

STEM OPT: Application Basics

International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO)



Introductions!

Workshop Agenda:

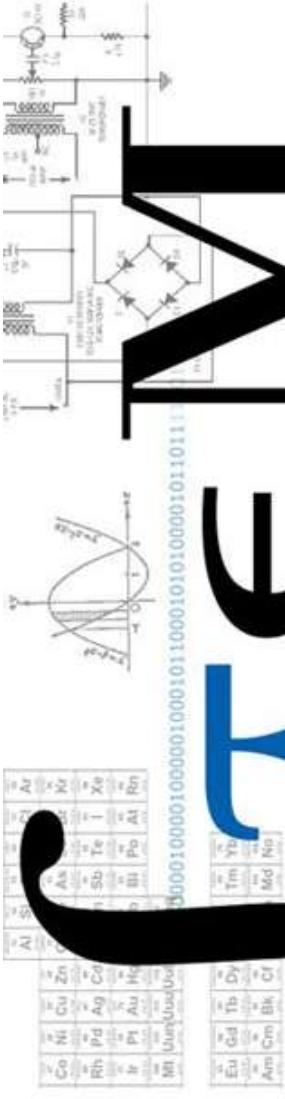
- ✓ Summary of the STEM OPT Rule
- ✓ Applying for STEM OPT
- ✓ STEM OPT Resources
- ✓ Q & A



F-1 24 month STEM OPT Extension

CVI

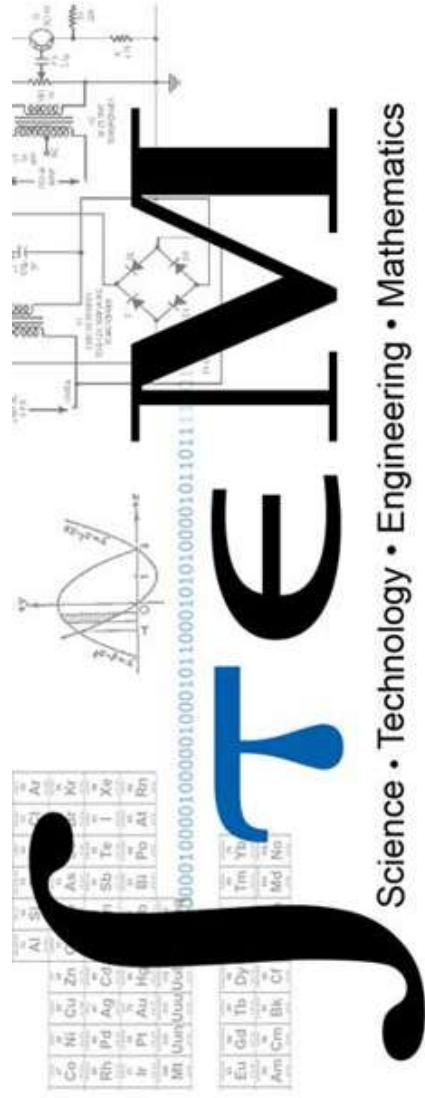
Science • Technology • Engineering • Mathematics



- Available only for students who complete a **degree program** (bachelor's, master's or doctorate) with a major field in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

- Eligibility for STEM OPT extension based on **Classification of Instructional Program (CIP)** code assigned to major field by University Registrar
- Requires **I-983 Training Plan** for STEM OPT Students
- Employer must be enrolled in federal **e-Verify** program
- Expands student and employer **reporting** requirements

F-1 STEM OPT Extension



STEM

Science • Technology • Engineering • Mathematics

- Allows for **2nd STEM** extension based on **higher STEM degree**
- Allows STEM extension based on **prior U.S. degree**

STEM OPT based on Prior Degree

Allows **2nd Lifetime STEM OPT** extension

Allows STEM OPT based on **prior degree**

- From a U.S. institution that is **accredited and SEVIS-certified**
- Degree earned within **past 10 years**
- Prior degree does not have to have been earned in **F-1 status**
- **Did not apply** for STEM OPT after completion of prior degree



