, my interview was barely 30 seconds and wasn?t a problem at all

- New Comment: Just getting an admit from a top university such as Northwestern reduces your refusal chances significantly. Go back to the same posts about visa refusals and note how many of them are from top universities and how many from mid to low ranked state universities.

This is usually because the VO has heard about your university and shows that you are not desperate enough to go to ANY university that will take you.

- New Comment: What has worked for me is being friendly with the officers. I always ask if their day is going good and I also compliment their Spanish (in my case). Last time I had a 10 minute conversation about how he ended up working for the embassy lol.

He did ask me a few out of hand questions like, what if you start dating a US citizen, would you marry them and stay in the US? I said, ?getting into a relationship is not part of my goals for now since I want to focus on my studies. If I was to get into a relationship though, I would still come back and give back to my community first.?

And he approved my visa.

You got this! Make sure your answers always center around you going back to your home country after completing your degree! Even if you know you want to stay and do OPT.

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- New Comment: Good luck

- New Comment: Hey! Let me know how it goes I am going to appear for my interview next week for Northwestern as well. From what I have heard it should be fine, they'll just ask why northwestern why this course and who's funding

- New Comment: Congrats on northwestern!

Be confident, don't say "sir" every 2 seconds, you'll be fine. Good luck!

Title of the post: International Student: School won't certify loan because Mpower misspelled my last name

Body of the post: I arrived to the U.S. on a student F1 visa and upon visiting the international student office at my school (as a grad student) they have notified me that MPower has misspelled my last name and hence they will not be able to certify my loan until Mpower does so. I'm trying now to get in contact with Mpower to help rectify the situation, but guys tell me... I'm I in jeopardy of losing my student status if mpower somehow does not fix this on time? Or is Mpower required by law to send my loan since its the same one i used to issue my i-20. Please advise.

Best,

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This is strange. Why does your college have to ?certify? an already approved loan? Aren't you getting the loan money credited to your account? I've never heard of anything like this before

- New Comment: I work in both financial aid and international. You're having a financial aid issue, not international. I wouldn't worry too too much about this (yet) but make sure you're in contact with financial aid.

- New Comment: Nothing to worry about. Just Call MPower and let them know about the issue- they can fix it from their end very quickly and resend the loan for certification. You can also contact your loan relationship manager. There should not be any penalty or late fee for you from the tuition point of view as your financial aid department is aware of the situation. Just ensure you contact and communicate with both parties and you will be good. Nothing to worry about losing status, you already have your I20, got a visa, are here and have an approved loan. Think of it as a simple error

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that can be fixed very easily. Good luck!!

- New Comment: I actually came online to search for this issue and I found this. I also just got a mail from my loan company stating that my school declined to certify my already approved loan. Thing is, after my research, I got to know that certification only applies to U.S schools meanwhile my intended study is in Canada. And it's clearly stated on the loan website that certification doesn't apply to Canada. So now I'm wondering what I need to do as visa is still pending but application has been submitted. Please What do I do?

Title of the post: F-1 visa

Body of the post: I have to study intensive english course before my desired major in engineering, but my I-20 just show english program for now what should i tell the U.S consular at the F-1 visa interview as I am worried to get rejected

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: whatever the course i-20 shows you gotta tell that, people keeps on changing major here in usa so they dont really care about what you going to study later just talk about the program shown in the i20 good luck

- New Comment: this is going to effect the visa decision a lot. if you are from a third world county and that you are going for ESL there is high chance of rejection. and note that you won't get the time to explain all these to VO as well. so you have to be clear with shorter answers straight to the point.

- New Comment: Does you I-20 mention your major? If yes they you need to talk about the course you going to study. Cause even my I-20 says English program and literature but in the course of study it mentions masters and my major.. so don?t you worry

Title of the post: Should I join a company offering job on OPT for 2 years.?They say they cannot gu

Body of the post: Please assist

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: join and keep looking? it's better to not waste ur unemployment days
- New Comment: My friend was in exact same situation. He was offered job but the company said he could work for 3 years, so he accepted and changed a job after 7 months (the one with sponsorship). He had time to prepare well. Now he is living the dream (fully remote, 150K TC).
- New Comment: [deleted]
- New Comment: Without a second thought, yes. Most people switch after 2 YOE, just start looking for a job in the one year mark.
- New Comment: Yes, join and apply for EB2 NIW right away

Title of the post: Is there any way that I can make it through without an I-20

Body of the post: I recently transferred after completing two years of college in the U.S. I'm currently back in my home country for summer break and only have three days left before my scheduled flight back to the U.S. Because I transferred my SEVIS record from my previous school too late, I won't be able to receive a new I-20 from my new school until my flight date.

The problem is that I have orientation the day after my original flight date, and there are no flights available before the semester starts.

Is there any temporary document I can request to my new school or a temporary form of residence such as I-515A that I can prepare? I know I was a dumbass for delaying the most important thing as a student but I'm desperate for any advice to help resolve this situation.

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: No way! You shouldn't come until you have your new i20. This would be a stupid decision and you may unnecessarily get into trouble.

Honestly orientation is not a big thing especially for someone who already knows how the schooling work here in states.

Reschedule your flight and come back when you have your paperwork ready.

- New Comment: Reschedule your flight. The Immigration always asks for I20 when you're trying to enter the US

- New Comment: I was also an international transfer student and I can assure you that orientation was absolutely not that important.

You'd be risking being turned away at the border for just one day at school that is not going to make any difference in your life?

Absolutely not.

Wait until you have your I-20, then go. Miss all the days you need as long as you maintain your status. That's all that matters.

- New Comment: The new school should be able to issue an I-20 with a "transfer pending" on it.

- New Comment: No. There is no alternate document.

Title of the post: Opt

Body of the post: I'm graduating next may , when do you guys recommend to start the OPT application? I don't want to be without work for a long time after graduation, and my international advisor is kinda dumb so I don't trust him haha

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Apply ASAP, the moment they allow you to work on your application do it
- New Comment: Finish off everything by Feb end.
- New Comment: >I don't want to be without work for a long time after graduation

What do you mean by this? Did you do any internship prior, and are you expecting offer from them? The market currently is really bad, and a lot of international students are struggling to get a job.

When it comes to applying for OPT, the best is to apply 90 days before graduation. The only issue is if you don't have a job offer, picking start date can be tricky.

Let's say you pick May, and you are jobless for the next 90+days (you are volunteering with a professor during that time). On the other hand, let's say you pick July, but you get a job where the company is willing to let you start in May.

Apply later means that you will wait for your OPT for more than 3 months if processing continues to be as long as it is this year. And you might need to pay for premium processing in order to not lose the job offer.

- New Comment: Count 90 days before your graduation date and apply on that day. That's the earliest you can apply. So somewhere in February. And after you apply start job searching and insist on a July start date if possible so the opt delay doesn't affect your work start date. I regretted applying 60 days before graduation because I definitely wasn't going to get my card before my august start date. I had to apply for premium processing

- New Comment: Verify with your school when your degree will be conferred cause at times conferral and graduation are different. You can submit your opt application 3 months before degree conferral so aim for day 1 of those 90 days and you can request your opt i-20 before that date

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Title of the post: US immigration dilemma

Body of the post: I've a flight on this 13th to US and it's going to cost me around 65-70k to stay in boston for 17 days at a diff place till my lease starts, lease starts at 1/09 and If I reschedule it's costing 32k which I think is a better option but my IELTS expires on 20th August.

So if I reschedule the flight to 27th will that expiration of my ielts will affect my immigration?

please advise

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Talk in USD please
- New Comment: As long as you have your F1 Visa in hand. They don't care about your IELTS.
- New Comment: Hopefully you're aren't talking in us dollars. 70k for 17 nights.
- New Comment: Only your visa, the tests doesn't matter
- New Comment: usd??????
- New Comment: I'm not talking to you until you edit your currency and develop of sense of self awareness. Moron!
- New Comment: 70K !!!!!

Title of the post: PP worth it?

Body of the post: I applied for OPT on July 3 (my school delayed the process by ghosting me for weeks), I have a job offer with a start date of September 9 and the website still says "3 months"...

I feel like at this point I have no choice but to switch to PP, but the \$1,700 price tag is painful.

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EDIT: paid for premium processing on Sunday, August 11, OPT was approved today, August 15. Thank you all for encouraging me to do this!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yeah do it. They are still processing applications from April so it is gonna take you a looong time without PP. I applied to PP on July 26 and received the approval yesterday.
- New Comment: Go for it. It's worth it
- New Comment: Ask your company if they can help with the cost of pp
- New Comment: def get it, better to spill 1700 than risk the job
- New Comment: I promise you , you will NOT get it in time without PP. You will lose more than \$1700 in income by not getting it in time
- New Comment: Please do it, you are risking your job offer !!!!!
- New Comment: What is PP?

Title of the post: F-1 visa interview

Body of the post: My young sibling got approved to study intensive English program in the U.S, is it a good idea to mention in the F-1 visa interview that he might pursue further education as this course is preliminary mandatory before pursuing the desired major?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: what's your nationality and county of residence ?

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the decision might vary upon this

Title of the post: US visa F1 and Irak visa

Body of the post: Currently student in the states with a F1 visa, I am planning a trip to Irak to help a catholic school as an English teacher for a summer (2 month).

I will have to renew my visa (on a French passport) in the next September, do you think that a visa for Irak will make the application difficult and probably refused?

Thanks !!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You mean IRAQ?

Wow! ?

- New Comment: You might have a much greater chance of getting 221g administrative processing if you renew your visa.

Title of the post: F1 lapse./Terminated.

Body of the post: Hi all,

So a friend of mine came here on an F1 visa 2 years ago. They couldn't go to school because their family found out they were LGBTQ and withdrew funding. After not showing up. The school told them to leave the US but because of fear for life they didn't and has been here since. I guess my question is what route could they take to fix the status. Could

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they enroll in a new institution that late? Or would it just boiled down to them marrying a USC? going back home isn't an option and they are telling me that if that's the only route they are going to possibly unalive themselves. Any advice would be appreciated.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: get an asylum status assuming your lgbtq status will cause you to be sentenced in your home country.

If you come from a Muslim country, that will be perfect to do so.

- New Comment: If they have a legitimate fear of persecution because of LGBTQ identity, they might qualify for asylum.

This is lawyer territory and beyond DSO and reddit's scope.

Keep in mind one cannot just get asylum without real evidence. They need to provide evidence of threat/persecution of their life based on their social identity.

- New Comment: If the school told him/her to leave that means that his/her I-20 has been terminated because of lack of funding. If that is the case he/her is an illegal immigrant now. There is no way to fix that status unless he/her goes through the marital route, which also will be hard since it would be evident that the marriage is solely for the purpose of status.

If his/her I-20 hasn't been terminated, he/her could try transferring to a new institution, but 1) it's probably too late and 2) he/her would need to show the proof financial situation. Also, his/her documents will be valid for 5 months (without being enrolled in an institution), but after that, he/she would need to pay for a new SEVIS fee, I-901, get a new I-20, and a new visa stamp.

The best chance is to ask the DSO what will happen with his/her documents and what are the consequences of him/her not leaving the US.

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Knowing the situation, the DSO may provide any other alternatives out there. But its a tough situation.

- New Comment: Well from my knowledge:

1. Like the others stated, if your friend's school told them to leave, that most likely means their SEVIS and i-20 were terminated due to not paying. Which means that since your friend hasn't left, if ur friend passed or will pass the grace period, they will be an illegal immigrant, which means it'll be next to impossible to apply/re-enter the states in the future with a visa or apply for a GC. They'll also have a hard time getting into Canada and NZ etc as well as they share immigration details with the US.

2. Since their i-20 has most likely been terminated, it'll be next to impossible to enroll into a new school. Partly because school admissions closed a long time ago and partly because they'll need to provide financial proof that they can pay for school.

3. Marrying a USC is also nearly impossible atm, if they're already classified as an illegal, USCIS will scrutinize the marriage as a marriage to solely gain status and a GC. Chance of GC denial is high in this case.

4. I agree with the rest of the comments, your friend should apply for asylum. If they're under legit threat because of their lgbtq status back in their home country and have proof, it's the best option. Evidence needs to be solid and it can't just be your friend's personal feelings regarding the country's negative outlook on the lgbtq status. Your friend's life needs to be in genuine mortal danger whether persecution or whatnot should they return.

most importantly seek a lawyer

- New Comment: What country are they from?

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Title of the post: **HELP after the post completion 60-day grace period**

Body of the post: Hi,

I graduated college this May and applied for my OPT kinda late, but I still managed to do it before I graduated.

My OPT is getting processed slowly, so I had to come back to my home country after 60 60-day grace period.

I'm pretty sure there are people like me out there who applied for OPT but couldn't remain in the States after the completion of the 60-day grace period and had to come back to their home country waiting for OPT to get processed.

In this case, did y'all update your physical address to your home country or just leave it as how it was when you applied for i-765 (American address) even though you are not living there?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >My OPT is getting processed slowly, so I had to come back to my home country after 60 60-day grace period.

If you apply for OPT, then you don't have a 60 day grace period.

>I'm pretty sure there are people like me out there who applied for OPT but couldn't remain in the States after the completion of the 60-day grace period and had to come back to their home country waiting for OPT to get processed.

Not sure why you couldn't stay in the US but that 60 day grace period doesn't exist for you.

>did y'all update your physical address to your home country or just leave it as how it was when you applied for i-765

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(American address) even though you are not living there?

Leave an American address where your EAD card can be sent. Somewhere where a friend can collect and ship it to you

- New Comment: Hey there,

Seems like you got the relevant answers to your queries from the other person. May I offer some relevant unsolicited advice.

May I also ask when is your job offer's start date? If it is in the near future, then it might also be worth it to look into Premium Processing of your OPT application. It costs about 1700\$ I believe and would guarantee that USCIS comes to a decision in your case within 30 days (usually much earlier within a couple of weeks).

If the OPT application takes too long to be approved, then your company might rescind your job offer, and in this job market, you wouldn't want that. You can also ask your company if they would be willing to help you with this cost as well!

Hope everything goes well for you mate :)

Title of the post: Companies offering Sponsorship

Body of the post: I'm currently on the job hunt and facing significant challenges with visa sponsorship. Despite my qualifications and experience, I've found that even some Fortune 500 companies are unwilling to hire candidates who require sponsorship.

I hold a Master's degree and have over three years of experience in data engineering and ETL pipeline design. Despite this, the sponsorship aspect is proving to be a major roadblock.

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I would greatly appreciate any leads or a list of companies that are currently hiring and willing to sponsor international candidates. Any advice or recommendations based on your experiences would also be very helpful.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: When did you graduate?

- New Comment: FAANG

Title of the post: How hard is the 20 hours a week rule on opt ? Does USCIS monitor it ?

Body of the post:

I am on OPT and I need to study for a licensing exam . Can I work less than 20 hours for a few weeks or take an unpaid time off to study from my employer ? Will USCIS monitor it and will it cause trouble ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The safe option could be to take pto.

Uscis do not monitor the hours on a regular basis. But if for some reason they do. You will get in trouble.

- New Comment: No, USCIS does not monitor it because it is very hard to do so. The only way to really monitor it is if USCIS asks you for time sheets or paychecks (which they rarely do unless they suspect your company was involved in OPT fraud and ask an RFE when you apply for STEM OPT/H1B).

Better to take PTO since you are getting paid for it.

- New Comment: Not working during your studies will not negatively affect your student visa status or academic standing, as working up to 20 hours per week is an option, not a requirement. However, there are some considerations:

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1. **Financial Implications**: If you were relying on the income from part-time work to cover living expenses, not working could impact your budget. You may need to find other financial resources to cover your costs.
2. **Practical Experience**: Working, even part-time, can provide valuable experience related to your field of study, which could be beneficial for your resume and future job prospects. However, if you feel that your academic workload is too heavy or you want to focus entirely on your studies, it's perfectly fine to prioritize that.
3. **Scholarships or Funding Requirements**: If you have any scholarships or funding that requires you to work a certain number of hours (e.g., a research assistantship), not fulfilling those requirements could affect your funding.
4. **Networking Opportunities**: Part-time jobs, especially on-campus, can be good for networking with professors, staff, and other students. If you decide not to work, you might miss out on some of these opportunities, but you can still network in other ways.

Ultimately, the decision to work or not should align with your academic goals, financial needs, and personal well-being.

Title of the post: Need help with my OPT

Body of the post: Hey guys,

I applied for my OPT on April 23rd and my case is still under decision. I had my start date for 17 June and my end date for my I20 was 22nd May. I have been applying to jobs but it's been hard to land one, I have interviewed with a couple of companies but they don't want to deal with new college grads. As a back up I applied for masters at my university and the program starts on 21 August.

I don't know what should I do, should I wait for my EAD card and keep looking for positions (my 3 months period will

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end on September 17th) or should i start my masters program and consider the fee paid for EAD waste.

I am scared and nervous i would really love your help guys.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Your 90 days doesn't start until your EAD gets approved. So let's say your EAD gets approved August 15, that'll be your start date

I would just keep on waiting if I were you.

Title of the post: Creating a Course in Udemy

Body of the post: Hi all, I want to ask if creating an online course in a platform like Udemy counts as a violation to my F1 visa conditions even if the course is related to my field? As a way to get a passive income to support my grad studies

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >As a way to get a passive income to support my grad studies

Creating the online course would NOT be passive. That is active work you are doing not passive.

- New Comment: Still illegal and not passive.

- New Comment: What kind of grad study field are you pursuing? I was doing grad studies too and tuition was covered by the university plus stipend too.

Title of the post: Any NPO for OPT volunteering program without the needs of monetary donation?

Body of the post: I'm searching CS related OPT volunteering program, just talked to one NPO, feel bit uncomfortable

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that they need \$250 to initialize and \$500 monthly fee. Any idea? Thanks a lot

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Look up IRS's website for finding non profits.

As for volunteering, the safest place is ask your professor or university department for unpaid RA. They won't charge you money and from a legal perspective it is the safest way.

- New Comment: I'm also on my first year of OPT and currently volunteering at a non-profit organisation.

My master's is in Business Analytics so I'm not 100% informed on CS but I know that in my team there are quite a few backend developers which I think might be related to CS. There's also other projects under the same organization that might better fit your skills.

The non-profit's called Match4Action-CrowdDoing and participation is free.

But yeah def reach out to professors first. Good luck!