Global Programs
International Students & Scholars Office

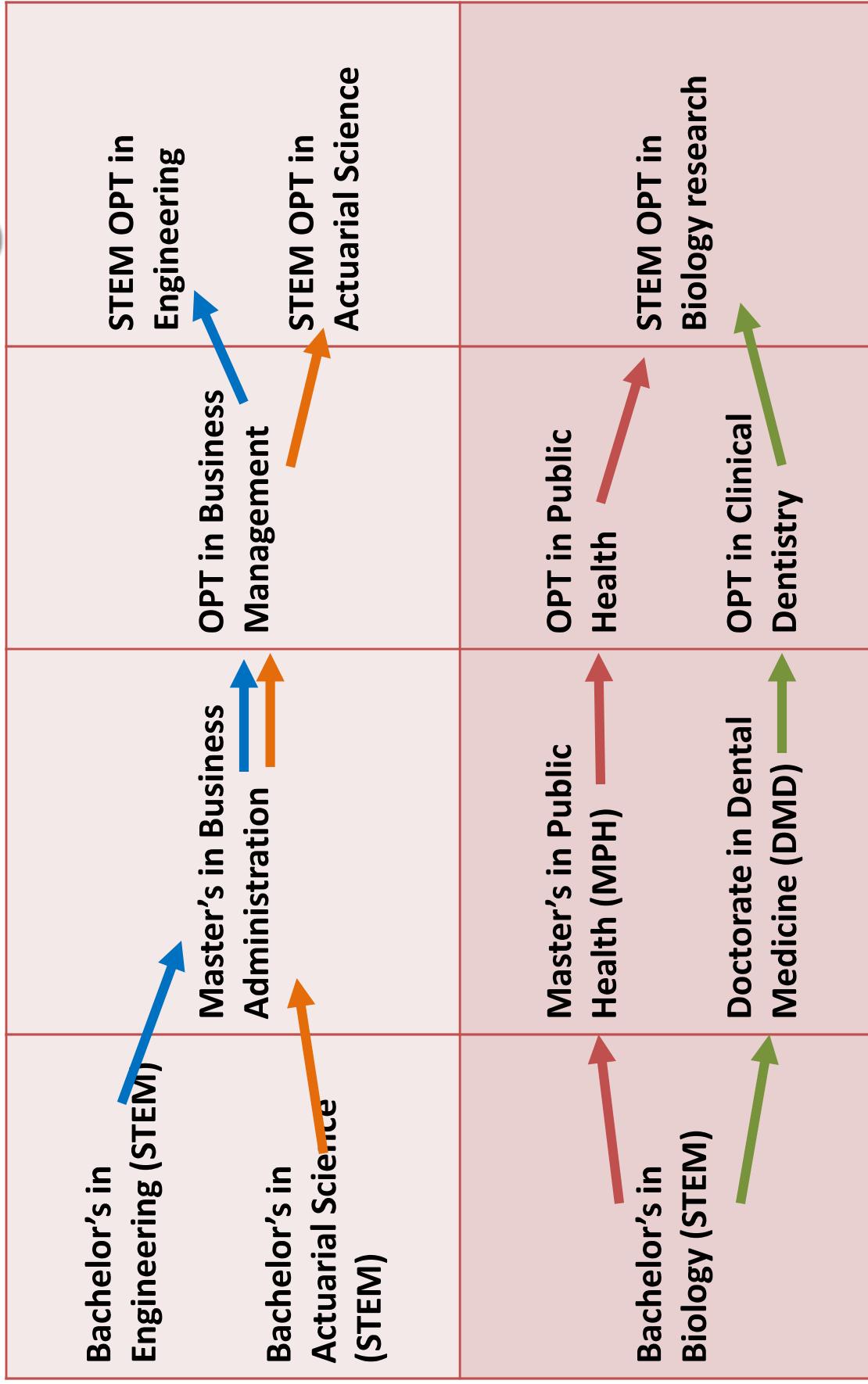


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STEM OPT based on Prior Degree



Eligibility for STEM OPT



Global Programs
International Students & Scholars Office

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Qualified STEM Major?