Title of the post: Worried that EAD card might not arrive on time

Body of the post: Hey everyone, I would greatly appreciate some support. I applied for I-765 on May 27 and haven't heard anything back, so I applied for premium processing on July 25. I have a flight booked back to the states on August 20 and I highly think I won't have my EAD card when I enter the US (I originally planned my friend to mail it to me). Assuming I get my EAD by this month, is it possible I initially enter the US through ESTA, receive my EAD card there, leave the borders of US as soon as I can, and enter again with my F1 visa and EAD card? Might sound dumb and reckless but this is my way of learning from my mistakes the hard way ?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Why can't your friend who's going to get EAD to ship it internationally for you?
- New Comment: I think July 24 PP got approved yesterday you should be getting it today or tomorrow. Try and move your flight if possible to be safe if that's an option.
- New Comment: Have you gotten approved for your EAD? I'm in a very VERY similar situation to you.
Applied initially on May 16, but was taking too long so I didn't PP on July 16. Have a flight back to the US on Aug31 and my uncle needs to mail the card to me in Asia.
Currently, I got approved on July 29, card produced August 3. Just waiting for my uncle to receive it. I don't know if you could enter on ESTA.
Your timeline is very similar to mine so I hope that all goes well for you and it is approved in the next few days, then you should get your card in time ?
- New Comment: July 24th PP here, my application was approved yesterday
- New Comment: I applied for premium processing on July 22 and got approved on August 5. I'm guessing yours would be approved very soon, in which case the ead should be delivered by next week. Fedex and ups have 1-day international deliveries, it's costly but might be worth it in your case.

Title of the post: What if STEM OPT not

Body of the post: Im working on my post OPT now. Since my program is STEM designated I can extend my stay for two additional years after the original OPT given that my company won't sponsor visa.

Is there a possibility for my company not to extend my OPT for my second year working here?

If you were me, what would you do? Would you keep applying for new positions that sponsor visa? Or forging a good relationship with the current company that they would change their mind to sponsor my H1B?

Too many questions but thanks for your comments

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If your company is not e-verified and if they don't agree to complete the e-verify process, you cannot apply for STEM OPT with that company. Find out about that right now. If they are not willing to e-verify, you'll have to get a job at an e-verified company before you apply for STEM extension

- New Comment: If your company decides to keep you for another 2 years but not sponsor you for h1b. Look at it as years that you could be saving money rather than "wasting your time". If you were not to work for another 2 years here in the US. What would you be doing? Studying a higher degree to stay in the US (that cost a lot of money). Working in your home country with your current degree (I know how cost of living ratio works, but most likely you'll be making more money here than in your home country). You can work here in the US for another 2 years. Live a frugal life, save as much as you can and spend it in property at your home country. That way you'll be back with a house of your own, with 3 years of experience in an American company. Besides, who knows a lot can happen in 2 years. You might get yourself a partner and get marry to a US citizen.

- New Comment: You file STEM OPT extension yourself, the only thing the company needs to do is filling up Form I-983. Employers don't usually pay for that, we do.

H1B is obtained through a lottery system held every April, an employer can register for you and if u get selected then they can sponsor you. An employer cannot just sponsor you a work visa just because they want to. Unless you mean an employer-based greencard which is a whole other topic.

Title of the post: Working under the F1 visa

Body of the post: Hey, I'm from Brazil looking to apply to an US college and before committing to it, I have some questions regarding the F1. I've been with multiple agencies and they gave me conflicting information.

First agency I went to told me that with the visa I could work anywhere inside the college campus and get paid, but the

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second agency I went to told me that even though I was allowed to work in campus, I could not legally receive any paychecks, and now I'm just confused on who's right or wrong.

Another question, I've been told that if graduate in the STEM field you can apply to stay in the US for up to 3 years, so in theory could I get an associates (2 years) then apply to stay 3 years (5 years total) and then apply for a bachelors (another 2 years) and once I graduate apply to stay another 3 years again for a total of 10 years in the US? It seems sketchy and it felt like the agency was trying to sell me a false dream but I'd love to know beforehand.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: F-1 visa allows you work on campus for 20 hours during spring and fall semesters and 40 during summer semester without needing to apply for any other applications.

You are allowed to work part time (20 hours) off campus in a company that aligns with your field of study, which this will require you to file CPT for.

You will need to have a Bachelors Degree to apply for OPT and being in a STEM field will allow you to have additional 2 year extension of OPT.

You cannot repeat OPT by getting another Bachelors, you only get OPT opportunity for each of the level of education.

Hope this helps !

- New Comment: Yes you can work ON campus , no more than 20 hours a week and receive a paycheck. Saying you can't be paid is nonsense.

STEM OPT is only for bachelors or higher. You can do 1 year of OPT after associates degree but you have to work, you

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have 90 unemployment days and if you use them up you have to leave or do another academic program. They likely explained getting a job OPT seem a lot easier than it actually is.

You get 1 chance at OPT per degree level , associates , bachelors , masters etc

While applying for OPT is simple, if you can't get a job then it goes to waste. The job also has to be related to your degree. Individuals with bachelors and masters struggle getting a job, much less associates.

- New Comment: Stop going to "agencies". They are not qualified to give legal advise.

Literally just go to the official government websites and you can learn all you need about F1 visa and status.

[Students and Employment | USCIS](<https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment>)

[Student and Exchange Visitor Program | ICE](<https://www.ice.gov/sevis>)

[Schools and Programs | ICE](<https://www.ice.gov/sevis/schools>)

[Training Opportunities in the United States | Study in the States (dhs.gov)](<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/training-opportunities-in-the-united-states>)

- New Comment: Não use agências, pesquise por si só.

Title of the post: Post-Completion OPT Approval/EAD Timeline

Body of the post: UPDATE: received approval on August 9. Waiting for card to arrive in mail now.

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I applied for my post completion OPT April 12 and still have not received a decision. Has anyone who applied in April heard back?

My start date was originally July 29 but has been pushed and is supposed to be August 12. Would it be worth it to apply for premium processing or is it likely I'll get approval soon?

Also, are most employers okay with pushing start dates? I feel really bad about pushing it twice now and want to make sure they won't rescind the offer. (I've already signed the offer letter, done the drug screenings etc.)

If you have any info that would be great thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: if you are in a hurry then premium processing is justified and worth. afterall it doesn't matter if most employers are okay with pushing the start date, what matter is YOUR employer.

- New Comment: Applied April 1, got on Aug 1

Now my job is gone :/

- New Comment: Applied Mar 30, approval notice came around Jul 28, EAD card produced Aug 1, both notice and EAD card received at my school's ISS office on Aug 5. My EAD shows a Jul 28 start date so I do have about 8 unemployment days already accrued, but I have until July 16th 2025 to apply for STEM OPT (so more time to find an E-Verified employer).

Still jobless without a paid job, but I managed to secure a volunteer position within my university to help stop the unemployment clock.

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Will continue to aggressively job hunt alongside this.

DM or comment below if you want to know more info!

Title of the post: What US address do I give to the airline before flying to the US?

Body of the post: I will be studying in the west coast but going to stay with my cousin in the east coast for a week before I start.

Do I give the east coast address or my student accommodation address on the west coast?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I have the exact same question, except I'll be staying in an Airbnb for a day and then moving to my housing. Just putting this here since I didn't get a response to my question.
- New Comment: Your university's DSO or international students office address
- New Comment: Make sure you have your internal flight tickets available. They may well ask at immigration how and when you will travel onto your college.

Title of the post: OPT EAD Process

Body of the post: I applied for my EAD on May 17th, and my start date is supposed to be next week, no case decision as of today, August 5th. I have an interview and I'm pretty confident that I will get the job, should I apply for premium processing or should I wait until the end of August? How will I change my current application to premium processing if I do need to?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: if you are confident that you'd be getting a job then premium processing is worth it.
- New Comment: Don't apply premium until you have the offer, I was in the same situation applied and later the position got cancelled. Luckily got another job.
- New Comment: >How will I change my current application to premium processing if I do need to?

File form I-907.

- New Comment: If you're sure of landing a job then you should definitely take the premium processing route because I have friends who waited 4months plus for the EAD card to arrive, the fact that they didn't have a job lined up meant they waited it out but if you already have a job lined up or are confident that you'll get it, do premium processing now !!
- New Comment: Apply PP. I also applied regular on May 16, but it was taking super long. I didn't want to have things go wrong as I'm flying back to the US on Aug31. Applied PP on July 16, got approved July 29, waiting on card now.

Goodluck ?

- New Comment: I applied on April 1. Got mine just last week
- New Comment: I applied for a premium processing today (August, 5th 2024) for OPT STEM Extension, I'll keep you posted
- New Comment: They're still working on cases from early April. USCIS really did spring grads dirty ?
- New Comment: Premium yes. Currently the processing time is 3-5months
- New Comment: Please guide me. I applied for my EAD card on April 26 and up till now it has not arrived. I already got a job and they are waiting for me to resume. Should I apply for premium processing?
- New Comment: I applied April 12 and still haven't received my OPT approval so I'm not sure that you would get it in

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the next few weeks.

- New Comment: In my case i got rfe and submitted june 27th and paid premium processing on july 1st. It been almost 25 business days . Still no case status is updated in my uscis portal. Anyone faced this situation

Title of the post: F1 visa renewal on post-OPT with commission-based job

Body of the post: I'm on my post-OPT and working in commercial real estate brokerage. Though the job aligns with my major, it is commission-based. I know that paystubs are normally used as financial proof for visa renewal. But that's not something that I can provide as I haven't received any commissions during my 3 months at the company.

Does that have any negative impacts on the chance of renewing F1 visa when I go back home?

Is it sufficient if I use my personal financial documents only? (along with the job offer letter)

Would appreciate any insights before I have my appointment with DSO in a few days.

Thank you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: have you at least gotten paid with a base salary for the 3 months? you would need to show that you are in continuous employment

Title of the post: Zolve

Body of the post: Hey everyone, I'm on an F1 visa planning to fly soon, what do you think about zolve credit cards? Any insight would be helpful. Any other cards/ Bank accounts i should consider. Any help regarding the topic is helpful thanks.

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Zolve has a credit card. It just exists. That's it.

You'll likely end up using other banks while in the US. Transferring the money to Zolve, paying the bill etc is an unnecessarily cumbersome process.

The plus point is that you can have your card right after you enter the US. So you have a credit card to use for your initial purchases. Within a month or so though you can get a BofA credit card. Once you have the SSN, you can also get Discover and other student cards as well.

Source: Have had a Zolve card for 2 years. Have not used it in 1 year and 11 months.

- New Comment: Discover is a great credit card to start with as a student.

Chase Bank and its credit cards are amazing as well.

- New Comment: I have had it for 2 years. It's a great starter card

Title of the post: Stem-OPT, chances of denial?

Body of the post: Hi everyone,

So I'm currently on my post completion opt, I'm a biomedical engineer with a coursework in subjects related to biomedical engineering and economic decision making, lean concepts etc. Currently I'm volunteering at a non profit organization, the organization is focused on empowering children, its health checkups, building shelter for them, etc. I majorly research on health, help them analyze what medical equipments they need and also use my coursework in economic decision making to help fundraise.

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Now I'm getting a new job, completely related to my degree, it's a proper medical equipment company and I will be starting soon. I'm applying for extension once I get my new job, but I'm afraid based on my previous volunteering my stem opt might get denied because I've to obviously submit all i20s.

Note: I've properly updated the SEVP, and all of that.

Please help. Thank you. Any advice on how to get it approved will be appreciated, also I've 3 months left for current opt expiration.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Have you clearly explained how the role aligns with your degree? If yes, you're good.
- New Comment: I think you should be good as long as your DSO is convinced and you can justify if you get an RFE.

Plus, I'd also consider doing premium for STEM, so that if something goes wrong, you'll have time to reapply

Title of the post: Do I need to get a new visa stamp??

Body of the post: I just checked my visa stamp has kind of a big crease from the bottom.

The crease was tiny when I first got the visa. I am going to fly on the 12th of August.

Is this going to be a problem? I could be just paranoid, it's my first time going to the US.

Thanks for the help!

Reddit Posts

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I have the same problem as well. We paid so much money only to have this huge crease ?
- New Comment: It doesn't look too bad, is everything readable on the stamp?
- New Comment: It's alright. You don't need a new one
- New Comment: If the scanner at the airport can't read it, you're going straight to secondary screening.

Title of the post: Could F1 visas holders mobilize before congress to improve work prospects?

Body of the post: As many I'm also facing a wall with the current job hunt. But while I understand the economy is terrible right now, I'm fed up of being automatically disqualified simply because I checked yes at the "would you now or in the future require sponsorship" question. It's unfair and discriminatory for those that are seeking some experience post grad. Congress should either make the sponsorship process easier and cheaper for employers or require employers to not discriminate against international students for a checked box the same way the SC did for affirmative action. Do yall think this is a possible ambition? I understand it takes time for the fed government to take actions on certain topics, especially immigration laws, but if at least we could circulate a petition or something i believe it'll be a valuable head start that'll let the government know international students are currently facing hardships.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: A reminder that an F1 is a non-immigrant visa. Meaning the ideal situation would be for students to come here and go back to their countries once they are done. However, there have been many policies to help students stay. Particularly OPT and STEM OPT. I think asking for more is unreal. In the eyes of the government, the best workers will be able to get jobs and stay, the rest should be back. No incentives to make it easier
- New Comment: We are not citizens. And there's no reason why congress should listen to us, especially in this economy where even lot of US Citizens are struggling to get jobs?.

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- New Comment: No. They don't need us, we need them. They would say don't come here then, if it's so difficult. Also, doesn't make any sense - why would they use their resources to help us when they could help their own citizens get jobs in this economy.
- New Comment: This isn't Canada, the Fed isn't bending over backwards to keep you
- New Comment: They know the situation, but they won't care, cause you can't vote. It's not the same as it was with affirmative action, they were voters
- New Comment: Umm, no offense but who the fuck are ?? Do you see your home country do this if there was a million international students living there? Companies rejecting you because of sponsorship are not discriminating you, they just don't want the hassle of paying thousands on visas every now and then. Plus you're taking away jobs from an actual American that's been living there since they were born. Smh why do I see so many people thinking that your visa comes with a guaranteed job.
- New Comment: lmaooo not a petition
- New Comment: Either way, international students are expensive to hire, even for just experience. So it isn't discrimination but rather at a disadvantage for the company. They have to pay for the hiring process which can be expensive and won't be in their interest to hire someone that'll leave soon. So companies are going to push back. Plus we come here with an understanding of not staying so we really aren't a priority.

I get the frustration, we've all experienced it but this is an impossible task unfortunately
- New Comment: This is not the action. Instead if the aspiring masters students hold off on coming to the us after seeing the current condition. It would incentivize the US to invest in better opportunities for h1b opportunities as most of the funding for the universities come from international students.
- New Comment: Why do people keep on saying the economy is terrible? The unemployment rate (minor blips aside) at multi-decade lows. Growth rates are healthy. Inflation is under control now, and interest rates will start going down soon
- New Comment: I would be so down to join you in this!

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Title of the post: Worth an Immigration Attorney?

Body of the post: I'm currently on OPT and my company will be sponsoring me for a green card.

They will start the process in a couple months through an attorney office that handles immigration.

- Would it be beneficial in any way to have a personal attorney as well?
- Is there anything I can prepare to speed things up? (documents to get, forms to fill early, ...)

Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Probably not and fyi this process tends to last 2ish years (if u r lucky not from a backlogged country).

PWD, job test, perm, etc, etc

Id read more on the process but that should be enough

- New Comment: >Would it be beneficial in any way to have a personal attorney as well?

Not really, because you get no say in the visa other than "yes please, Sponsor me." and "no thanks, I don't want to be sponsored". It's not a negotiation on the immigration side. It's administrative paperwork.

>Is there anything I can prepare to speed things up?

Speed it up? Not really. You can get documents ready, but it depends entirely on how they want to sponsor you. So,

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maybe but nothing substantial.

- New Comment: What kind of green card? EB-2? EB-2 NIW? EB-3?

Title of the post: Post F1 plans

Body of the post: Hello, I'm planning on going to US to study and obtain a undergraduate degree. I got a full tuition scholarship so the tuition is not a problem.

I read many posts here on Reddit and saw how hard it can be to stay in the US after graduating and get a h1b visa or even opt sometimes. There's also the lottery system that makes the h1b more difficult because it depends on luck. I would like to know if you have a plan when that time arrives and what options it could be considered. That uncertainty is something that really makes me uncomfortable and question whether I should study there.

Also, sometimes the degree you earn in US is not valid in your home country which can make the time and effort almost useless if go back.

Would appreciate very much your help and advice.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'd suggest aim for a STEM research based MSc degree at the very least. Doing so would let you hedge on several things:

- you'll have more expertise in a particular field, hence increasing the chances of employers to hire you (and also increasing the chances of employers to sponsor you)

- slightly increase your chances for H1B lottery (as they are on a different cap)

- if you can produce some publications, you would be eligible for EB2-NIW

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- an additional STEM OPT gets you 3 years to figure out H1B and/or other visas

- if your employer likes you a lot, they can grant you O-1 visa to buy you more time to try for H1B or waiting for your EB2/EB3 visa

- New Comment: F-1 is a non-immigrant visa. It offer no special benefit to staying in the US long term. It also affords no special benefit to applications for employment sponsorship.

If your plan to study in the US hinges on your ability to stay after or your intent is to immigrate, you need to look at other countries that offer that benefit.

>I read many posts here on Reddit and saw how hard it can be to stay in the US after graduating and get a h1b visa or even opt sometimes.

Yes, because as stated above, "F-1 is a non-immigrant visa. It offer no special benefit to staying in the US long term. It also affords no special benefit to applications for employment sponsorship."

> I would like to know if you have a plan when that time arrives and what options it could be considered.

If you cannot obtain sponsorship via employment or via marriage then you are returning home or going elsewhere.

>That uncertainty is something that really makes me uncomfortable and question whether I should study there.

Do you have a full ride offer somewhere else? You essentially get to come, study, work, and take a chance at this... for the cost of immigration papwrowkr and cost of living. Something the vast majority of student spend tens if not hundreds

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of thousands of dollars to do.

>Also, sometimes the degree you earn in US is not valid in your home country which can make the time and effort almost useless if go back.

As the F-1 is a non-immigrant visa you should plan to obtain a degree that would be useful back home.

Title of the post: Entering US for first time on F1 visa

Body of the post: Hey , do I need some extra documents to enter us first time on f1 visa or the normal ones(passport,i20,sevis fee receipt) will do fine ?

I read somewhere about i94 and travel signature from Uni

I am confused about these two if anyone could elaborate about these 2 that what are these and whether they are required or not would be a huge help

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I-20 and passport with visa.

Can they ask for more or scrutinize? Sure. But in my 2-4 per year entries across 8 years on F1, never was I asked for more than the I-20 and the visa. Technically they can even ask to rummage through your phone.