- STEM major list determined based on U.S. Department of Education **Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP)** code assigned by Office of University Registrar
- DHS STEM List includes:
 - Engineering (**CIP code 14**)
 - Biological and Biomedical Sciences (**CIP code 26**)
 - Mathematics and Statistics (**CIP code 27**)
 - Physical Sciences (**CIP code 40**)
- Other “related” majors based on six-digit code for fields involving research, innovation, or development of new technologies using engineering, mathematics, computer science, or natural sciences



SEVIS ID: N0001234567

SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME		GIVEN NAME	CLASS																																										
PREFERRED NAME			F-1																																										
COUNTRY OF BIRTH		COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP																																											
DATE OF BIRTH																																													
FORM ISSUE REASON <small>CONTINUED ATTENDANCE</small>		ADMISSION NUMBER	ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE																																										
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REMARKS <small>Used to reflect change of major.</small>																																													
SCHOOL ATTESTATION <p>I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above was entered before I signed this form and is true and correct. I executed this form in the United States after review and evaluation in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcripts, or other records of courses taken and proof of financial responsibility, which were reviewed in the school prior to the execution of this form. The school has determined that the above named candidate's designated school official(s) meet all standards for admission to the school and the student will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(e)(6). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form.</p> <p>X <i>[Signature]</i> Andrea Pops, Associate Director, ISSO DATE ISSUED 29 March 2016</p> <p>PLACE ISSUED Boston, MA</p>																																													

Check Your I-20

Lists Major 1 and Major 2

Includes
assigned CIP
Code for each



Check the DHS list of STEM Major Codes –

<https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/stem-list.pdf>

**STEM Designated Degree
Program List
Effective May 10, 2016**

The STEM Designated Degree Program list is a complete list of fields of study that DHS considers to be science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) fields of study for purposes of the 24-month STEM optional practical training extension described at 8 CFR 214.2(f). Under 8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(ii)(C)(2), a STEM field of study is a field of study “included in the Department of Education’s Classification of Instructional Programs taxonomy within the two-digit series containing engineering, biological sciences, mathematics, and physical sciences, or a related field. In general, related fields will include fields involving research, innovation, or development of new technologies using engineering, mathematics, computer science, or natural sciences (including physical, biological, and agricultural sciences).”

Accordingly, this list designates the following four CIP summary groups/series at the 2-digit CIP code level: Engineering (CIP code 14), Biological and Biomedical Sciences (CIP code 26), Mathematics and Statistics (CIP code 27), and Physical Sciences (CIP code 40). Any new additions to those areas will automatically be included on this STEM Designated Degree Program list. Consistent with the definition of “related field” above, related fields in this list include fields involving research, innovation, or development of new technologies using engineering, mathematics, computer science, or natural sciences. DHS designates these fields at the 6-digit level.

CIP Code Two-Digit Series	2010 CIP Code	CIP Code Title
01	01.0308	Agroecology and Sustainable Agriculture
01	01.0901	Animal Sciences, General
01	01.0902	Agricultural Animal Breeding
01	01.0903	Animal Health
01	01.0904	Animal Nutrition
01	01.0905	Dairy Science
01	01.0906	Livestock Management
01	01.0907	Poultry Science
01	01.0999	Animal Sciences, Other
01	01.1001	Food Science