- New Comment: Look at Page 3 of the I-20. It lists the things you need. Other than passport with F1 Visa, I-20, better to be prepared with:

- internal flight ticket if landing in one city but college is somewhere else in the country. They do sometimes ask.

- they may ask how you will fund your studies tuition+living (and if I remember right this is one of the items listed on page 3 under the heading Admission). Does not hurt to carry the supporting docs you used when you applied for the visa.

- and yeah, don't carry fresh fruit in.

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- New Comment: You can download your I-94 through the website and you would need your I-20
- New Comment: It honestly depends where you're from. I think that if you come from a country where people constantly stays illegally, then expect to be asked for more things other than your I-20 and passport.

For instance, I come from a Central American country and one time they asked me for a proof of enrollment. Thankfully, my mom told me to bring extra documents just in case and I had one with me.

Other times, they've asked me what is my major, where is the college located, and when is my expected graduation date.

In contrast with my Korean girlfriend, she only shows the F-1 visa in her passport and they let her in.

- New Comment: Carry your funding documents and lease (if you've already got your housing sorted). You never know what you might be asked

Title of the post: Impact of Student Loans on F1 Visa for Spring Intake

Body of the post: Hey everyone,

I'm planning to apply for a US university for the spring intake, but I'm facing financial challenges. I'm considering getting a student loan from Mpower or Prodigy Finance.

I'm wondering how much a student loan impacts F1 visa approval. Does it increase or decrease your chances? Any experiences or insights would be helpful.

Thanks!

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: if u can show that u have enough money for ur i20 from the loans and other sources then it shouldn't be an issue
- New Comment: Watch out for the interest rate. Make sure you can and have plans to pay it. Loans aren't free money.
- New Comment: Your visa has nothing to do with you having a loan. All you need is to show that you have funds for your education.
- New Comment: Those two right there are worst lenders to get a loan from. They leave you high and dry midway.
- New Comment: F1 Visa approval has nothing to do with student loan at all, during the interview just bring the loan document as a proof that you'll be getting the funds from them. That's all.

That was my personal experience

- New Comment: But have you done some research on the situation in the US? It is quite risky now.
- New Comment: Dude, I reached out to Prodigy and MPpower too, and let me tell you, it was a total disaster. There's a bunch of stuff they don't tell you about. Their interest rates are going through the roof, and they don't even give you tax exemptions if you get a loan from them. The processing fees are 4-5% on the loan, while regular Indian lenders only charge 1-1.5%. And if they happen to say they'll include it in the loan, you'll end up paying interest on the processing fees too. They won't give you money for the second year if you fail any subject in the first year, unless you clear your backlogs. I wouldn't advise anyone to go to these US lenders. I got my loan approved by this org called wemakescholars. They helped me get an education loan, and I got it very quickly. You should take expert advice when it comes to loans and stuff. Even the embassy is very skeptical about them and you might face problems with the visa, so try going through an Indian lender only.
- New Comment: Dude, MPower and Prodigy finance doesn't affect your visa. But they surely will affect your mental health. They will charge you with crazy high interest rates. When you covert USD into INR it will be so much. I have a

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friend who wanted to take loan from prodigy but someone suggested her to take loan through wemakescholars. Guess what she bagged a crazy deal from private bank and interest rate is also pretty good. Try them out.

Title of the post: Ms after PhD

Body of the post: Hello guys,

I came to US for PhD in molecular biology. For my thesis, I learnt a lot or bioinformatics and want to move to the biomedical data science field. But idk a lot about DS. So I could either go to a post or do another MS. I prefer MS over post doc because I really hated the academia experience.

So if I don't take any OPT after my PhD. Will I get OPT if I pursue MS next in a different field?

Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I don't think you can use OPT that way but I maybe wrong. You will not only waste your OPT for your PhD degree but also you need to be doing higher degrees to use OPT again.

- New Comment: I am doing my PhD right now and my dso said this.i used my opt after my masters. If you want just check in with your dso . They'll let you know.

- New Comment: Naah that's wrong you get a OPT at each degree level. So even if you don't use it now. You'll get one for masters

Title of the post: Received OPT approval email

Body of the post: I received an OPT approval email this morning, but it doesn't say approved on USCIS my account.

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I am confused, am I approved or not yet?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Its approved, even i received it
- New Comment: Congrats, now yo on the next steps realizing almost impossible to find job on OPT and 80 more days you will be probably on here asking what todo ??? welcome the hell of International students.
- New Comment: I have the same confusion. I got an email today saying opt approval- the next step. Create an SEVP Portal account. But on uscis account it doesn't say approved yet. Do you have any updates on your case ?

Title of the post: Regarding amount transfer

Body of the post: Hi,

I applied for a loan in SBI but my bank saying it can't disburse amount to my account. First I have to pay the fee and then reimburse it. Or they will pay directly to my college which my college isn't accepting.

My senior told me that he'll pay my fee in us and I can transfer him in INR.

Will it violate f1 laws as I said my fee will be paid by father and also all the conversion charges and tcs are exempted?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This will not violate any law. Your senior is trying to make a good money by cutting down the transaction cost.

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Even if you do this. How will you get the loan money from the SBI is a big question.

Title of the post: F1 REFUSAL SLOT URGENT!!!!!!

Body of the post: Hello,

I am seeking guidance and clarification regarding my F1 visa application. My initial application was refused under Section 214(b) on July 15, 2024. Since then, I have been attempting to secure a new visa appointment slot, but unfortunately, I have not been able to find any availability.

I am concerned that I may not be given a second opportunity to reapply, as I have heard that many others have successfully obtained slots within a week. Despite daily monitoring, I have not seen any available slots.

Could you please advise if there have been any changes in policy or procedures that may be impacting my ability to secure a new appointment? I would appreciate any information or guidance you can provide regarding my situation.

Thank you for your assistance.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: new appointments come out almost everyday, i would advise u check 5-6 times a day. I had an appointment for 14th AUG 2025, but i checked around 5AM on a random tuesday and saw an appointment for 9th april 2025, not the best but still better than nothing.

- New Comment: Same bro me too

- New Comment: What

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Title of the post: Where can I apply for F1 visa closer to the US?

Body of the post: I'm currently in the United States and have successfully changed my status from B2 to F1. I am starting classes this fall. I want to apply for the F1 visa at US embassy nearby so that I can travel out. I checked Canada and Mexico and there are no appointments. Any recommendations where I can apply? My passport is from Ghana.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Why bother risking a denial when u travel out.

- New Comment: You don't have time to get the visa before school starts. You should wait for winter or give you are from Ghana summer vacation.

Title of the post: opt question

Body of the post: i have a degree in management & work on OPT in that field during the week. (i have a 1 yr OPT at the moment and am on F-1 visa) however a bar in my neighborhood is hiring part time bar managers for the weekends and i thought it'd be a good way to make some extra \$ since money is so tight:(am i allowed to work? and would it cause any problems to my status? thank uuu

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: you are required to report your second employment to your DSO, unfortunately. Take it at your own risk.

Title of the post: Should I worry about timelines?

Body of the post: I applied for OPT on 5/16 but the portal has been giving me the ?your case is taking longer than expected? message since late June. I understand if this doesn't seem like a long wait time, but I'm not sure what to

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expect at this point. Any thoughts or tips?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Where are you seeing this message on the portal?

- New Comment: Dude it'll at least be a few more weeks for you. They are now processing the first week of April.

- New Comment: You should ignore the myProgress page since it's inaccurate. I got my case approved today and the myProgress page still says that a decision for my case will be made in 4 months. However, right now they are approving the cases submitted at the beginning of April, so you might expect your case to be approved between late August and mid September.

Title of the post: STEM OPT wait time 7 months!

Body of the post: Anyone apply for STEM OPT extension in late June or early July? My receipt date for the extension was June 28th and on the USCIS website it says that the estimated time for the case decision is 7 months! My friends who applied in mid June say that their estimated time for the STEM OPT extension is only 2 months.

Is anyone else facing a similar issue? I'm probably going to go for premium processing at this rate.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: That estimate time is not accurate.

- New Comment: I won't trust this estimated time. It took almost 5 months for my friends to get their STEM OPT. If you need peace and have money, I would highly recommend to do PP.

- New Comment: It depends on when is your start date and if you have an offer letter in hand then go for premium. But even the premium processing is taking 2 weeks just to get approved. I have heard of premium processing cases being approved in July first week but they still haven't received their card. So in general it is taking some time. Just have to be patient.

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Title of the post: F1 visa renewal on STEM OPT.

Body of the post: Hi, I completed my Bachelor's in Dec 2023 and am currently working on STEM OPT. My F1 visa expired 2 months ago. I want to travel to my home country. So, how can I renew my F1 visa as a TCN (DR, Mexico, Canada)? And what is the probability of getting it approved? Help will be appreciated. Btw, I m from Nepal.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: My friend renewed his visa on stem opt and had no problem. He didn?t need an admission letter or anything. I renewed my visa on normal opt and had no problem, and I just submitted my stem opt application. Go for it and don?t be scared.

- New Comment: It?s a huge hassle. I came a month ago on STEM OPT for visa renewal in India. There have been huge delays, my status was refused after 3 weeks, I was called for an interview, it?s been a few days since that and still waiting for passport to come back. Here is my timeline:

<https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/s/caWni7yWRd>

- New Comment: Thank you for giving me hope. But it's been 5 years I haven't traveled back to my country. never been there once I came here.

- New Comment: *my personal look on this* i think it might be difficult for you to get a visa renewal because technically you are not showing that you are going to further study (Masters)- and i haven't heard of anyone got his visa renewed sole based on the STEM OPT. no one knows what are the chances/probability but however, goodluck to you!

Title of the post: Should I renew my visa?

Body of the post: I just completed my undergrad in US on F1 which is valid till the end of this year. Im currently back home and starting grad school in fall this year. Should I renew my visa or travel on the current one?

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Might as well renew it while you're there.
- New Comment: I feel like it'd be easier to get a renewal while the visa is valid than visa is expired.
- New Comment: As long as the visa is valid, you can enter the US using it. It is also totally fine if it expires while you're in the US. However, if you want to leave the US (for whatever reason), and then come back later, you will need to have a valid visa. If your classes start in a week, then there's no point in trying to renew your visa now. I would recommend going back next summer (if you can), with ample time in hand, and renewing your visa then. Technically you could also stay in the US for the entire duration of your program (even with an expired visa), but in that case you're effectively "trapped" in the US, with no way to return unless you renew your visa.
- New Comment: You don't have to as long as the visa itself remains valid.

I got my F1 when I was 15 for high school 3rd year. Still used the same visa with the high school's name on it through college. Renewed it 3rd year of college. Used it past college for grad school.

That plus renewing it is always a gamble due to the doctrine of consular nonreviewability.

Title of the post: Out of status since fall 2023 (october). Just got a new I-20 issued from new school

Body of the post: I fell out of status in october 2023 due to failure of enrollment (financial issues). I'm back to normal and ready to continue my education. I just got issued a new I-20 from my new school. Visa been expired since 2020. Is it even possible to go to Canada for 6 days for my best friend wedding under automatic revalidation and they just signed the back of the I-20. I'm assuming since i fell out of status for more than 5 months i would be ineligible. I don't want to take the risk however i want to hear your opinions/experiences.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: if your US visa is expired, you will need to reapply your student visa for re-entry to the states with your

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new I-20 issued from your school.

- New Comment: Question, where have you been for this duration of time? Did you stay within the United States or did you return to your home country? It sounds like you were in the U.S.? And were you pursuing reinstatement during this time or just out of status and received a new Form I-20?

Title of the post: Working with STEM OPT Extension Receipt

Body of the post: Has anyone worked with STEM OPT Extension Receipt? Someone told me that it is not possible to work with receipt and that EAS card is mandatory. I would like to hear experience of people who have worked with the receipt? Any suggestions would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: As long as you are in the same role, and provided your i-765 was filed before your OPT end date, your work authorization is extended by 180 days on your existing EAD so you can continue working. However, if you want to switch employers while your i-765 is pending, that would be a pain and a whole different process.

- New Comment: no you will need your EAD card to start working. a Form I-797C receipt only notifies you if your application has been received/rejected. It does not provide work authorization.

Title of the post: Will my OPT application be denied?

Body of the post: Hi everyone,

Long story short, i graduated on may 12th and my grace period ended on July 10th. My DSO told me to submit my application on or before July 10th. Right after graduation, I had to renew my passport (which took around 2 months) then figure out a way to secure that \$470 application fees then after all that i finally submitted my application on July 10th around 6pm. After submitting my application, the USCIS website showed that my application was submitted on July 10th

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but received on July 11th. Now i am worried that it was off by a day, i emailed my DSO but they replied with "it's up to USCIS to make that decision". Has any of you been in the same situation before and got their opt approved?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Tbh, From May 11 to July 10, the total days are 61 days. Even July 10 looks not okay?

- New Comment: this pains me to ask, but why did you apply for OPT only on the 60th day of post graduation date? OPT generally takes months to get processed. i am sorry.

- New Comment: I'm sorry OP, usually you read in this subreddit about f1 students that miss this type of deadline because of negligence, being misinformed, etc. Usually excuses for those people are

"I didn't know we had 30 days after getting i20 opt"

"Dso didn't told me about that"

"Dso misinformed me"

"I totally forgot"

If you asked me. Those excuses are due to negligence on the student part. A simple Google search, chatgpt can answer too. Even a post here in reddit would've solve their problem.

Your situation on the other hand, it was unavoidable, there was nothing you could have done differently. Your faith was up to passport being processed faster. I'm sorry for that.

Now the facts. You applied after the 60 day mark. Which means that even if your case it's pending. It will be denied. Which means that you're living here legally. All left to do is to pack and leave the country and hopefully reapply for f1 visa.

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- New Comment: I hope USCIS will accept your application!
- New Comment: I will advise you apply to a university immediately!!! If you are denied, you are literally out of status!!!!

Title of the post: For self employment opt

Body of the post: Hello for self employment opt

Do i only need ein number? And i need to explain why my self employed company related to my major on the sevis record, what are the steps thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If its just the 1 year OPT your talking about, then all you need is an offer letter and some of the company details like EIN, E-verify number to submit to your school.
- New Comment: I don?t think this exists ?

Title of the post: F1 visa renew

Body of the post: Has anyone stayed in the u.s even after an expired visa, but had valid i-20 for more than a year? (Opt)

Had anyone got rejected to renew there student visa?

Please share your experience please.

I got rejected to renew my visa, no clue why.

My second appointment coming up? Any help much appreciated.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I am currently in the US (STEM OPT) with an expired visa. You really can't renew your F1 visa at the moment because you're not proving that you are going back to school.

The plan is to finish your OPT- and then admit for a Masters program, go back home & get your visa renewed. You cannot leave the US. OR you can hope to get picked on H1B during your OPT, and then get an adjustment of status and then you can go home and get stamped for H1B visa.

- New Comment: Do you mind sharing any updates?

Title of the post: Should all of your answers be under 10 seconds ?

Body of the post: Like if I get asked why this uni ? Should I keep it very crisp or am I allowed to yap a reasonable amount?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Don't have robotic answers. But at the same time don't give unwanted information that you're ask for. Remember, you've got 2 minutes tops for the whole interview. If you gotta take an extra 10 secs to thoroughly explain something do it.

Example of bad short answers.

Officer: "who is your sponsor and how do they make money?"

You: "my father, he's a business owner in xxxxx".

Example of short answer with explanation.

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Officer: "who is your sponsor and how do they make money?"

You: "my father would be my sponsor. He owns and operates a construction company since 2002 at xxxx city. Which focuses on residential and commercial building projects"

The key is to be honest and provide enough detail to demonstrate that your sponsor has the financial means to support your education. Plus that you have ties to your country.

Good luck

- New Comment: A little advice (not sure if other people would agree): I got this from an old boss who went through it and I did the same; after they ask the questions, make a little conversation. I asked the officer if they'd been to the city I was studying at and we had a little chat about it. I think being a little personable helps show that you really are interested in going.

- New Comment: Why would you want to yap? Are you visiting your auntie on diwali? Keep it to the point

- New Comment: they won't care if you yap, just don't lie about anything and you'll be fine

no need to feel the extra pressure of answering under 10 seconds if the answer requires a bit more than that. looking stressed and agitated doesn't help.

Title of the post: OPT status after getting a job in a foreign country

Body of the post: Hi guys. I finished Ph.D. 2 years ago in a STEM degree (i.e. graduated May 2022). I had a postdoc in the US for a year using OPT, then got a job in the UK for which I've been working for a year. I had been assuming that my OPT is over once I've left the country and getting a green card is the only way to go back to the US. But recently a recruiter contacted me and told me that (after her discussing with her immigration legal team) if I still have valid opt time, there shouldn't be a problem in hiring me, which confused me a little. Do I still have a valid OPT, and if so, what are the

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remaining years?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: No, you don't have anymore OPT time left
- New Comment: USCIS count your unemployment dates on US base, not globally.

Title of the post: Desperately need some advice

Body of the post: I will graduate from my master's on August 16. I was planning to a PhD in the same lab that I worked for during my master's as my PI told me that I could finish in 3 to 3.5 years as I would be transferring credits from my master's. However, recently my PI's attitude towards me changed and not for the best. Also now the timeline for completing my PhD has also been increased to 5 years.

All this plus some personal stuff has put a lot of emotional stress on me. I also asked if I could defer my PhD admission to the winter semester as I am going through severe mental distress but they refused.

Will it be a good idea for me to apply for my OPT now and start looking for a job? I don't have any job offer yet. Or should I push through for the next 5 years.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Apply for opt, takes about 5 months to process anyway. You'll have that time to reflect and what you want to do. Meanwhile you can apply to PhD or if you have been accepted already. You can deferred ot until a semester you feel comfortable.
- New Comment: Been through the same thing (long story) and I am having to do a second MS(wasted 2 more years) to

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get OPT since I did not apply for the based on the first MS. I had to quit after an year of the PhD and wasted my first chance for apply OPT.

Apply for OPT and find a job. You can get a PhD offer again from someone else or the same PI. PhD doesn't matter (in most case) if you want to go to the industry and you will also get another OPT for your PhD if and when you complete it.

Title of the post: Is it okay to wear jeans in the visa interview ?

Body of the post: Title

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I have had to issue multiple temporary bans for joke comments. Per the rules, no joke comments.
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: I wore for mine and it was fine. I don't think there's a strict dress code, just don't go in there wearing gym shorts and tank tops
- New Comment: Can they actually see the lower part of your body?
- New Comment: you can go in half pant also
- New Comment: Yes. I was wearing them and had no problema
- New Comment: I won?t lie I wore a t shirt and joggers + trainers to my interview. Had no problem
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: Shouldn?t be a problem but if I had questions on my dress choice, I?d just stick with something traditional- business/business casual. Trust me you?d not wanna get nervous during your interview especially not due to your dress options.