Check list of qualifying BU majors – bu.edu/issO



Boston University STEM Majors

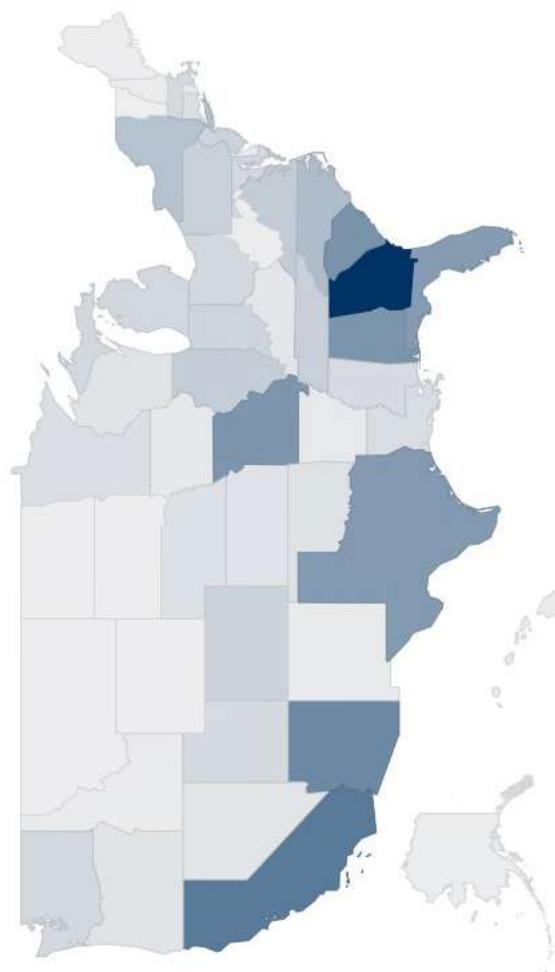
The Department of Homeland Security's Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) published a new STEM OPT rule effective May 10, 2016, permitting an extension of Optional Practical Training/employment authorization for students who have earned degrees in certain specific areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). SEVP has provided a list of CIP¹ codes which they have determined to be STEM fields eligible for the OPT extension. In March 2016, SEVP designated several new CIP codes as STEM fields (in bold below) effective May 10, 2016. The list below is of Boston University degree programs by major that qualify as STEM along with their corresponding CIP codes. The list is in alphabetical order by BU major.

HEGIS Code	Boston University Major	CIP Code	CIP Description
0533	Actuarial Science	52.1304	Actuarial Science
0902	Aerospace Engineering	14.0201	Aerospace, Aeronautical and Astronautical/Space Engineering
0932	Aerospace/Mechanical Engineering Department	14.0101	Engineering, General
0412	Anatomy	26.0403	Anatomy
0456	Anatomy & Neurobiology, Program in Cell & Molecular Biology	26.0406	Cell/Cellular and Molecular Biology
1315	Anatomy & Neurobiology, Program in Biomedical Neuroscience	26.1501	Neuroscience
0443	Anatomy and Neurobiology	26.0403	Anatomy
9111	Applied Biotechnology	26.9999	Biological and Biomedical Sciences, Other
9122	Applied Business Analytics	52.1399	Management Sciences and Quantitative Methods, Other
0596	Applied Business Analytics Management	52.1399	Management Sciences and Quantitative Methods, Other
0586	Applied Business Analytics Management	52.1302	Business Statistics
1923	Applied Chemistry	40.0501	Chemistry, General
4961	Applied Linguistics	42.2701	Cognitive Psychology and Psycholinguistics
1703	Applied Mathematics	27.0301	Applied Mathematics, General
1924	Applied Physics	40.0801	Physics, General
0849	Applied Psycholinguistics	42.2701	Cognitive Psychology and Psycholinguistics
1941	Applied Science	14.9999	Engineering, Other
0015	Approved Deferral (Engineering)	14.0101	Engineering, General
2221	Archaeological Heritage Management	45.0301	Archeology
2220	Archaeological Studies	45.0301	Archeology
2203	Archaeology	45.0301	Archeology
1911	Astronomy	40.0201	Astronomy
1955	Astronomy and Physics	40.0201	Astronomy
1965	Astronomy and Physics	40.0201	Astronomy
1912	Astrophysics	40.0202	Astrophysics
1928	Astrophysics and Space Physics	40.0202	Astrophysics
1913	Atmospheric Sciences	40.0401	Atmospheric Sciences and Meteorology, General
0403	Bacteriology	26.0503	Medical Microbiology and Bacteriology
0425	Behavioral Neurosciences	26.1501	Neuroscience
1322	Behavioral Neurosciences, Program in Biomedical Neuroscience	26.1501	Neuroscience
0460	Behavioral Neurosciences, Program in Cell&Molecular Biology	26.0406	Cell/Cellular and Molecular Biology
0414	Biochemistry	26.0302	Biochemistry
0414	Biochemistry and Molecular Biology	26.0310	biochemistry and molecular biology



Qualified E-Verify Employer?

E-Verify Total Enrolled MOUs by State as of March 31, 2020:



E-Verify: An internet-based system that compares information from an employee's Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification, to data from U.S. DHS and Social Security Administration records to confirm employment eligibility.