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- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: [removed]

Title of the post: Unpaid Internship concerns

Body of the post: I was able to secure an unpaid internship that I have been working for the last 2 months in another state from my college. Because I'm not paid or compensated of any kind, I assumed that I don't need to apply for any work-study program that authorizes employment.

I want to include this working experience as Internship in my resume but my concern is if for some reason my DSO sees that I had an internship (which she doesn't know it is unpaid) but no authorization, she might assume that I work illegally which risks my F1 termination.

There are split opinions online but my question is do I actually need authorization to work for an unpaid internship?

Also should I include this experience as Internship or Volunteer Work in my resume to avoid any legal issues?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You technically did work illegally, so I would not mention this to your DSO because they have a legal obligation to terminate your SEVIS record

- New Comment: Extra information around the unpaid internship:

- I worked for a Catholic Charities organization, where the clients are refugees and immigrants.

- I have helped preparing orientations for new clients about the programs offered.

- I helped clients in filling out application forms.

- I assisted a team of employees with some tasks that are repetitive and doesn't require advanced knowledge (for

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example making copies of state funding checks, look at clients' hand written forms and fill out their records in the system,....)

- I acted as an assistant for an employee whenever he has to take a client out for shopping necessities (is it a part of the program). I would just hanging around with the client to help them buy grocery while the employee prepare some paperwork on his car.

There are also some other minor stuffs that I did. Hopefully someone can determine if it was okay for me to do this internship or not.

- New Comment: Are you going to show your resume to DSO, and why? You can put whatever you want on your resume. DSO can't terminate your SEVIS because you put something on your resume. A lot of people put projects as jobs on resumes, and DSOs would work 12 hours per day if they had to check people's resumes and call companies.

The only thing that you need to be aware of is that when companies do background checks, they sometimes will check employment history. Since you are not paid, they might either call the company and ask for proof.

Title of the post: Place of Birth Spelled Differently in I-20 Form and Passport

Body of the post: Hello! I have already stood for my f1 visa interview and was issued my visa. But, only now I'm noticing that there is a mismatch in the name of the place I was born in my passport and I-20 form. In my passport it is spelled "Chattogram" and in my I-20- "Chittagong". They refer to the same place and it went through a change of name a few years ago. While applying for my university, I forgot about this fact and used the name I was used to. Will this be a problem when I try to enter the USA? Thank you for your help!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: The Sevis number is never gonna change unless your I-20 is terminated, and in that case you need to apply for a new I-20 and pay the sevis fee again.

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If reached out to your school about this issue, all they gonna do is go to the sevis database and make the necessary changes, and produce a new I-20 with the same sevis number. But Like I always say, I'm not an attorney, so seek more information on this.

- New Comment: I'm not sure it would be a problem to enter the US. I also had a similar issue on my f1 visa, as the name of my university was spelt wrongly but it didn't raise any problems for me when entering the US.

I'm not an attorney anyway, so I would advise you seek more advice out there.

Title of the post: Forgot to sign I-20 for OPT

Body of the post: I forgot to sign my I-20 for my OPT. What should I do?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I never signed mine. Uploaded as was provided by ISSS. Got my EAD card last week without any issues.

If it makes you feel any better you can always sign and upload it as additional evidence.

- New Comment: Try to upload a new one as additional evidence. If you use PP, you can email or call PP service center about the issue. If not, try normal USCIS customer service. Try to do it ASAP or you may receive RFE, which will delay your decision.

- New Comment: I didn't even sign mine when I applied and got my EAD as well. If you still want to do it, upload it as an additional evidence.

- New Comment: Also, consult the DSO as well.

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Title of the post: STEM OPT RFE (bonafide employer - employee relationship)

Body of the post:

Hi, recently I got an RFE on my Stem OPT application asking for a bonafide relationship with my previous employer (Initial OPT). Actually while on Initial OPT I had an unpaid position (40hrs/week) with a company XYZ Tech from Sep 2023 - Jan 2024. Then I started working for the Florida State as an analyst which is my current position. I submitted my i-983 through the State job I currently have. These are the questions I have

1: What documents should I submit? I have the offer letter from my previous employer mentioning job title, EIN, Address, supervisor name

2: Should I submit these online as they have given me both options.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I agree with u/Codetornado . Upload as many docs as you feel are relevant to the question and as always, a consultation with an immigration lawyer is never a bad idea. Keep in mind not all immigration lawyers know F-1 as much as others. Lawyers do not have access to SEVIS. I too have seen these kinds of RFE. On OPT, you had the right to accept employment that you felt was directly related to your degree and when you reported it, you provided SEVIS with an explanation of how you felt the employment related to your degree. I'll be curious to hear how uscis adjudicates your case. Good luck!

- New Comment: u/Codetornado

Title of the post: RFE on OPT Stem Extension

Body of the post: I recently received this letter from USCIS so I went to the Dean's office to acquire the statement? Will that be enough?

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(PS, my transcript has Bachelor's of Accounting instead of Bachelor's of Management Science so I don't know if that would help)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It happens sometimes with people who study not normally non stem degrees. I have a MBA/stem so when I graduate I will have to be careful and fill in the right details
- New Comment: Do what the RFE is requesting. The DSO or your department most likely has a template response ready to go to satisfy point 1 and 2. Get them involved. Provide transcripts for point 3.
- New Comment: I think something similar happened on a particular post
- New Comment: <https://www.reddit.com/r/f1visa/s/uE76IDpc4W>

Yeah this is it check it out

- New Comment: I think this guy had similar reason RFE. Please check the video here: https://youtu.be/YeIJB6SJKl0?si=1_SyBpGDtZaR5Fp5
- New Comment: I had a similar situation happen to me earlier this year! My DSO said it's becoming more common this year after they moved STEM OPT processing to the Texas facility.

You should be fine getting a statement from your Academic Head / Dean. I got one from the Dean of the College that specifically laid out how some of the courses I'd taken correspond to the CIP code degree and why they should be considered quantitative in nature. For example, I was an Economics major, so she noted how I'd taken econometrics etc.

After submitting the materials from my Dean, I got the approval notice in ~3 weeks. Hope it all goes well!

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Title of the post: F1 Post completion opt RFE

Body of the post: Hi all,

I received an RFE for my post completion opt application today. I studied in a executive course(mostly online except some days). I'm on F1 visa and this is my first masters.

1. I did not yet receive any documents(I do not see it in USCIS portal) of what evidence they need. Do I receive it in a post to my address? Or do they send it in email?

2. Does anyone know what they ask?

3. Do they ask for any bank statements? If yes, I have some recurring transactions(all are zelle transactions) to help my stay in US, for which I do not have any proof, does it cause any issues?

4. Should I reach out to an attorney, to help get this solved?

Can anyone help me with this please?

Thanks in advance to all.

Update: I received the pdf of RFE.

They are asking for the:

1. Bank statements for the past 3 months for which I have transactions in it which I don't have any proof for those.
2. Travel and stay information for my masters attendance.

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3. Coursework information.
4. Attendance information.
5. Addresses of stay.
6. Transcript information.

The problem I have is with the bank statements, since I have couple of zelle transactions.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Wait for one or two days. They will update your portal to tell you more details.
- New Comment: Check your apartment mail box you might have received a mail

Title of the post: Please please help

Body of the post: Will be traveling to USA (JFK) for the 1st time as an F1 student. Can I bring two phones with me (1 Android and 1 iPhone)?

I would be using iphone for my US sim card and android for my Indian sim!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yeah of course
- New Comment: Hey bro, nothing to worry. First time they would not ask anything. Only chicago immigration is little tough. I brought 3 phones so it's not a concern, they don't ask anything. Just answer the questions which college, courses, etc., that's it

Best of luck!!

Reddit Posts

- New Comment: Goodluck brother ?

Title of the post: How challenging is after F1?

Body of the post: Opinion regarding switching from F1 to H1B

Hello, I'd like a honest opinion regarding going to US as a undergrad student and aiming for a H1b at the end of graduation.

I'm from Brazil, 26, and would start a new graduation in the US studying life sciences. I see that h1b is not easy to get and you rely on job offers and the lottery. However, I would like to know if it is easier if you get a stem diploma, like your chances are higher to get picked up by lottery? I know that stem jobs can get you up to three years working on OPT is it common for international students get those jobs and work for that many years?

I also would like to know if age can make things more difficult since I will be an older student attending university?

Does your country you are from and degree interfere on the chances of lottery?

I got a very good scholarship so I wouldn't have much expenses. So, the matter is more about opportunities. The initial investment wouldn't be so bad.

I really appreciate your opinion and help .

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: -STEM students have a better chance at the H-1B lottery because they ordinarily get up to 3 attempts at the H-1B lottery. There's nothing that inherently improves STEM outcomes in the lottery, just that you have more shots at it given you'll likely have STEM OPT access, permitting you to work in the US in the field of your study for 3 years.

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-individuals with a masters or above have a better shot at the lottery given there's a quota for those folks, but that doesn't apply to you.

-you might want to look into cap-exempt H-1B employers. Those employers (research nonprofits, among a few other categories of institutions) can file for an H-1B irrespective of the lottery.

- New Comment: It's not based on your country of birth or type of degree. Only master's degree holders have higher chances of getting selected, but it's still not great. With a master's degree, you're looking at 20% chance , and with just an undergrad, you'd have 15% chance of getting an H1 each year when you apply. It's also hard to find companies that sponsor visas, so it's an uphill battle.

Edit: typos.

- New Comment: STEM is better because you have three-year OPT, while non-STEM has only one year. So you have more chances if you failed the lottery in the 1st year or even 2nd. Some unlucky international students may fail in three years in a row. Their plan is to find a university that supports first-day CPT and continue this tedious process.

There are some lottery free H1b. For example, you work for non-profit or university. But these jobs are very difficult to get, especially when you're foreigners.

For Green card. It very depends on your employer. Whether they want to sponsor you because it will take money and long time to be approved. Many people I know who receive green cards is by marrying a citizen or green card holder.

H1B only give you up to 6 years to work in US. If you cannot obtain green card after that, sorry you must leave.

Also, your employer needs to sponsor you for H1B. Tbh, most employers will directly reject or ghost you once they know you need this. That's my experience and you can see plenty of f1 students complain here. Just think about this, the company will spend extra money for you if you keep failing the lottery. So they do not want to take that risk.

The situation is not easy for everyone.

Will you get your chance? Maybe.

Will you meet the worst result? Probably.

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What I did is ?keep trying, but also keep the least hope.?

- New Comment: How do you apply for h1B lottery? I just graduated in May and doing opt right now.

- New Comment: OP, based on your post and relies; it seems you are interested in the F1->GC path.

Here?s my knowledge based on hearing experiences from other people.

When you apply for a GC, you apply under a category. Most GCs are *sponsored*, which means that someone/something has to back you up in the process. When people marry a U.S. citizen, their partner is the sponsor (usually) and this counts as family sponsored visa.

Now, a lot of people get sponsored a GC through an employer. A lot of employers don?t sponsor directly F1->GC, they tend to use an intermediary visa category. Options of intermediary visa categories are H1B and L1B. Each of them have their processes of obtaining them. You might wonder, why do they need the intermediary step?

Many employer sponsored GC categories like EB2 and EB3, have a more than 3 year timeline. If you are a F1 student, the maximum number of years you can have working for an employer is 3 years. For some employers, this timeline makes them uncomfortable because it is really likely you will not finish the process before you have to leave the US.

Another argument is that as soon as your employer starts the GC process, you are showing immigrant intent. If you don?t finish the GC timeline, you will have to leave the US or apply for another US visa and having a GC application started while you were an F1 student, does not look good in the eyes of immigration. Remember, a F1 visa a nonimmigrant visa. As a result, it is preferred to be in a dual-intent visa category, like H1B to start the application process.

Now, as I said, H1B is one of those intermediary visa categories. How do you get an H1B visa? Well, your employer

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puts your name in an application pool. In theory, there are 2 pools: the postgraduate pool (P1) and the rest (P2). During the lottery, 20K applications get selected from P1. Applications from P1 not selected, get combined with P2 and 65K applications get selected. In total, every year, regardless of number of applications, 85K H1B spots are available.

Each year, the chances of getting your application selected depends on how many applicants have applied that year. The number of applicants have increased every year, and it is not expected to decrease. Each year the probability is different, and you can approximate it by doing $85K/\#$ of valid applications. You can go and Google how many applications/applicants were each year. It used to be roughly 25% chance. Some years (I believe 2021 & 2022), it dropped to something like 12%. Now, with some math of probability, you can calculate the expected value of getting your application selected at least once in N attempts to be $N \cdot P$, where P is the probability. STEM students get 3-4 attempts.

All of this to say, there's no guarantees. Yes, the probability of getting a GC after F1 through an employer is non 0%. But it is not 100%. It always falls something in between. It is up to you to decide whether or not that risk/chance is something you want to attempt and make life decisions based on.

Title of the post: Can you open HYSA & CD accounts on F1 visa (STEM OPT)

Body of the post: If yes , anyone have accounts with Marcus by Goldman Sachs.

How has the experience been ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes you can. I've used Wealthfront

- New Comment: I have a HYSA with Amex opened on f1.

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- New Comment: U have to certify that u r a US person for all the HYSA out there. If u r in the U.S. for less than 5 years on F1 u r not a U.S. person.

Title of the post: (NEED HELP/ADVICE) Post-OPT is still processing...

Body of the post: Hello everyone! I was a recent graduate last May and I applied for my Post-OPT in April with the start date as July 5th this year.

However, it's been almost a month and my application still shows up to be in the "Case Decision" step. Should I pay the premium processing to get it done? I still haven't gotten a job offer yet so I'm a little bit reluctant to pay the extra fee.

I'm also wondering if this is gonna affect my post-grad grace period since I already put a pretty late date for the start date.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you don't have a job then just wait, save the ~\$2k and keep job hunting.

>I'm also wondering if this is gonna affect my post-grad grace period

You applied for OPT. You do not have this grace period.

- New Comment: If you applied in very early April, I do not think

It is necessary since they basically completed the process of March. If you apply like April 30, then expect another month

- New Comment: Will they move the OPT start date back for late approval?

- New Comment: You can ask your DSO to send an inquiry if it has been processing for over 90 days. I've done that

Reddit Posts

twice in the last week and it has worked for my students.

- New Comment: hello there, I applied for it on April 4 and i?m still waiting. I saw another post saying it takes 120 days to get process done this year due to delays. i?m also wondering if i should pay the extra fee, but i think i?ll wait. This is very stressful but we are almost there!!

Title of the post: Need help with my F1 interview

Body of the post: Hi, I'm a prospective master's student. I was initially admitted to Spring 2024, and I got my US F1 Visa.

I went to the US around December 15, 2023. When I went to the US, I felt homesick and decided to go back to Pakistan after two weeks. One of the reasons I took this decision was that I had the option to defer, which I did to Fall 2024. I thought to myself, "I can go back now and come back if I feel like it." Now I want to try again. As per the visa policy, I again applied for an F1 visa. I have an interview on August 5th. I don't know what to say to them. Possible explanations:

- * Tell the truth that I felt homesick and came back, but the person will ask, "Would you feel homesick again? How will this time be any different?" (Keep in mind, I'm applying through the Islamabad embassy in Pakistan, and it's the worst US embassy)
- * Go with the first point but add that I have been to therapy, etc., even though I didn't, to answer the "what's different this time" question.
- * Make up a medical family emergency, e.g., something happened to a family member; it was the first time something happened, and I had an option to defer, so I did. Now everything is back to normal, and I want to go back (I think this is the most safe option).

What should I do?

Update: Went with the truth. Got the visa.

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: >As per the visa policy, I again applied for an F1 visa.

What visa policy? If you used the F-1 visa and it is still valid you can continue to use it.

- New Comment: I went to Islamabad Embassy too. I think you should tell them that you weren't ready and your parents missed you so you decided to come back next year.

Throw in some culture.

Based on my understanding, I think they are only interested in immigration intent so if you have strong ties, you are fine.

And you proved it by running back home.

- New Comment: Have you thought about what will happen if you feel homesick again?

Title of the post: ???Associate of Arts or associate of sciences ?

Body of the post: As an international student wants to study in the us and why not found a job and stay in us what should I go with A.A or A.S?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You need to be more specific. Associate of arts cover like 20+ majors and associate of science as well.

There are major in both that are good and majors that are "useless" in both

- New Comment: A bachelors degree. You likely won't be issues an F1 for an associates

- New Comment: either then transfer to a uni

- New Comment: The most important thing is what you would like to study. From there, you can see what projects, internships, or research you can obtain and contribute during your study to build your resume.

Reddit Posts

AA or AS can be subjective as different colleges and universities define them in their own terms.

- New Comment: Can someone pls answer me :(

Title of the post: F-1 Visa Applicant - Community College in California

Body of the post: I need help regarding if I am likely to get rejected or accepted for my F-1 US Visa during the interview.

Here's my situation:

I am going to community college because I really didn't have an option to go anywhere else as I wasn't allowed to apply to universities till June due to my parents not allowing me to. They didn't want to send me to any universities and wanted me to join their businesses from the get-go. I ended up convincing them but it was a bit late so I really didn't have much option in where I should apply. After doing a bunch of research, I realized that going to a community college and transferring to a 4-year university is the best option financially but also in terms of where I end up getting my degree from, as it is basically a second chance in helping me go to universities I probably wouldn't have been able to if I had applied to them as a high school senior.

I chose a community college in California due to the amazing transfer program that they provide alongside its huge transfer alumni network, of which I have already have been in contact with for a bit and they all recommended me to attend the community college I ended up choosing. Also the articulation agreements with all the CSU and UC schools and also USC are a huge factor to ensure that my courses and credits transfer without any hiccups.

Additionally, I chose to go to a Community College near the LA area as I also want to be able to visit the UCLA and USC campuses as I will be applying to those as a transfer applicant. I can also simply book a flight and also go tour the Stanford and UC Berkley campuses with the privilege of being able to go to a community college in California, especially near the LA area.

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Another reason is that I applied to a 4 year university aside from the community college in California and its not ranked high at all but it's close to my city. It is also far more expensive and it really isn't prestigious at all. I'd much rather go to community college for 2 years and transfer than attend that university for 4 years and not only graduate from somewhere mid but waste a ton of money.

Another reason is that I would much rather have a more intimate, 1 on 1, and classroom type environment for my classes to further ensure my success than to attend a lecture hall at the university close to my city.

These are basically the main reasons as to why I want to go to Community College in California. Aside from that I also want to participate in the student government and the athletics program there, which are not offered at the other university that is close to my house.

After I'm done with my bachelor's I plan to immediately come back to my country of residence as I have nothing else to do in the United States other than to study, I have strong ties back home with all the businesses my family runs, and even my extended family living there and being involved in our business. I am basically required to take over the business sooner or later so I have no plans of having a prolonged stay.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You have answered your own question. That's more than enough information you can tell an officer.

- New Comment: Hey! I thought I could share my experience because I was interviewed twice. One for high school, and the second one was for community college.

The thing was I dropped out in the middle of going to a a university right after high school and took a break/gap months(?), came back for interview and interview to attend a cc.

Reddit Posts

My only advice is be honest. Don't overcomplicate your answer and don't answer the way that you think officer wants to hear. Both time that I interviewed I just answered what I thought lol.

For example, I chose my high school because I found a YouTube video and thought the school was nice.

And for my cc interview, I just told the officer after they asked me why do I want to attend a cc, straight out that I dropped out my university to take a break and try to figure out what I want to study, then explaining the perks of community college.

Can't really judge your answer and say that it's a good answer or not, because really at the end of the day it's what the officer thinks ultimately. Good luck buddy, you've got this!!

- New Comment: Apply and see

Title of the post: OPT chance of approval

Body of the post: Hi right now i am on F1 visa i completed my masters and applied for OPT and i am waiting for the approval. my concern is that my DSO issued my OPT i20 on April 2nd and i have applied or submitted my I765 or OPT application on May 2nd and my receipt was generated on may 3rd. so recently i heard about 30 day OPT Rule. so as per given dates what are the chances of approval of my application ? Can anyone please advise me on this

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: My school has told me some students have experienced issue like yours, where the students submitted OPT at the end of 30 days and get denied? all I can say is good luck.

- New Comment: How can you check when the DSO issued the OPT?

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: Hi, any update?

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Title of the post: INITIAL POST OPT

Body of the post: IS 20hours per week is considered as Part Time or Full time on initial POST OPT ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: [removed]

- New Comment: For immigration purposes full time begins at 20hrs a week.

For immigration purposes part time ends at 20hrs a week.

- New Comment: Could anybody response?

Title of the post: Can i go and renew my F1 visa in Canada if im from Eastern Europe?

Body of the post: Im currently employed and in STEM OPT. I want to go and visit my family back home but my F1 is expired and i have heard that even though my status is legal theres a high chance that i might not get the renewal and i will get stuck in my home country without being able to come back here. US ambassey in Canada i have heard are more lenient.

I have heard that some people from US go to Canada to renew their visa.

My questions are:

1. Am I even allow to go to Canda with my current status? Do i need a tourist visa?
2. Can i go to the US embessay in Canada and apply for a renewal?
3. What happens if i get rejected? Am i stuck in Canada and wont be able to come back to US?

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Also my Visa expired during COVID so its been couple of years and this might make me high risk

Thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Your homeland has no US embassy?
- New Comment: Also if im legal here in US, why the hell wont i get my visa renewed? Why should i gamble? I hate that i have to choose between my future and my family
- New Comment: Yes, any consulate or embassy that offers the service
- New Comment: A lot of wrong information being spewed here. @OP you can renew your visa easily in Dominican Republic, Canada or Mexico irrespective of your home country. You might need a visa to go to those countries though.

Title of the post: Question regarding expired status and return to US

Body of the post: This is not for me, I am just curious.

I have heard that if you have expired student Visa, that if you DRIVE to Mexico, you could return to your home country. And if you wanted to return on tourist visa it would be as if you never overstayed visa because they don't check passport on mexican border.

From customs pov, I am sure they would know you must have overstayed if you didn't get exit stamp of some sort.

Is it possible to get your status "reset" that way?

So you don't get a ban?

Reddit Posts

I don't believe it and it doesn't make much sense to me.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Visa is only required for you to enter the country! You can have expired visa and still be in status (F1). Conversely, you can have valid visa and can overstay (B1/B2). However, to answer your question, I am sure you're required to present your passport at the border while exiting which will affect your ability to obtain visas in future depending on your status before you exited!

Title of the post: Receiving Money from Father via Coinbase

Body of the post: Hello,

I am an international student in the US with F1 visa. I need to receive money from my father for my tuition and living expenses. He is living in Turkey and he is my father. And his plan is to buy cryptocurrency (USDC) from Binance and send it to my Coinbase account so that I can convert it into dollar and transfer it to my bank account in the US. He wants to send the money this way because it is a lot cheaper and also faster. This won't be an income or trading.

Do you know if this is legal to do and if I would experience any problems? Is there someone who handled the money transfer this way and experienced problems in the past?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Please don't do this. All Coinbase back to dollar conversions are taxable income and need to be mentioned during your filing in US. You will pay a lot of taxes. Rather do as all our parents did when they sent money. Ask them to go to a bank and send money for your education. Banks do that all the time and there is a set process which is followed. Your father will be asked to submit documents (don't give your SSN). All that money that will be sent

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to you must be shown as income during your father's filing in Turkey (or his resident country).

- New Comment: You should check out papara

- New Comment: Wise is a way better option imo

Title of the post: Does reputation matter?

Body of the post: Hi guys, i am thinking of joining a double degree program in industrial engineering with a US college which is not super prestigious (300-400qs).

Does reputation make it much harder to find a job on opt or it is hell in either case?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Although people are going to tell you otherwise, but reputation does matter, it opens gates you didn't know existed

- New Comment: If you are into R&D, then reputation does matters.

If you want to work in more industrial roles, experience & problem solving beats reputation any day

- New Comment: Yes, graduated from a high ranked university does help.

Will it stop you from entering big companies? No. Many companies will check your work experience, social life in college, and even your GPA. If can network with some professionals, they may also recommend you for job chances.

The most important issue is you. Are you good enough to qualify their requirements?

Title of the post: How long will Immigration Border Control check take?

Body of the post: I will be landing at SFO (San Francisco) on 16th August. I am an international student from India going to University of Arizona. I was wondering how long does immigration check usually take at SFO. My landing time is 7 am

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in the morning. How long after landing will be able to walk out of the airport after immigration check and baggage collection.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Depends on the line. What I've found is that my baggage takes 2/3 hours so even if the CBP line is quick. The bag line is not

- New Comment: San Francisco sometimes gets fog in summers which leads to flight delays

So if you want to be really safe, choose a flight to Tucson in the afternoon, like after 2pm.

- New Comment: It depends on the line and how many planes landed. For my experience it was always fast unless if they put you on the secondary check

Title of the post: OPT Premium Processing taking longer than expected

Body of the post: Hi all. The reason for this post is, I am getting really anxious because of tight timelines related to my OPT approval and job I'm starting soon. I applied for initial opt on 4/16. However, I got a job offer to start August 26. I knew I would get approval by then so I was not worried. By July 10 I was still not getting any update and I need my EAD card for the company to work out accommodation for me. I am moving from the west coast to the east so I also am shipping my car and the shipping company needs the destination address which I don't have because I don't have my EAD yet so the company cannot work out accommodation for me. It's a vicious cycle and so I applied for PP on 7/14. It's 7/26 today and I still have not had an update, I understand it can take up to 30 business days but that would be 8/23, only 3 days before I start the job and if I don't have the EAD before then I would still be living on the west coast and not have accommodation in the east with the company. It'll be cutting it real close, and I feel very upset because many posts on here say they get their PP approval within 2 to 8 days but mine's taking longer than most. On opt timeline the 80th percentile of people get approval within 14 days. What if mine takes all 30 business days? I know this is silly to think but

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it feels like the USCIS is playing favorites and I'm certainly not theirs. Because how else are they approving PPs for people who applied for initial opt in July and I'm still stuck? I'm just really anxious right now and needed to vent.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Update: I posted the above an hour ago, I just received my approval in the mail.

- New Comment: giving you some cautious optimism:

pp applied on 07/13 is currently being adjudicated. here's a more up-to-date discussion:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/USCIS/comments/1e76bn0/opt_ead_premium_processing_july_2024/?sort=new](https://www.reddit.com/r/USCIS/comments/1e76bn0/opt_ead_premium_processing_july_2024/?sort=new)

you're very likely to get the approval by next week (or even this weekend). good luck to you

- New Comment: 30 days from 7/14 is 8/14

- New Comment: I am also in the same boat, if it makes you feel any better. Have applied for PP on 7/16 and still waiting. Have a flight back to the US on Aug31, so need it to be shipped to friend, then mailed to me in Asia. Praying for you and praying for us both, all will be okay ???

- New Comment: Question for you, after applying for PP does the timeline disappear from your portal on website? Mine only says ?application was changed to premium processing? and nothing els?

- New Comment: I applied for PP on 7/18. No further updates after that. When should i expect approval ?

- New Comment: Based on my post (you can check, many PP students posted their timeline). The PP timeline suffers some delay recently. You need to expect 14 to 15 days to expect their reply.

But I do not think it will affect you since your offer is almost the end of august.

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Title of the post: Best bank account for international student?

Body of the post: Hello everyone,

pls tell me which is the best bank to open your account as a student. I am an international student coming from Pakistan to Greenville, South Carolina next month.

please note: I have a joint dollar account in Pakistan.

so, considering my circumstances, kindly guide me where should I open my bank account?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You are overthinking this. Open an account with the bank that charges no fees, and has branches near you.
- New Comment: I use BofA, all good for me
- New Comment: Chase bank is pretty good too
- New Comment: Bank of America! They have branches nationwide. They waive student account fees so long as you're a student.

Chase is also a good option as well!

I personally banked with Bank of America for the past 5 years and had zero issues.

PSA to new international students - whichever bank you choose, open a credit card account and start building credit - you need it to qualify for car loans, mortgage, rental apartments, etc down the road. You do need on-campus

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employment to qualify for SSN, in order to apply for a credit card. Check around with your bank - the advisor can help you.

- New Comment: Chase

- New Comment: Bank of America worked for me but Merrill Lynch investing did not.

- New Comment: Chase college student account is pretty solid

- New Comment: Chase Bank

- New Comment: Bank of America is fine for you with minimum maintenance fees and branches all over the USA.

- New Comment: which university are you coming to?

Title of the post: Can I book a flight for a state I'm not studying in?

Body of the post: I'm booking a flight for my first arrival to the US and the international flights to my University's state are very expensive. It looks like I can save almost 150 USD (about 550 in my local currency) by choosing a flight to NYC and then a second flight to my University's state. Is there any chance that this could be a problem? Has it ever been a problem for anyone? I will book both flights at the same time so it's not like I'm going to show up to the NYC port with no proof that I intend to fly to the University area, but if there are any cases where people had their visas revoked or flights cancelled for doing this then I don't want to risk it all for 150\$...

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >Can I book a flight for a state I'm not studying in?

Yes.

- New Comment: Yes sure. I landed in a different state, stayed there with my family for a couple of days to explore and then went to my university

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- New Comment: Absolutely. I landed in DC , stayed in PA & then I went to ATL where my college is. So yes. Shouldn't be an issue at all

Title of the post: Please help me

Body of the post: HEY CAN YOU PLEASE TELL ME HOW SHOULD I JUSTIFY MY GAP YEAR. After passing my high school i was diagnosed with a disease and that why i took a year gap. How should i put it in my visa interview. please help me out.

ould i upload these on ds160 or take my reports with me in visa interview.

thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This is good enough justification.

Your visa officer can read your DS160 information so if you come up with a fake excuse, it will confuse him.

- New Comment: I am in a similar situation but I worked in our family company for 3 years and now I am going for my master's. I mentioned it in ds160 with all the work info. Will it be a problem?

- New Comment: Don't come to US.

1. The job market is bad. It will not be easier in the coming years as well. There will be a lot of competition for the jobs. If you have really good skills then you can survive.

2. The chances of getting H1B visa gets thinner as well. Have a glance over the statistics (total no of F1 students coming to USA every year, no of H1B visas for a year)

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Some of my friends are in the job market from past 12 - 18 months. They are under lot of stress (financially and in other aspects as well).

Title of the post: F1 overstayed !

Body of the post: F1 overstayed but married to US citizen

My F1 visa was inactive last February and my DSO advice me to go back in my country. I finished my program in STEAmM program (Associate Degree) last December. I am married to a US citizen last year July 03,2023. I wasn't able to process my adjustment of status at that time because I was overwhelmed with pregnancy. I gave birth to my son last February after giving birth to our son. I was full time mom. Now I am starting to fill up some documents DIY however my visa is already out of status. Would this affect my application?

Can anyone advise?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You'll be okay. Your unauthorized stay will be waived by your marriage to the U.S. citizen. Just make sure to fill out the forms carefully and don't give them any other reason to deny your application.
- New Comment: Marriage to a U.S. citizen can help a foreign national who has overstayed their visa adjust their status to a lawful permanent resident. Since your initial entry was with a valid visa, you should be fine.
- New Comment: No problems as long as you didn't marry within 90 days of your last entry. Overstay + unauthorized work is legally forgiven for spouses for US citizen if your entry was legal.

Title of the post: Applying to D160 F1 renewal

Body of the post: Hey Everyone currently on OPT and wanted to travel so renewing my expired F1 stamp. Hoping for an

Reddit Posts

interview waiver but confused about some questions on the DS160:

1. Should I mention internships I did during CPT under work experience or only full time roles?
2. Add secondary education in home country. Does this mean highschool or just post highschool like a bachelors degree?
3. I don't have points of contact back home I can include that is not family? Can I use my uncles as a point of contact?
4. When adding your current salary, does local currency mean USD or the foreign currency?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: 1. Yes
- 2. Think it's HS (they explain it all there. Just read)
- 3. Find friends pls
- 4. USD.

Pls don't complicate it nor stress about it. No one actually cares there

- New Comment: Hey, I am on the same boat. Any additional info from people that did it previously will be super appreciated!

- New Comment: I asked my DSO for #3 and she said I could put contacts from my international student office (her and another advisor). It didn't make any sense for me to put anyone from my home country bc other than family, no one would be able to confirm any information on my studies in the US bc they don't know it.

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Title of the post: OPT vs Masters Degree on CS?

Body of the post: Hello everyone,

I am a Computer Science student expected to graduate in April 2023 who had completed two internship in the U.S as a software engineer. Hopefully, after the second one is done I will apply for the third one. My family is encouraging me to do masters degree right after bachelor's. They are right about that because the market is terrible and if I reach unemployment days during OPT, there is a risk of being out of status. Also getting sponsored for H1B is very very unlikely for an entry level position. So I am deciding between those two;

1- Using OPT for gaining three years of work experience before applying to Graduate School.

2- Getting employed on campus as a researcher (when I will have to compete with lots of student) and doing masters at the same time.

3- Continuing at the same school for masters and using CPT to work off campus and getting both work experience and education. As well as securing two more years.

Which one is better?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If your applying for masters right away after your bachelor's graduation, you will only waste 3 years of your OPT and possibly 3 years of H1B tries, so go for option 1.

- New Comment: Before you graduate, apply for masters and get an acceptance offer.

Until you graduate, keep applying for jobs.

If you get a job, then defer your masters enrollment. That way even if your job ever goes away, you can right away start masters cuz you'll have acceptance offer anyways.

- New Comment: How are you expected to graduate in April 2023?

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- New Comment: Option 1

- New Comment: Option 1. You will save more money to fund your future master's degree and if you find an employer who you excel with, they might even fund your master's if they value you a lot. I also think the three years of experience will help you both in finding a future job on your additional 3 years of MS level OPT, as well as help you with your courses. And having done both your bachelor's and master's in the US should help you in your h1b process as well. Ofc higher degrees have a better chance at winning an h1b in the lottery.

The sad reality is that the market sucks for higher degree holders as well. In fact, you'll end up searching for entry level jobs as you have no experience and you will get rejected bc they don't want "overqualified" candidates (they assume you will request more money as you have a higher degree, and they don't need a higher degree for the job).

The only downside I can think of is that you will get out of the "student" mindset for a while, so going back after 3 years might be a little frustrating as you don't think like a student anymore. But plenty of people do it just fine, even after 10 years of graduating.

And like another commenter suggested, I also suggest you get an acceptance from a university and defer acceptance. Depends on them though they might not hold the offer indefinitely.

- New Comment: Do opt and stem then do opt and stem again (you can have stem opt again for masters but no more)

Title of the post: Aiding in Tiktok earnings

Body of the post: My uncle asked me to connect my paypal to his tiktok account and facebook so i can help him collect his earnings and send them to him. Though I wont be in part of the creation process and don't have access to those accounts. Will that get my visa terminated?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You will get a 1099-K tax form from PayPal. Don?t do it!
- New Comment: If that account is under your name, just don?t do it.
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: As a basic principle, yes.

In principle, You are not to engaged in any commercial activity.

- New Comment: I'm not understanding why he wants you to collect his earnings and then send it to him?

Title of the post: F1 visa interview query

Body of the post: I need urgent help guys! My sister recently got approved for her k1-visa (fianceè visa) for usa. She?ll be travelling in november. My classes start on the 3rd of september and i have my interview soon. During filling my ds-160 i mentioned i have no immediate relatives and even No other relatives in Usa which is very true. So, now if i get asked in interview what should i tell. Should i mention my SOON- Brother-in-law lives in new jersey and my sister will soon join her in november or just say i have no relatives. I am afraid to contradic with my ds-160 thats why.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Don?t mention she is going because she isn?t living in the US currently

Just say no immediate relatives

Title of the post: URGENT: SEVIS Fee Doubts

Body of the post: Hi everyone, I am from India. I am going for my Master's in the US and have my OFC and consular appointments coming up soon for F1 (student) Visa. I have two major doubts:

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1. Is it required that I pay SEVIS fees before the biometric appointment? I am confused about this as some people say it is needed while others say we do not require SEVIS receipt for biometric/OFC.

2. I am unsure about my plans of going considering the market and I may re-apply to get better universities or research-oriented programs for next year. In that case, if I get an F1 visa now, would that still be valid for next year or would I have to go through the F1 process again? Would I have to pay SEVIS fees again for next year? The fees are a lot (350 USD) so just checking.

Thanks in advance, appreciate any help :)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: SEVIS fee is valid for one year, you can transfer it to another university down the line.

- New Comment: 1. You don't need a SEVIS for biometric. Just DS160 and appointment

2. I was in a similar situation last year, you need a visa that matches the SEVIS number so if you change universities you will need to get a new visa. Assuming you did not enter US with your earlier visa.

Title of the post: Urgent help!!

Body of the post: Hey all, I'm in india for F1 visa renewal on STEM OPT. I had Dropbox appointment on July 2 at Chennai. I submitted documents at Bangalore Dropbox on July 2. Here is my timeline:

July 2: dropped off documents Bangalore.