For Employer Search Tools see:

www.e-verify.gov

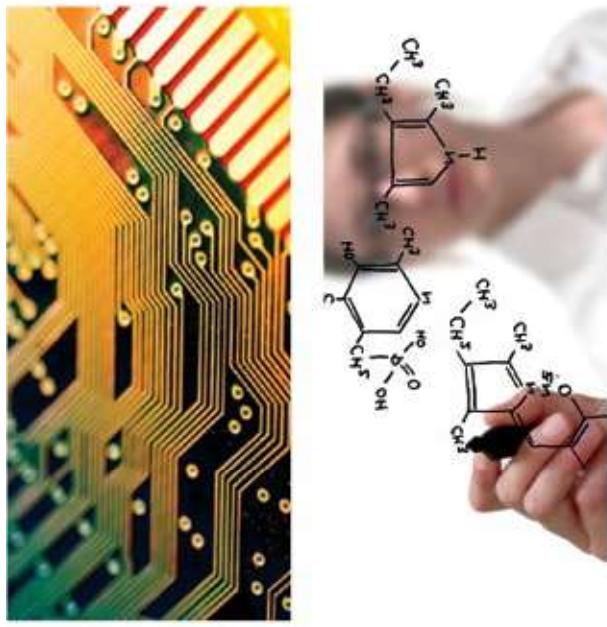
Hiring Sites as of March 2020:

- 66,382 in Massachusetts
- 266,121 in California
- 222,784 in Georgia

Comparing allowable OPT Employment Types

	12-Month OPT	24-Month STEM OPT
Job related to major	Yes required	Yes – STEM major
Paid employment	Yes allowed	Yes required
Self employment	Yes allowed	No – Must be supervised/trained
Multiple employers	Yes allowed	Yes but... <u>Each 20 hours min</u>
Volunteering	Yes allowed	No – Must be paid
Temp Agencies, Contract employment	Yes allowed	No – Must show employee/employer relationship

How to Apply for STEM OPT under 24-Month Rule



Comparing OPT Applications Requirements

	12-Month OPT	24-Month STEM OPT
Job required to apply	No	Yes
E-Verify Employer	Not required	Yes
I-983 Training Plan required	No	Yes
EAD required to begin		No – can work for 180 days pending approval