July 9: Application received status on CEAC website.

July 16: case last updated and still Application received.

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July 19: case last updated and still application received.

July 19: evening it changed to approved.

July 22: administrative processing.

July 23: again application received.

July 23: evening changed to refused.

What do I do now? What could be the reason for refused? I'm really worried :(

Update:

July 26: received passport with 221g form asking to come to Chennai for interview

July 29: went in for interview. Took 2 hours of waiting. 2 minutes of interview with the interview asking questions related to my job. Visa approved.

July 30: status online changed to issued

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: USCIS has two words - refused and denied. Refusal means there is still a chance and they might require more evidence. Idk what that could be. Denied is what you don't want. They might ask you to schedule another appointment. Bring your evidence such as I-20 with approved STEM OPT, EAD card, job offer letter and other relevant

Reddit Posts

documents.

Title of the post: Working remotely from outside the US on OPT

Body of the post: Hi all. Has anyone worked remotely from outside the US while on OPT? Assuming employer is ok with it and for a short period of time <1 month. Not finding a clear answer so similar questions others have asked here and DSO said they have no guidance. Ideally looking for an example of someone who has done it.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: This is fine.
- New Comment: Yes my DSO told me it's fine if it's just a short amount of time (around 1 month max). Talk to your DSO to make sure, but you should be fine.
- New Comment: Employer is okay but USCIS isn't!!!! Don't do that to yourself!!! You are supposed to work full time and be in US!!!!

Title of the post: Preparations before moving

Body of the post: Hi! I will soon be moving to the US for grad school, and I wanted to ask your advice regarding what I should make sure to bring with me as I prepare for my flight.

For sure I will bring clothes, shoes, some books, I-20, passport, and other personal items.

****Is there anything you wished you brought with you but didn't?***

A friend suggested that I bring my birth certificate, but I'm not even sure that's necessary.

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Another friend said I should bring toiletries and skin care because my skin needs to adjust to the new environment and I will likely have breakouts if I make it adjust to new products at the same time too. Which makes sense, I guess.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Healthcare stuff will probably be cheaper in your country, as will toiletries especially if you have specific shampoos and such that you prefer.

Also bring an adapter for your device chargers until you can buy the right kind here.

And I'd recommend bringing some snacks that remind you of home ? especially since your first few days will likely be busy and hectic and it'll be nice to have a food option that is quick and comforting. You definitely do not need your birth certificate

- New Comment: birth certificate might be useful as a form of ID if you ever want to get a drivers license or state ID.

- New Comment: Get some photos adhering to the US passport requirements. Will be handy

- New Comment: This might be a little overkill, but personally I'm bringing as many personal documents as I can. Birth certificate, medical diagnosis letters, certificates proving grades from home country. Things like that. You'll never know if you'll need them and its better to have them on you than to wait for family to ship them overseas where they could get lost in the post.

Don't know if you'll need to do this too, but my university requires proof of immunisations for international students so that is coming as well.

On top of that, if you have anything like a laptop, 100% bring that too. Doesn't matter how old it is, if it still works it'll be handy for class. Make sure to pack clothes or purchase new clothes to fit the climate of where you're moving to, don't just go off of the clothes you already have that work for your home countries climate. With toiletries, the most harmful thing to the skin for breakouts will be the change in water. If you want toiletries from back home, bring them. But it isn't that necessary as you can't change the water which will cause breakouts.

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But the most most important things to bring are: your passport, your visa stamp, your I-20 form, SEVIS I-901 payment receipt and any documents proving how you'll fund your stay. Make sure you have all of these to even get through border security.

Hope your move goes well! :)

- New Comment: Make sure to bring SS card as well

Title of the post: Non-STEM cap-exempt h1b success stories?

Body of the post: Hi! I'm not sure if this is the right sub to share this or ask for this, but I would like to ask about people's success stories on OPT to cap-exempt H1B? Maybe non-STEM + on the last few months of OPT. Lol. I'm just really looking for some inspiration as I am slowly losing hope about finding any way to stay here. It feels kinda depressing but what can I do.

I'm currently in the last few months of my non-STEM OPT and my employer right now can't really sponsor me as 1) it's too late and 2) my position is entry-level and they cannot justify the need to sponsor my visa. I took a masters degree here in public administration and a few of my friends had experienced being told that companies rarely sponsor people with our degree since anyone can do it. I have also been constantly applying to nonprofits but still no luck so far.

Are there anyone here who have/had the same experience? If I get a job (by some miracle maybe) that they would sponsor my cap-exempt h1b on my 60-day grace period, would I make it? What are my other possible options? Any other advice?

Would appreciate any response but please, please be a little kind. I know I should've made better choices from the get-go, but here we are.

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Thanks, everyone!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Haven't been through this so I'm not sure but just sending love and support to you. I'm current on my non-stem OPT and my employer has told me they won't be able to sponsor, I currently have 11 months left so I am sincerely hoping something changes.

- New Comment: I went through a similar situation with an MPA. Had to go back to school post-OPT. It's tough for non STEM folks but keep hope alive! Sending you good vibes.

Title of the post: Does employers agree to e-verify?

Body of the post: Currently an F1 student working in a small company on OPT. Told them that I don't need sponsorship and can work for three years.

Assumed they must be e-verified, but now I think they might not be. What do I do? Has anyone gotten their employer to e-verify before? Were you successful?

Planning to wait until December to tell them! (3 months before My OPT ends)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes, it is easy to e-verify. I help my boss do it on his behalf.

Don't wait until that late. You have to provide the e-verify number while applying for opt extension.

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- New Comment: Yep. It took 5 mins for my employer to do that
- New Comment: You can check if they are e-verified or not. Just go to www.e-verify.gov and enter the company name, that is all.
- New Comment: You should be fine, but it would be better to ask in November since December is when most holidays are. So you will have more time to prepare all the documents.

Title of the post: Employment Related to Major - OPT/STEM-OPT, can i accept a job offer that is related to my major

Body of the post: Hey guys,

I have looked extensively online and talked to people regarding this topic, but have not gotten an answer that they are sure of. So I have a Masters in Business Analytics and Project Management, that I completed this May. But I also have my undergraduate degree in Mechanical Engineering, both from accredited US universities. The employment that I now seek on OPT/STEM-OPT after my Masters, does it have to pertain to only Business Analytics and Project Management? I would say my masters is quite broad, data science, business analytics, project management. Currently I have an offer for an automotive vehicle company as a manufacturing engineer. Is this a position that I am eligible to take? Thanks everyone, looking forward to hearing your inputs.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You should look up "applying for STEM OPT based on a previous degree". Also the best person to answer these questions is the DSO at your university.
- New Comment: You can do it based on your previous degree! Just be sure to let your DSO know. It's not too complicated; just involves checking a box off to indicate that you're applying for the STEM Extension based on a prior degree
- New Comment: You should be able to do that but feel free to ask DSO. You can tell that you had technical skills and

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have learnt project management skills, supply chain which is very resourceful and it is in sync with your undergrad. So the new role is a combination of both.

- New Comment: Have you used your OPT from your BA? If not. You're able to use it
- New Comment: I wouldn't care at all tbh. I have a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies and I'm like screw it - I'm going to work in the skiing industry. Been searching for jobs for months and not much come through so I've reached the point of desperation for money.

Title of the post: HOW TO JUSTIFY FUNDS IN F1 INTERVIEW

Body of the post: I am an Indian undergraduate student my interview is on 16th of August in Bombay VAC, so I prepared all questions but I don't know how to justify my funds like my father is a farmer and my mother is a housewife higher we have a good amount of land here and the funds i showed is from my relatives.. I need to know what what kind of story I tell to the visa officer that convinces him??? @visainterviewcoach

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Tell them - " like my father is a farmer and my mother is a housewife higher we have a good amount of land here and the funds i showed is from my relatives". You don't need any story
- New Comment: You don't really have to use the word ?farmer?. Just say he is an agriculturalist. Can you get a valuation of the land? Have that document ready. It's better to show loan papers (just for showing). Only answer whatever is being asked. Don't volunteer extra information unless asked. Just be confident. Practice and practice if you're feeling nervous. Good luck!

(I have appeared for the interview twice, MS and PhD, approved both times).

- New Comment: Just say it that your father is a Farmer and Your mother is a Housewife. You have XYZ amount into savings account. Most probably what questions visa officer ask is who is funding your education? If your answer is father then they would ask what does he do? In some cases they might ask how much they earn annually?

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Title of the post: Is it mandatory to pay sevis fee before biometrics

Body of the post: Hi I have biometric appointment tommorow but my consular is later next month. Is it mandatory to pay the fees before biometric or can I pay it a week before consular appointment?(F1 visa)

Edit: I had my biometrics just paid sevis fee one day before but they didn't check anything related to it during the biometrics. The biometrics were successfully done. If you have not paid the fee about one week before your consular interview then there will/might be an issue. But for biometrics you'll be fine just paying it a day before(if you got time pay it a week before just to make sure but if you are just a day away then too you'll be good.)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes, pay your SEVIS before any appointment.
- New Comment: Yes. You should pay at least 3 days before your appointment

Title of the post: Contract to hire through staffing agency during OPT

Body of the post: Hello! I got job offer from X company through a staffing agency. I will be a contract-to-hire employee through a staffing agency. Now I am in initial OPT period. I need to inform DSO and SEVP portal when I start the job. I am wondering that should I write staffing agency as my employer name, location, number, email and manager or X company where I will work for? In other word, account manager of staffing agency should be mentioned as my manager or my direct manager in X company?

X company working location is different than staffing agency.

Please help me as soon as possible.

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: You will write staffing agency as your employer

Title of the post: I765 approval case decision rendered

Body of the post: I applied my I-765 on July 3rd with premium processing service, and got approval case decision rendered on July 18th. Do you know when I can receive my EAD card. I'm so worried because my starting day is next Monday but nothing is updated on my case today.

Updated: I got new update on my case status today. It's said that my card was produced so hopefully I got it soon.

Thank you everyone for reassuring me on this topic ? and hope all the best to you guys ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Mine got approved July 11th, haven't received my card yet.

- New Comment: Around 2-2.5 weeks

- New Comment: My EAD approve date - July 11th

Card produced - July 17th

No tracking yet. Hopefully receive it this week!

- New Comment: 2-3 weeks for producing the card. 1 week for card delivery.

- New Comment: I believe it's 2 weeks to receive the card. Did you apply for premium processing? I applied on July 8th but it says it will take 4 months for the decision.

- New Comment: You can always show your employer your approval notice and update was card has been received. No need to stress

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- New Comment: Not to scare you, but if your card does not get produced in a week, it will straight jump to taking a month-ish. If your USCIS account shows that the card is produced, then you can just call them and ask for the tracking ID. If I were you, I would already email HR and your manager and request to extend the start date. You can attach your I-797 notice to that email so the company will know that your work authorization was approved, and all you need is few more days to get the card delivered via mail.
- New Comment: Not sure if my timeline will be of help. I got mine in 10 days. My premium processing was approved on June 16th and I got my card on June 27th.
- New Comment: from approval case decision rendered on portal to delivered card to your hand, can you tell me exact time(days) taken for you?

Title of the post: Will I get an stem opt extension if I worked as an outside sales executive in on my

Body of the post: I have to apply for stem extension in September 2024, I have done my BS in mechanical engineering from UIC. I am working as an outside sales executive. Will I get an stem extension as my job is not directly related to my degree ?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Even if you apply for Stem extension

Has the employer give the I983 and e-verify number

Plus the job is not related to mechanical engineering

It might be tough

- New Comment: You need to connect how your field of study is related to the job that you work in

- New Comment: How is he working a job that's not directly related to his degree RN? anyway, with STEM OPT, your employer has to explain how your training is benefitting you through professionally and learning wise. They have to explain your responsibilities and provide an evaluation. In addition, you will have to self evaluate once a year and then

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again at the end of your STEM OPT. So you will have to prove it's benefitting you in your major multiple times.

If his mechanical engineering degree is *needed* for the job though, then it *should* be fine.

- New Comment: I'm a fellow mechanical engineer brother

Would you like to connect?

Title of the post: F1 opt and F2 visa

Body of the post: Is there a chance of getting an F2 visa while the primary applicant is on OPT? Should I apply or not?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: A lot of people do get F2 for their dependants while they are on OPT. You are right it does effect the chances but to an extent that a few extra questions are asked from the F2 applicant during the interview, usually about the job of the main applicant in the US and what are the plans to return to home country at the end of the OPT. I suggest you should definitely go for it, take an appointment and ask your spouse to prepare properly, be confident, honest and have a proper plan/story to tell the visa officer regarding her intentions and why she didnt apply earlier.

- New Comment: Yes, you don't need to apply. If you're the dependent of an f1 visa holder (regardless of being of OPT or OPT STEM) you already have an f2 visa. No need to apply. If you wanna study. You can only take part time classes. My wife it's on f2 visa and I'm on OPT.

Title of the post: OPT

Body of the post: How do I withdraw from OPT application if it's still pending. And how soon can I leave the country if I don't want to do OPT?

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: You must write a letter to USCIS to withdraw your request.

You can leave whenever you want, you are not a prisoner and OPT is no way, shape, or form requires you to or forces you to stay in the US.

- New Comment: Bruh.....

If your OPT is still pending, your unemployment is not being accrued.

Let's say your OPT gets approved on August 15 like the comment before me said, your clock begins then for unemployment, from August 16.

You then have 90 days to land a job.

Now let's say your OPT gets denied on August 15, your 180 days to leave the country is then counted from the day of your graduation.

But right now, all you have to do is wait, and apply for jobs..... keep applying for jobs and learning new skills.....

- New Comment: I'm from USC as well. Send me a Dm if you need any help with opt, and it's time line. :)

Title of the post: Volunteering without EAD card

Body of the post: Hi, I have got a unpaid volunteering position doing research under a professor. I have applied for OPT and waiting for my EAD card till then can I start with my volunteering position (where the offer letter will contain the start date as when I start) and then when my EAD is approved can I show this position in the portal? Or should I wait for my EAD to be approved to start the volunteering position.

Thank you in advance!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Can't start working until you have your EAD in hand and have reached your start date.

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- New Comment: Wait for your EAD card
- New Comment: DON'T DO. I asked this to my univ. ISSA office, and even if that is unpaid or volunteer, it might (somehow) give bad impact on your visa status (in the future).

Title of the post: Am I in trouble? F1 student and Medicaid. Please Help.

Body of the post: I was enrolled in the international student health insurance plan my first year. Then my aunt who's a citizen told me she could get me on a free insurance plan since mine was pricey. I didn't think that this could be an issue, and I have been enrolled in the "Anthem"-Medicaid insurance plan for the past year. I applied for an insurance waiver at my school the past year since I have Medicaid, and even got it approved. I haven't used Medicaid for anything other than a covid vaccine.

I've always been serious about following all the F1 rules and regulations and made sure to clear everything with my DSO (DSO does not know about the insurance because I didn't think anything of it). But now I am freaking out. I have no problem unenrolling from Medicaid and getting back on the international student plan.

Am I in trouble? And will it affect me in future OPT applications, etc...? **Is it best if I discuss this with my DSO?**

Any advice would be appreciated :)

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I would unenroll and say no more. Your DSO will not be able to do anything helpful here.
- New Comment: I agree with the other comment for you to drop the medicaid immediately. In the event you have the chance to transition to permanent residency, this matter will be brought to light.
- New Comment: You should unenroll from medicaid

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- New Comment: I just got my opt and i did the same for my dependents (not myself) but i got the visa approved. So many of my classmates did the same and got their opts or h1Bs.

Public charge acts isnt a big issue. They can make an issue out of it if you apply for a GC and still are a public burden.

Chillax

- New Comment: Hello :)

I'm also an F-1 student with medical (California). Since this is my 6th year in the US and I became a resident for tax purposes, I now pay FICA taxes (Medicare and Social Security) so I think it is okay to take advantage of that. I have spoken to my international counselor and she said there is no problem at all with applying for medical, and that this is available to everyone regardless of their status. I also went to the online chat when applying just to make sure I would be eligible as an F-1 visa, and they confirmed that this wouldn't be a problem, so I have saved the chat transcript just in case I have any problems in the future. Having Medicare is very helpful since, just like you said, you can get a waiver and save some money! Even though I have the plan, I am not planning to use it unless for extreme circumstances such as a trip to the hospital. I hope that helps!

- New Comment: Hi, I'm an F1 student and I have a medicaid of Metro plus. Is this any problem if I have any medicaid.

- New Comment: You should stay in Medicaid from a personal perspective. It's free and probably better than the other plan. Insurance is irrelevant to any international student regulations so I'm not sure what you're worried about, but nothing bad will happen related to whatever you decide in regards to either decision you make. School policies can dictate which plan you need so run it past your DSO but this is not anything to worry about.

Title of the post: Employer info not showing on everify

Body of the post: Hello all. I have applied for stem opt and it is in case decision stage. My employer said they are everified but when search their name it is not showing in everify. Is it normal or it should definitely show up in the everify site?

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Did they recently enroll for e-verify? It takes a long time to show up on the e-verify database
- New Comment: If they enrolled a year+ ago they should show on the website. They may have a slightly different name for e-verify
- New Comment: Update for someone in the future:

If your employer does not show up in the eVerify eventhough they are on everify, the reasons could be

1. They are newly added in everify and it needs a quarter show up in the results.
2. They might have put the number of employees less than 5 . This is a default option while enrolling which some employers will not see.

In both the cases, you can call everify and get a clarification for peace of mind.

Title of the post: Do I need to pay Sevis Fee?

Body of the post: I got my bachelor?s degree a couple years ago and returned to my home country for work. Now I?m going back to the U.S. for graduate studies. I?m planning to use my old f1 visa, which is still valid for two years, with a new i20 to enter the country. I?m just wondering if I need to pay the sevis in this case.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Your SEVIS is terminated automatically when you are outside of the US for 5 months or longer. So, yes you would need a new SEVIS number if you have been outside of the US for 5 months or longer.
- New Comment: Your old SEVIS number should no longer be valid because you graduated and a SEVIS transfer did not happen. Your new i-20 will have another SEVIS number, and this number must match the one on your visa when

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you enter the states. Hence, you can't use this new i-20 to enter on the old visa because the SEVIS numbers won't match. So basically you need to apply for a new F1 visa and pay the fee again.

Source: me. I did summer school at one college during high school and then did undergrad a year later. I didn't know I needed to pay the sevis fee again because I didn't know a new SEVIS number was needed, so I went to the embassy with the undergrad i-20 and the old SEVIS number for the summer school (which was the SEVIS number on the old F1 visa that was valid for 5 years lol). Was rejected at the gate of the embassy for not matching SEVIS numbers, did not even make it past security. So yea, it doesn't matter whether your old F1 visa is still valid or not. The SEVIS numbers must match.

Title of the post: Traveling to India on stem opt

Body of the post: Anyone with experience traveling on stem opt what's your experience?

Taking a flight to India in 3 days, what are all the needed document for re-entry into US?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Do you have valid visa? If yes, did you renew it before?
- New Comment: Your EAD card, I-20 with DSO signature, visa, and pay stubs/offer letter from employer (if you will start working after coming back)

Title of the post: School within 100 miles for Real ID?

Body of the post: Doing Day-1 CPT and my school is more than 100 miles away from my residence in a different state so NJ DMV says they can't issue a real id. Is the 100 mile rule documented anywhere?

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PS: I asked her but she wouldn't give a straight answer. Said she's leaving in 3 mins and I have to decide rn

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Does NJ give out non-REAL IDs? If so, that is the way to go. Longer expiary date that isnt tied to your i-20. Just bring your passport to the airport, other than that, I see no benefit from it.
- New Comment: I don?t think so. I feel like this is up to the discretion of the dmv in question but I might be wrong
- New Comment: [removed]
- New Comment: Pretty sure you need a social to get a real id in NJ. If you don't have one, just get a non-real id
- New Comment: I thought only citizens are eligible for real id?

Title of the post: Need your help

Body of the post: I have to convert from j1 to f1. The waiting time for my home country exceeds one year so the only option is to travel other country and give interview. So would it be allowed to do so? With that i was thinking of give interview in between the gap when i am in my j1 visa so if i got accepted for f1 can i return even during my remaining j1 visa and then continue with f1?

I genuinely need your help as i dont have any information

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I'm confused. Are you in US? What do you mean by the wait for your country? You mean for the next available interview slot or for the status change itself to process (I know that there are different waiting times for different status processes that vary by country). What gap are you talking about? Have you been admitted to Uni yet?
- New Comment: Lets see other alternatives

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Title of the post: You get opt after 364 days after you arrive in the us. So how can I do an internship

Body of the post: We can apply for opt after 364 days means I come in August 2024 and I'll be able to apply in August 2025 but by then the summer break will end (so I can't do internship in the first year). Is there a workaround???

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: It's not 364 days, but 2 full semesters (fall + spring). So you can get a CPT for your summer internship. And you're confusing CPT with OPT.
- New Comment: There's a CPT for internship with its own set of rules.
- New Comment: you don't sadly
- New Comment: You get CPT in campus. There are two CPTs:
 1. Full Time CPT 40 Hours / Week (BE CAREFUL OF THIS ONE. As if you do it for more than 11 months you won't qualify for OPT)
 2. Part Time CPT 20 Hours / Week (You can do this for as many semesters as you want, although some colleges do have rules that make it kinda hard or impossible to do it continuously). Do note that in order to qualify for Part Time CPT , you'll have to get an offer letter from an employer and some colleges have rigorous background checks for the companies too.

Title of the post: Filing OPT late if you don't have a job offer

Body of the post: Hi,

I am in a weird situation. I have a job offer, but waiting to go through the extensive background check process (which could take 6 months or even more). My program ends in 10 days, but I requested an extension which is going through. I also have an internship, but whether or not it gets extended is unclear now.

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My question would be, in the worst-case scenario that I don't have a program extension and don't have an internship extension, could I just file for OPT a little late, say within the first month post-graduation, and put the start date 6 weeks after graduation?

Now by doing so, there could be two scenarios:

1st: I get a job or an internship is extended, so I just add a premium processing to that.

2nd: I haven't gotten any job or internship. Then I would not file premium processing and in the 4-5 months it takes for me to receive the EAD card, I look for more jobs. The good point here is that I saved the premium processing fee, and I also don't need to be worried about unemployment time (although I know my OPT would get shortened).

Is this a good strategy?

P.S.: I have a PhD offer for Spring, as the last resort.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You don't need a job offer secured to apply for OPT. But yes you can apply for OPT within the 60 day grace period after graduation.

- New Comment: What kind of background check takes more than 6 months. Are you applying for CIA ?

Title of the post: Over 90 days unemployed and still waiting for my OPT approval

Body of the post: Hi, I completed my masters and degree completion date was 17th march.

I applied for OPT at 30th April with my job start date 10th of June.

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My application is still in process. Case decision is pending yet.

I'm afraid that will my OPT be approved? As it's already over 90 days since my degree completion date.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: How did you select your start date as June 10 when you graduated on March 17th? That's outside the 60 day grace period!

- New Comment: You're fine. Unemployment days don't start counting until it's approved. Your new start date will be the day it's approved , you don't need to worry and can stay in the US and chill until the card arrives.

- New Comment: I had applied on the same date. It's been stuck on 'your case is taking longer than expected' since. Not sure how long it's gonna take for an approval since USCIS is still processing cases from late march and early April. Since you have a job offer you can probably apply for PP. What is your block no, if I may ask?

- New Comment: How come you didn't add premiums processing after getting the job. April 30th applications won't be processed until late August base on timelines shared by others. You are risking your job?

- New Comment: I also graduated in March and my receipt date is April 14th. Still no news about it, it says "your case is taking longer than expected". It's been more than 3 months unemployed in the us, barely living haha. Pls let me live USCIS ?

Title of the post: My initial OPT application is in process should I visit my home country in the mean

Body of the post: Hi, I completed my masters and applied for my initial OPT on 30th of April. But my case decision is still pending and it's taking longer than the usual.

I wanted to visit my home country. Should I travel or wait for my OPT case decision?

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: wait for your opt, do not leave.

- New Comment: Why do you want to risk your chance to work in the states?

- New Comment: The situation has a lot of risks and I don't think anyone on reddit should persuade you to travel, so I should answer the question from a point of weighing the pros and cons of both, and you should be the one who decides if you can take the risk or not.

Pros of traveling: you may have a bit of time while waiting for opt and you get to spend some time in home country. If you're coming back and your opt is still pending, you may be able to enter (but customs has the right to deny your entry if they want to).

Cons of traveling: Nobody knows exactly when USCIS will get to your case. if your opt gets rejected while you're abroad, you cannot come back to the US on the same F-1 visa. (You can on a B1/B2 visa, but you can't work), and so you lose the OPT opportunity for this Masters degree. Or if your opt gets approved while you're abroad, you will need the EAD card to re-enter the US, which means someone has to get the package and mail it to you to home country or by some other means. This means more time and money wasted on international mailing. Package might get lost. Or if you're approved but your EAD card has errors on them, like wrong birthday or name or photo or start date (it happens), you will have to get USCIS to send you a new one.

Pros of staying in the US: if your opt gets rejected, you get to apply again and won't risk not being able to come back.

Cons of staying in the US: you can't work while it's pending.

For reference, I also had the same thought a few months ago. If I had travelled right after graduation in May, I would still be waiting for my OPT now, and that would be 2 months in my home country. But because nobody knew that it was going to take this long, I didn't want to risk it. It is now nearing the end of July so there's a chance that they're getting to

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your application soon.

- New Comment: No

Title of the post: OPT rules 90 days unemployed while waiting for opt

Body of the post: I applied for my opt very late (16th of July, 15 days before the end of my grace period) because I originally had planned to leave. I am wondering if technically i have to pay for premium processing because it currently says the wait is 4 months and that means i will have been unemployed for more than 90 days... i dont mind waiting the 4 months but i am worried that is going to cause me to be in violation of the OPT by the time it arrives. I put the latest start date i could on my application (as told to me by my school) which was 1st of july... any ideas where I can find this information?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Your 90 days start from the day of your OPT approval!

I?m a little confused about your start date though. So you say, you applied on 16th of July but your start date is the 1st of July?

Anyways, the start date that you set doesn?t come in picture if the approved date is after the start date. The new start date would be the day your OPT gets approved and then you?ll have 90 days from the OPT approval date.

Note:- I?d still suggest you to verify this with someone who?s more knowledgeable about this subject. I?m just another person like you who got his OPT approved past the initial start date!

- New Comment: The OPT start date is either your requested start date or the date of adjudication, whichever is later.

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Additionally, initial OPT must be completed within 14 months of your program completion date. This means that if you graduated on May 15 2024 then the latest your OPT could be authorized to is July 15 2025. Even if you were approved on August 15 2024, your OPT would still end on July 15 2025, i.e. you'd lose one month of OPT authorization.

Also, the 90 day unemployment clock starts from the approval date.

- New Comment: As long as you have a receipt notice, you're good! Also, since I am in the same boat as you, what are your plans during these 4 months?

Title of the post: Sponsor

Body of the post: Hello guys. I need an advice. My sponsor is my mother and we have all the funds on her account, the thing is that we sold our real estate asset to finance my studies in USA. Which seems kinda red flag and i am scared interviewer won't like it if i say it. I also thought i could say that she owns business or something but i am also scared that they will ask me for proof if she owns business. Could you recommend what should i say when interviewer asks me how my mother pays for my studies?

Thank youu !!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Savings

- New Comment: Up

- New Comment: That's a great question OP. Often wondered if there's a minimum period needed for the funds in your account for the F1.

Like for the UK, they clearly state you need the funds for 90 days, left untouched in your account for a student visa.

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Did the university give you any instruction on this while sending the I20?

Title of the post: Please help! F1 Visa Follow- Up Appointment Issues

Body of the post: Hello all! I applied for F1 visa in June and due to me having a previous F1 visa within the last 48 months, I was granted an interview waiver. I submitted my document at the Dropbox on June 28 and on July 12 I was told that my visa is refused. I was sent my passport back telling me they want me to schedule a follow-up interview appointment. However, when I try logging in to the portal and I try to select the dates, the page is blank and no dates pop-up. I've been having this issue for the past 8 days with no appointments showing up. Is anyone in a similar situation and can please help me out. Thanks in advance.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: tough luck, maybe the website is having some issues as of now, best chance to check tomorrow or email them for info.
- New Comment: LITERALLY in the same boat as you. I recently graduated from the States and had a valid F-1, but applied because I wanted to have a 5 year visa for security as my Doctorate program was going to last for 4-5 years. my passport was returned on the 13th and since that time, no interview slots are visible. My program starts august 9 and I need to be there by then. So far nobody has any answers for me. If you have any insight, please let me know

Title of the post: Status keeps updating to ?Application Received?

Body of the post: Hey all, I'm in india for F1 visa renewal on STEM OPT. I had Dropbox appointment on July 2 at Chennai. I submitted documents at Bangalore Dropbox on July 2. Here is my timeline:

July 2: dropped off documents Bangalore,

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July 9: Application received status on CEAC website,

July 16: case last updated and still Application received,

July 19: case last updated and still application received,

July 19: evening it changed to approved,

July 22: administrative processing,

July 23: again application received,

July 23: evening changed to refused

Is this an issue? Or should I just wait longer?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I am in the same boat with the same timelines. Did you receive any update, today or still application received?

- New Comment: Have you maybe checked the usvisascheduling website?

- New Comment: Any updates?

Title of the post: F1 visa renewal on STEM OPT

Body of the post: Hi everyone! I completed my undergraduate degree in Computer Science in December 2022 and have been on OPT ever since. My initial OPT expired January of this year as well as my F1 visa. I am currently on STEM Opt right now with the same employer and it's valid until January 2026.

I have to travel back to my home country (Nepal) due to some personal reasons. I have been visiting home almost every year (this will be my 5th time since 2019). I was there last year as well when I was on my initial Opt but my visa was still valid at that time. I've maintained legal status throughout my period here and currently work for state government as an

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application developer. I have read and heard that any application can be denied but I've also heard some success stories from my friends who successfully renewed through dropbox appointment last year. I am eligible for dropbox as well. Do you guys think it's worth risking it? I am planning to do Masters after my STEM OPT (if I don't get picked for lottery next year). If I don't renew now, I have to renew it later in the future.

One thing that might help me is that I will have almost 2 months of PTO from work when I plan to visit (October). My position is remote as well so I would be able to communicate with my employer.

What do you guys think? Worth risking? Let me know! Thank you!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I personally don't see any risk in visiting your home right now (unless you just started your job a few months ago and worry about your job security). I visited home multiple times during STEM OPT and had to renew my visa as well. They all went well.

- New Comment: I think you will be fine! I renewed my visa on OPT last year with Dropbox application and it only took 2 weeks altogether

Title of the post: Housing

Body of the post: Hey guys, i am going to the US 2 weeks before starting the semester, can i mention at the the airport that i will be staying with a friend of mine in the same state but a bit far from the university? Just for these 2 weeks till i find a proper lease near campus

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes

- New Comment: yea, hurry up and find a place asap.

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Title of the post: can i work 2 part time jobs on OPT?

Body of the post: Hey all, I am currently employed part time in a company related to my major (under 20 hours). If I get another part time job thats under 20 hours so that the total will be 20 hours (from combining the hours from the two part time jobs), will this be allowed?

any tips are appreciated! thank you so much

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes you can
- New Comment: There is no limit to how much you can work on full time (besides your own energy)

Title of the post: Employer wants a W9 Form

Body of the post: I currently have my post-completion OPT and a company wants to hire me as an independent contractor. They asked for a W9 form, but since I'm a non-resident alien it doesn't seem to apply to me. I've spoken with the company and they said that I can figure it out and send the right form to them instead (they've never contracted an international student before). I have asked my DSO, school tax people, and even tried to file my pre-employment forms on Sprintax but keep getting different answers on what i should be doing. Has anyone been in this position or able to provide me with any guidance on this topic?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: W8BEN
- New Comment: W9 if resident for tax purposes (I believe if you have been in US for 5 or more years), otherwise W8BEN
- New Comment: Can you confirm what year you entered the United States?

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Title of the post: STEM OPT premium processing time

Body of the post: Hey everyone,

My initial OPT expired a couple of days ago, and I applied for my STEM OPT in May. I've been waiting for an update ever since. I upgraded it to premium processing a week ago. I was wondering how long it usually takes for the case to be approved and to receive my card. I'm stressing about this and don't know what to do. Any input about this is appreciated!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Not sure about the premium processing timeline. But, FYI, even if your initial OPT expires and your STEM extension is under process, USCIS automatically extends your work authorization by 180 days.

\[[link](https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/optional-practical-training-opt-for-f-1-students#:~:text=If%20you%20file%20your%20STEM,your%20STEM%20OPT%20extension%20application)\]

- New Comment: You'll get approval notice within 10 days from the start of premium processing.

- New Comment: I applied at the end of March and received a decision last Friday. No pp

Title of the post: PhD, MS and an OPT

Body of the post: Hey, so basically I will start my PhD in AI from a US university soon. I had one question, slightly unrealistic but just wanted to know if someone has done or seen anything like this.

Basically, Can I pull out of my PhD degree before time, within 1.5-2.5 years with a masters degree? What universities allow it and whats the condition?

If I am allowed to pull out with an MS, being an international student can I just take a job on OPT just like other MS

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graduates? This does sound like a loophole because you are essentially getting paid to do your Masters and pulled out right in time and get a job but I am super curious to know. Thanks

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Does your PI even allow you to do so? Knowing that is more important as not all PIs will allow you to drop out from PhD program with an MS degree.

A PhD is a commitment. Don't abuse or misuse it as a way to get a free/paid MS degree and a work permit.

- New Comment: people like OP suck. It is one thing to drop out unintentionally like medical, things not working out, personal issues but to come with the intention of dropping out deprives a slot from a student that actually wants to do a PhD.

- New Comment: Most universities require you to complete the masters requirement of credits in the first 1.5-2 years. And you can pull out of the phd and take a OPT like masters students. I do have a friend who did it. Also if you are here for a masters and you get a PhD after your masters, you can drop out of it, if you find a job. It all comes down to what you want in the long run. But just remember, since the academic community isn't that big, most reputed professors know each other in different colleges, so if you pull out something like this, it should be really difficult for you to get into academics back again if you wish to do a PhD later on in your life as it creates a bad impression in the community.

Title of the post: If you've attended an F1 interview, please answer this!

Body of the post: Interview in 2 days, I got documents ready but I'm really nervous so I've got 2 questions about this. When you bring the documents to the embassy, do you get any of them back? For instance I brought my school transcripts but they're my only copy, I don't want to permanently hand them over to the embassy. Second question, am I supposed to just show documents when relevant or only if the VO specifically asks? Let's say I'm asked about my sponsors, is that when I should show financial documents, or should I only answer the question and not show

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documents unless asked to, even if its relevant?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: i've given my interview a week ago, so I'll try my best to answer your questions.

1. for the transcripts carry a pair of Xerox just in case they most probably won't ask you for your transcripts, but keep them handy.

2. 99% of the time the VO is just gonna ask you questions and not gonna ask you for any documents. only give documents when asked.

- New Comment: I had my interview last month and the only documents actually necessary are your passport, your sevis fee receipt and your I-20. The rest of the documents you can carry with you, but they generally don't ask for them and they definitely don't keep them. Even if they do they return them with your passport when you've received your visa. You don't need to show documents unless they explicitly ask for proof, which they rarely tend to do.

- New Comment: I gave my interview 6 years ago so a bit foggy on the details. But from what I remember they don't keep any documents except passport.

For documents, yes I believe you only provide when they ask for it (not 100% sure on this one though)

- New Comment: In most of the cases, they will only ask for Passport/s, I20 and other Appoinment related documents.. all other documents that interviewee gets with him are for just in case.. it's always a good idea to carry all required documents but VO don't ask for one.. and in worst case if they ask, they will probably give back.. at the end of interview.. they will only keep your passport and that's what everyone wants.. Goodluck.

- New Comment: To answer:

1) They won't be keeping any of your document's. Most likely they won't even ask for it. For the 0.1% chance they ask for it, just carry a xerox. They usually only ask for your passport and i20.

2) Only when they ask you. I read a lot of interviews before I gave mine a few years ago, sometimes the VOs get

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annoyed when you try to provide extra info, such as show documents.

- New Comment: You do get them back! They only take your passport if approved. Answer the question confidently.

Only slide over the documents when asked. During my interview, the guy before got yelled at by the VO for sliding over all the documents without being asked to.

Good luck!

- New Comment: When I did mine, they asked for my diplomas and transcripts, they kept them for a month, and returned them when I got the visa

- New Comment: They only keep your passport if they want to give you visa.

- New Comment: Only thing you need to carry is your i20 passport sevis id. Many times other things are not even asked(if uni ranking is good)

- New Comment: I had my interview a day ago. I'm not sure if every US consulate works the exact same procedure. But down to your questions, it might work similarly.

1. If you are approved, they will keep your passport for issuance. Moreover, additional photos could be asked, so just bring them.