When to Apply? STEM Extension



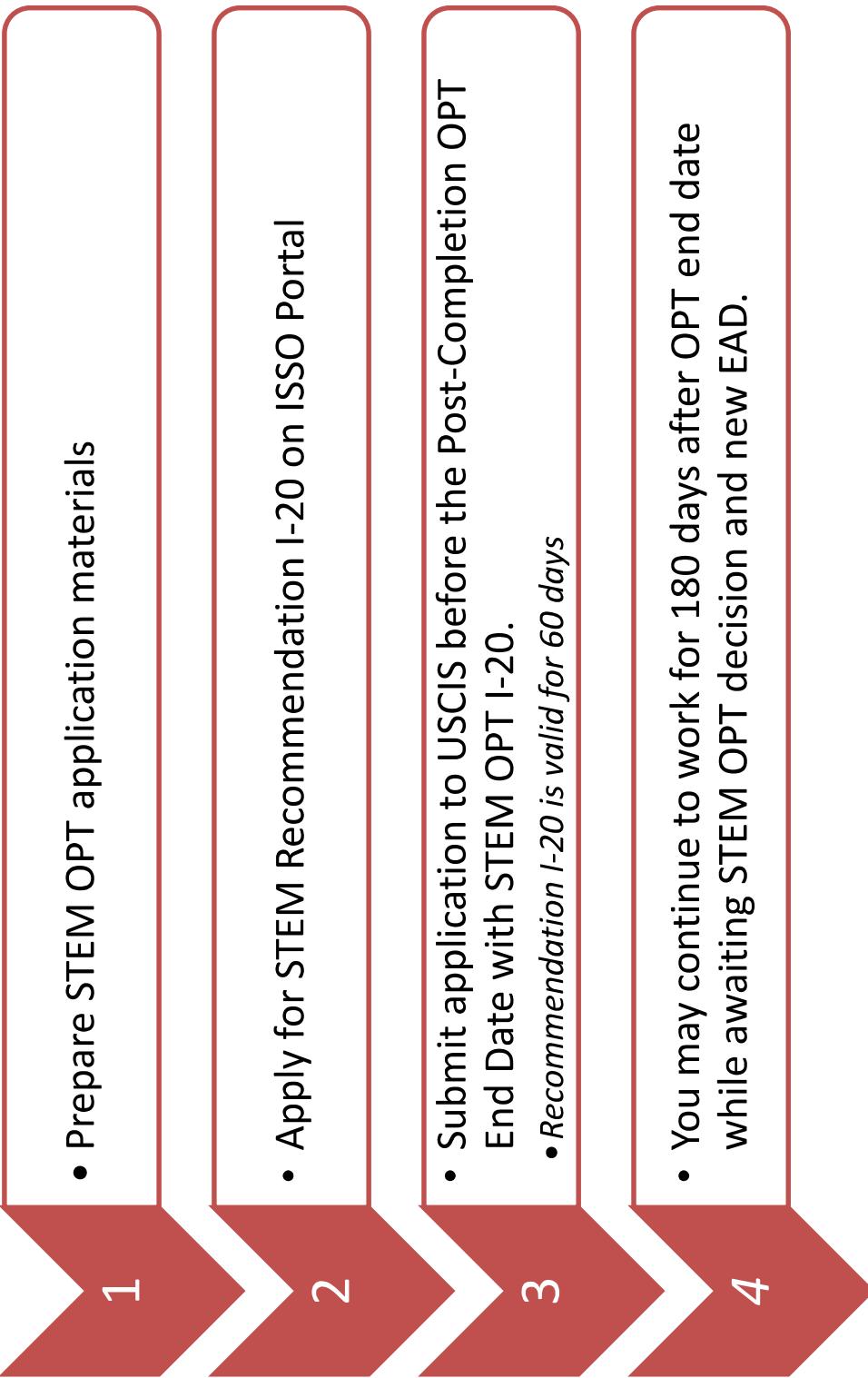
As early as 90 days* before the expiration of your current OPT work authorization (but no sooner)

Received by USCIS no later than the last day of your current OPT work authorization

90 Day Processing Time ... but you can continue working **up to 180 days** while application is pending and before the new EAD is issued

* Limited 90 day application timeframe is problematic as it can take 90 days for USCIS adjudication

Timeline to apply for STEM OPT



How to Apply – Form I-983

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

TRAINING PLAN FOR STEM OPT STUDENTS

Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) Optional Practical Training (OPT)

OMB APPROVAL NO. 1653-XXXX
EXPIRATION DATE: XX-XX-XXXX

SECTION 1: STUDENT INFORMATION (Completed by Student)			
Student Name (Surname/Primary Name, Given Name):	Student Email Address:		
Name of School Recommending STEM OPT:	Name of School Where STEM Degree Was Earned: SEVIS School Code of School Recommending STEM OPT (including 3-digit suffix):	Designated School Official (DSO) Name and Contact Information:	Student SEVIS ID No.: STEM OPT Requested Period: (mm-dd-yyyy) From: _____ To: _____
Qualifying Major and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code: _____			
Level/Type of Qualifying Degree: _____			
Date Awarded: (mm-dd-yyyy) _____			
Based on Prior Degree? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Employment Authorization Number: _____			

Completed and

Submitted to DSO

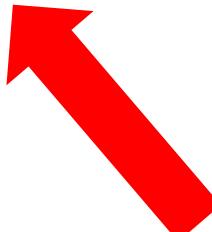


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How to Apply – Form I-983

See Study in the States for a complete I-983 Tutorial

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/form-i-983-overview>



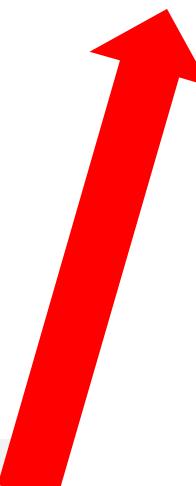
Form I-983 Overview

- Getting Started
- Traveling to the United States
- Studying in the United States
- Student Benefits
- STEM OPT
- Status Changes
- K-12 Resources
- Outreach
- Tools

The 2016 final rule that reinstates the 24-month STEM OPT regulations increases the educational benefits that F-1 students receive from their practical training experiences by requiring the submission of a formal training plan.

The formal training plan must clearly articulate the STEM OPT student's learning objectives and affirm the employer's commitment to helping the student achieve those objectives. To fulfill this requirement, a student and their employer must complete and sign Form I-983 and submit it to the student's DSO.

STEM OPT students and their employers are subject to the terms and conditions of the 24-month STEM OPT extension regulations; the Form I-983 instructions and the completed Form I-983, effective as of the employment start date requested for the associated STEM OPT period, as indicated on the Form I-983.



Form I-983 Instructions

A STEM OPT student and their employer must obtain, complete and sign the Form I-983 before the student may apply for a STEM OPT extension. Select the below image to view the Form I-983 tutorial, which provides step-by-step guidance for completing the form.



I-983 Training Plan for STEM OPT

Summary

Student Attestations

- Employer Name
 - Will notify DSO of any material changes to plan
 - Will notify DSO if not receiving appropriate training
- Hours Per Week
 - Training is directly related to STEM degree
- Compensation
- Start Date

- Student's Role
 - DHS may revoke OPT if work not in compliance
- Goals and Objectives
- Assessment Plan

- DHS may conduct site visits



Global Programs
International Students & Scholars Office

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How to Apply – Form I-765

OPT Application

**Current Form I-765
Application with USCIS**

**Employer's E-Verify
Number**

2-4 Month Processing Time

I-983 Training Plan

\$470 Current App Fee*

Proof of STEM Degree

*Fee subject to change, visit
www.uscis.gov/I-765 for updated fee info



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Resources for completing Form I-765

- Video #3 on our website:

The screenshot shows the Boston University Global Programs International Students & Scholars Office website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for 'Getting Started', 'Immigration Status', 'Employment Authorization', 'Travel & Visas', 'Campus', 'Editing I-9', 'I-9 Status', 'About', and 'Contact'. Below the navigation, there's a section titled 'Applying for OPT' with a sub-section 'OPT Basic Workshop'. This section contains a video thumbnail for 'Video #1: How to Prepare for OPT Processing with your ISSO Advisor'. To the right of this, there's a large grid of 15 items, each with a title, a small image, and a 'Close All' button. The titles include:

- Form I-765 (PDF, 492.38 KB)
- Instructions for Form I-765 (PDF, 618.16 KB)
- I-765 Worksheet (PDF, 238.54 KB)
- Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition/Acceptance (PDF, 237.85 KB)
- Form Details
- What This Form Can Help You Do
- Obtain an Employment Authorization Document
- Forms and Document Downloads
- Student Off-Campus Work & Training
- Cumular Practical Training (CPT) (F-1)
- Optional Practical Training (OPT) (F-1)
- Where to File
- Edition Date
- Filing Fee
- Checklist of Required Initial Evidence (for informational purposes only)
- Special Instructions
- Related Links
- Academic Training (AT)(J-1)
- ISSO OPT Policy
- 24-Month STEM OPT
- Employee/Advisor Reporting
- Manufacturing F-1 Status During OPT
- Making your OPT Application
- OPT Employment Type
- OPT Basic Workshop
- Video #2: Picking Your OPT Start Date for Post Completion OPT Authorization
- Video #3: Completing the Form I-765 Application for Employment Authorization
- Video #4: Assembling & Mailing Your OPT Application
- Video #5: What to Expect after Mailing: Your OPT Application & the USCIS Adjudication Process
- Social Security Numbers

- I-765 instructions on the USCIS website:
<https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>