2. You only show the documents when asked.

Title of the post: Entering the US on tourist visa prior to entering on F1 visa

Body of the post: I plan to enter the United States on July 19th to receive the required vaccines for my university. Since my program begins on August 19th, 31 days after my arrival, I intend to enter initially with my tourist visa. I will return to my home country approximately 10 days later and re-enter the U.S. with my F1 visa closer to the program's start date. My concern is whether the close timing between using the tourist visa and the F1 visa might cause any issues with my

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entry into the U.S. Any advice would be appreciated.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Just travel a day later... problem solved

- New Comment: Definitely talk to your DSO but:

No, you won't have any issues . There will be no issues. But I'm curious: What vaccines do you need? It can be done when your university starts as well. Also, why go to your home country just visit Mexico and enter again.

All these comments are just misleading.

- New Comment: I heard when you enter on tourist visa and change your status to F1 after entering US may take more time than expected. Think before you take this step. Do more research!! You can get the vaccinations in your home country as well and get the documentation

- New Comment: I believe once the F1 visa has been issued, you can no longer enter with a tourist visa

- New Comment: You really taking those vaccines?

Get the certificate from some diagnostic centre for INR 1000 bucks.

Don't do this to your body.... How stupid of you silly.

Title of the post: How to report Outlier AI contractor work to SEVP portal on F1 OPT?

Body of the post: Hi guys. I've recently started working for Outlier AI as an independent contractor. The work is task-based and not project based so they do not provide any official offer letter. How am I supposed to report this in the SEVP Portal? I am still looking for full-time opportunities so once I get a job, I plan on discontinuing working for them. Is there an option to not report them at all as I already have a volunteer position that would satisfy the working requirements and would stop the "unemployment clock"? Any advice would be appreciated.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can include the employer name as Outlier and your address for the office and the job responsibilities. You need to definitely mention the Outlier name in your OPT because you are getting paid.
- New Comment: I'd talk to the DSO. They know what is required for OPT reporting.
- New Comment: Outlier doesn't qualify for CPT / OPT. Don't report them.

Title of the post: STEM OPT question

Body of the post: I have a degree in CS. I'm about to interview for a job that opened up internally. I work as a computer tech. This new job will is IT Project and Procurement Specialist.?

Does this job qualify for the 'related to major' component of STEM OPT?

How about H1B? This is for a school so It would be cap exempt H1B.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Yes it qualifies for a CS degree but make sure you list the work your going to do when you apply for your OPT so you can show it is related to your degree.
- New Comment: h1b is kinda different story but for stem opt its not that hard to show connection between job and study
- New Comment: Have you had H1 before? Is this your first ?

Yea schools are cap exempt and it is counted as STEM.

Title of the post: OPT Stuck at 'Your case is taking longer than expected to process', now what?

Body of the post: Just got my job offer with tentative start date set for start of August... OPT was meant to have start

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date July 8th, it got down to 1 week processing remaining and then switched to 'Your case is taking longer than expected to process' and has stayed at that since.

Its somewhat fortunate they took longer to process as it meant my unemployment clock hadn't started whilst I didn't have a job, but now I am worried they may not be done by start of August, when I'm meant to start my job. Any recommendations for course of action?

Do I push back my start with employer (I feel this is safest as who knows how long this will take)? Or do I pay the \$1600 premium fee, I don't mind paying as if I start work a week earlier I will make the money back almost instantly but I just don't want to mess around with jerking my employer and start date about. For example if I pay the premium fee and ask my employer to start a week early am I guaranteed USCIS will process my application in a week or is it still possible they take a while?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Apply for premium processing but do not ask employer to start early. PP promises decision within 30 days, not a week. So apply for PP asap, and keep your August start date to make sure you will have your EAD for sure by the time you start. Because you also will need to wait for the physical card to arrive in the mail before you can start the job, even if the application is approved within a week.

- New Comment: When did you apply?

- New Comment: I would do premium processing because it guarantees action within 30 days. With regular processing you might get approved before your job start date, you might not.

Title of the post: Gap in health insurance

Body of the post: Hi my student is on OPT. She started her OPT on July 15th in New York. Her College health insurance

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plan ends on 14th August however the new health insurance plan (from the employer) will kick in only from September 1st. Need advice on how do we get the 15 days coverage. TIA.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I was without health insurance for 6 months while on OPT and got the flu. I just had to suck it up but could have used CVS, or my local free clinic for a test or shot. I also could have used planned parenthood for birth control but I did not have a need for that. I also knew that in my state emergency Medicaid kicks in regardless of immigration status and payment plans are available (e.g. if I crash) though I don't know how these affect public charge rules. Didn't use any of those because I didn't need them. Using local resources could be a last resource if she decides to swing it and if crowding out others that may need them more is a concern you can consider volunteering or setting up donations. She could make sure her shots are up to date before her insurance expires and get a general checkup and make sure she stock up on refills for any medicine but 15 days is not the end of the world.

- New Comment: She can get short term insurance on insubay.

- New Comment: Why do you need those 15 days covered?

- New Comment: Yes true. Thanks

Title of the post: Replacement EAD timeline - 1st EAD not delivered

Body of the post: Anyone has any insight on how long it takes to receive a new EAD after filing for a replacement? My initial EAD was approved but USPS lost it as it was never in my mail box.

My employer does not accept the receipt notice for replacement since it does not explicitly state "receipt for replacement." What documents would convince a strict HR in a field with very little international students.

If anyone one was in a similar experience, please share your experience and advice.

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Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Were you sent an approval notice? It also serves as an extension.

<https://www.uscis.gov/i-9-central/form-i-9-resources/handbook-for-employers-m-274/50-automatic-extensions-of-employment-authorization-and-or-employment-authorization-documents-eads-in/51-automatic-extensions-based-on-a-timely-filed-application-to-renew-employment-authorization#:~:text=Those%20who%20timely%20and%20properly,26614%20and%2089%20FR%2024628>

- New Comment: I am hoping all goes well with you in Jesus Name Amen

- New Comment: Any updates? I'm in the same situation, just filed for a replacement card

Title of the post: Can I work 60 hours on CPT, 40 for 1 employer and 20 for second?

Body of the post: I have asked my school, they are fine with it. But I am not sure if this will lead to any issues in future, OPT related.

Has anyone done this and can speak to it? Any advice is appreciated!

Thank you

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I know it is not answering the question. But if you already talk to your DSO and said it was fine. (Would advise to have it on a written form). Why would you ask advice on strangers that you don't even know they are making stuff up.

- New Comment: Are both employers listed on your I-20? Are you working the hours listed on your I-20 for each employer? (ie part time or full time respectively) then you are fine.

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Title of the post: How long after receiving OPT EAD approval email from Premium Processing should I expect the card to arrive by mail?

Body of the post: Received OPT EAD approval email today using Premium Processing. The portal still hasn't updated.

How soon should I expect the card to arrive by mail?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I got email about approval, then standalone approval doc 2 days later. Then the card was produced about a week later and it is shipped out now and will be receiving it in the mail tomorrow, so 5 days after the card was produced. I'd say in total I'd expect 2 weeks, but it can be up to 30 days it said in the approval document.

- New Comment: I applied for premium on 10th July and haven't got any approval.

When did you apply and what is the current trend for approval

- New Comment: 2 weeks

Title of the post: F1 visa renewal while on OPT

Body of the post: Hi, I am from Germany and currently on OPT. I am employed since June 2024 and have a valid EAD until June 2025. Based on my research online, it is super risky to renew a F1 visa while on OPT and I am thinking to cancel my travel plans because I am super stressed out. I have a appointment later this month in Germany. I had to correct my DS160 twice but have now updated everything in the portal. DS160 updates because I did one after my OPT got accepted but forgot to put my previous school on the second one so I added everything on the third one and cancelled the appointments for these two. What kind of questions can I expect (I am not eligible for dropbox because I am still in the US). Thanks!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: I renewed mine while I was in Germany and on OPT (I was just visiting home) with no issues at all. It's

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just a drop off mail and took less than 2 weeks. You said you will be in Germany this month so why can't you do Dropbox? Are you trying to renew while in the US?

Title of the post: Sponsoring my friend's F1 Visa

Body of the post: Hi!

I'm sponsoring my good friend to come to community College in the US through an F1 Visa. He has his interview coming up in about a week and a half, and we can't figure out which papers I need to fill out. We've both been calling around and trying to figure this out, but nobody seems to have any answers.

Also, my friend is from Lebanon. It's very difficult to convince the officers that they'll be returning to a country as desolate as Lebanon. Any tips to avoid rejection?

TIA!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: How are you sponsoring your friend? As far as I know, your sponsorship is not worth much when it comes to F-1 visas. If your friend cannot demonstrate that he has strong ties to Lebanon and intends to return there after degree completion, no sponsorship in the world can help him avoid visa rejection. And he's applying to a community college, which I think is not a good sign.

- New Comment: You can't sponsor your friend for an F1 visa. He will apply as an individual. To avoid rejection, he must prove strong ties to his home country and a plan to return. Perhaps showing how the degree from the US will help him get a good job back home to give back to the economy etc

- New Comment: Whatever documents you gave to your friend to show as proof of funds for the issuance of the I-20 is all you need to carry along as evidence of financial support and a signed affidavit (if the school requested one). This

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could be bank statements or a bank letter stating how much money you have as a closing balance. You don't have to actually fill anything with the embassy/consulate to prove you are sponsoring your friend. Just have him/her carry the original copies and only present them when asked for it. And also him/her prepared to answer the question "who is going to pay for your degree"?

Title of the post: F1 Visa application status changed from ?Approved? to ?Application Received?

Body of the post: My interview was on 27th June and they asked for submission of SEVIS payment receipt, I submitted it and the status changed to "Approved" on 28th June. This was the status till 9th July when it was changed from "Approved" to "Application Received" and got reupdated to the same yesterday i.e. 15th July. I checked with the consulate and they confirmed this status. Is this something to worry about and is it normal? My program starts on 26th August

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hey which are you in any chance the university is suny buffalo? Saw your start date and is kinda the same so curious xd

Title of the post: I really need help with F-1 Visa renewal from 3rd country.

Body of the post: * **Current Status:** South Korean, Currently at Italy.

* **Initial Visa Adjudication:** The initial F-1 visa was issued at the U.S. Embassy in **South Kore**a, 6 years ago

* **Current Activity:** Pursuing a MS. at a State univ with Piano major/ Staying at **Italy** for Piano performance and orchestra programs Until end of July.

* **Current Situation:** Was not aware of expired F-1 Visa and went to Italy.

* **Visa Expiration: May 2023**

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Questions:

1. Is it ok to apply for visa renewal at the US ambassador in Italy? Or is it safer to go back to Korea and apply?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can apply it in the US ambassador in Italy. Just briefly explain your situation, they will approve it.

Things to keep in mind:

1. Have you had an appointment? If not, when is the earliest appointment?

2. Do you have a mailing address that gets your passport? (usually take 2 weeks)

- New Comment: Are you an Italian citizen as well? If not, there is a chance they reject your application as a third national in Italy and ask you to apply from your home country. I don't know how probable it is. Also check with the US embassy at your city in Italy to see if they even accept third national applications.

If you apply to the same embassy as your original visa, you are likely to get an interview waiver, so that is definitely a benefit as you won't have to go in for an interview or wait to schedule one.

The process can be lengthy, or it can be quick. To be safe, I'd apply from my home country so I can be there in case they need an interview or they need me to come in.

Mandatory note: always check everything with your DSO. They offer valuable advice. They're there to help, so use that to your benefit.

- New Comment: How did it go? I'm currently in a similar situation

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Title of the post: Can I still work while waiting for my STEM OPT card?

Body of the post: So I just got my stem extension approved (applied march 21st for those wondering) and now I'm waiting for the card. My OPT expired but I was granted an extension to work while the Stem extension application was pending.

Can I continue to work without having the card in hands?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If you file your STEM OPT extension application on time and your OPT period expires while your extension application is pending, we will automatically extend your employment authorization for 180 days. This automatic 180-day extension ceases once USCIS adjudicates your STEM OPT extension application.

<https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/optional-practical-training-extension-for-stem-students-stem-opt>

- New Comment: Yes, you can continue working. Once you get your new card, reverify your I-9 with your employer
- New Comment: true while pending your automatically extended but as long as I know u need a card first and than u can work but i might be wrong check with hr
- New Comment: No you need the card in hand before you start.

Title of the post: Address change while pending OPT approval

Body of the post: Hi! I applied OPT on May 3, waiting for my opt approved. Then I got a job offer, and they wanted me to join as soon as possible, I moved to there (from west to east).

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I changed my address on USCIS, and now it says the estimated time for approval is 4 more months.

To make things worse, it turned out the job didn't work out, and I had to come back to west and changed my address again.

Do I really have to wait 4 months? My OPT start date was actually today, July 15th. I'm trying to apply another job and what if an employer asks to see a work authorization? I spent too much money for this shitty relocating stuff and flights, I don't have enough money for premium processing. (Actually I haven't received the full deposit from the landlord even though I lived in the house for five days.) What should I do ?? Any advice would be appreciated!

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: well damn sucks for you but i think u should make credit card and sell some stuff you have and get premium processing asap or u might have to pay one more thing = plane ticket back to your home

Title of the post: Can I use PhD to search for jobs?

Body of the post: Hello everyone, I am a MS computer science student in the US and have finished my undergraduate degree from the same university. I will graduate in this coming December. I am on the job hunt right now and was wondering if I can start a PhD and apply for SWE roles during it, and leave the PhD if I get a job. I will have had my masters and bachelors degrees, but will leave my PhD. Is this possible?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: >I am on the job hunt right now and was wondering if I can start a PhD and apply for SWE roles during it,

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Sure you can do this, but you won't be able to work on the F-1 status and will have to change to another status.

>I will have had my masters and bachelors degrees, but will leave my PhD. Is this possible?

Possible? Yes. Will this work the way you expect? Absolutely not. You would need the employer to sponsor you. You get no special treatment from your previous degrees.

Title of the post: I-765 Delayed Approval

Body of the post: Hello I have a question.

I applied for my I765 on April 5th, start date for August 5th, and accepted that the approval might be delayed. I know that if it is approved later than my start date it will change, what will happen to the end date? Will it also be changed?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: If your application is approved after your requested start date, the start date would be the day application is approved and the end date would be a year after that date.

- New Comment: The OPT end date is 12 months after the start date or 14 months after the end of your program, whichever is sooner. This means it is possible to get less than 12 months of OPT due to USCIS delays.

- New Comment: I have applied on April 12. and received a receipt notice?

Why is there so much delay in getting the EAD?

- New Comment: When do you think you will get the EAD or approval notice, as I applied on April 12

- New Comment: Did anyone get an approval who applied on 12th April ?

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Title of the post: F1 stamp from Canadian us consulate. thoughts?

Body of the post: Context- I am currently working with an f1-opt but never got a stamp because I only ever did change of status cuz I've lived here for over 10 years with different visas under my parents.

I don't need any renewals. I just need the stamp so I can travel abroad for work.

Now what's the process/timeline to get it at a Canadian consulate. I work remote so that's no problem. It is very easy to get a Canadian tourist visa as well, so I can just hangout there for as much time as needed.

I am under the impression that this is a much quicker and predictable option. Also, do I need an interview?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Currently, there are no available slots for interviews for non-residents at any U.S. consulate in Canada. The actual wait time is more than two years. I would advise you to go to a different country to renew your visa.

Title of the post: Delay in EAD delivery: How to get back lost unemployment days?

Body of the post: My visa type is F1. I just graduated. I applied for my EAD on march 20, and my start date was supposed to be June 10th. However, my EAD got approved on 30 June, and I received the card today. The card still shows 30 June. Legally, I couldn't start working on 30th, since I would have to physically show the card. Hence I lost about 14 working days. How to get that back, since there was a delay at USCIS side.

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: You can't do anything.

- New Comment: >How to get back lost unemployment days?

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You don't.

- New Comment: You actually got 14 extra days if you think about it and it's the same.

- New Comment: nothing u can do about it\~

Title of the post: F1 visa renewal drop off

Body of the post: Hello, my f1 visa is valid till sept 2025. My flight is on 25th July 2024. I wanted to renew my visa using drop off. I am thinking of booking an appointment on 15th July 2024 at 9:45am at Chennai VAC(going to drop off at Mumbai). What documents do I need apart from my passport, i20, US visa spec photograph, proof of funds. And is it likely I will get my passport before 25th?

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: Hello, not to discourage you but the timeline is impossible..my wife had a F-1 drop box appointment on 2nd July and her visa got approved only on 17th. We are still waiting for the passport to be ready for pick up. Since all drop box appointments are handled by Chennai, I believe there is a delay in processing.

- New Comment: As far as I know, you can only renew your visa up to 12 months in advance.

Title of the post: Can I, as a guy, have long hair and attend the F1 student visa interview?

Body of the post: I will be wearing formals to the interview, and I will be tying my hair. Would that be a problem?

I really could not find any specific information regarding hairstyle for men from the official website. So I wanted to ask here for a general opinion

Comment of the post:

- New Comment: What? bro just look formal

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- New Comment: You can. As long as your documents meet the required criteria, the Americans don't care.
- New Comment: I am AMAB, had long hair, and all the officer did was compliment my hairstyles haha.
- New Comment: You can absolutely have long hair and attend the interview.
- New Comment: Hair style shouldn't be a concern as long as it isn't messy and you dress up in presentable manner
- New Comment: Attend with formal dress code, hair etc. casual not welcome. Best of luck.
- New Comment: Hey!

I recently did exactly the same and my Visa was approved.

Rest assured, they absolutely don't care about it as long as you're neatly dressed and properly groomed.

Don't worry, you'd be fine.

Goodluck for the interview!

- New Comment: I saw a guy in shorts and another in hoodie to the interview, no problem if u have long hair lol
- New Comment: I am a trans woman but presented as male at the interview. I wore a T shirt and long hair to visa interview and passed pretty quickly. I don't think it matters as long as you dress normally and not sloppily.
- New Comment: They do not care about your hairstyle and it will not affect your interview. Lol
- New Comment: Wearing smart casual is better than formal.

Title of the post: F1 Visa expired but I20 valid?

Body of the post: My F1 visa expired this may, but my I-20 is valid for another 4 years, how exactly do I renew my visa?

Like the one in my Hong Kong passport? Do I renew it or extend it? Do I have to fly back to Hong Kong to do this or can I do this in the US?

Comment of the post:

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- New Comment: Afaik, you have to fly back to your home country or anywhere with the US embassy to renew it. You can't do it in the US, which sucks. OR you can just not renew it BUT never fly out intending to enter the US again with expired visa.
- New Comment: I had a similar situation and I had to renew my visa. It was a dropbox (no interview) and they renewed my visa for 5 years