Navigating the USCIS Website

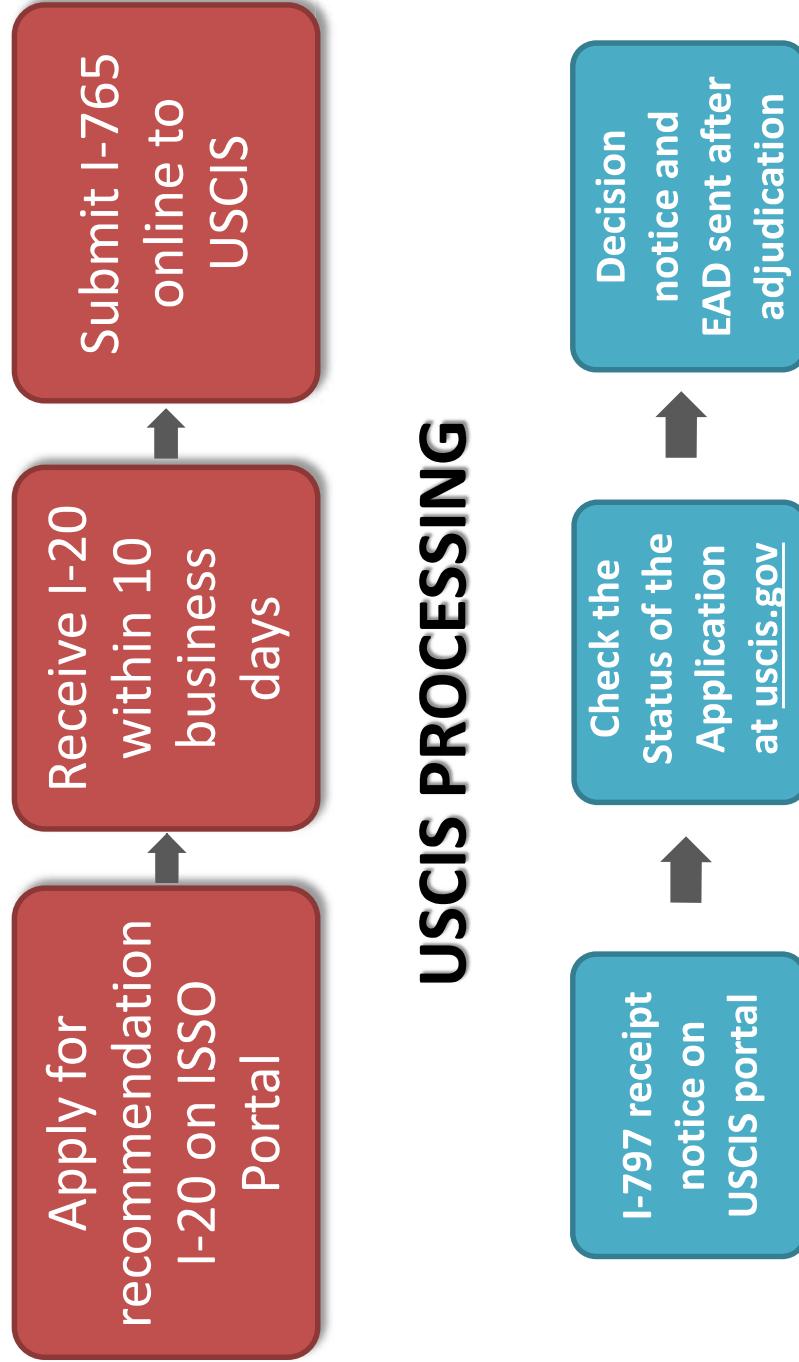
Filing your application online will not require a physical I-765 form to be completed.



Key differences between OPT and STEM OPT when filling out Form I-765

- **OPT**
 - Question 27 Eligibility category (c)(3)(B)
 - Question 28 and 29 are not required for OPT
- **STEM OPT**
 - Question 27 Eligibility category (c)(3)(C)
 - Question 28 a) Degree: STEM Degree
 - Question 28 b) Employer name as listed in E-Verify
 - Question 28 c) Employer's E-Verify number (4-7 digits)

STUDENT AND ISSO PROCESSING



A Note on Premium Processing

- Premium Processing is available for form I-765 for OPT.
- Additional \$1,685 fee
- Guarantees an approval, denial or RFE within 30 days
- Does NOT guarantee an EAD within 30 days
- Can be added when you apply or after your application has been received
- Please discuss with an ISSO Advisor if you have questions



You will receive a new Employment Authorization Document (EAD)



Don't forget to report your new EAD to the ISSO!

Student and Employer Reporting Requirements



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International Students & Scholars Office

bu.edu/isso

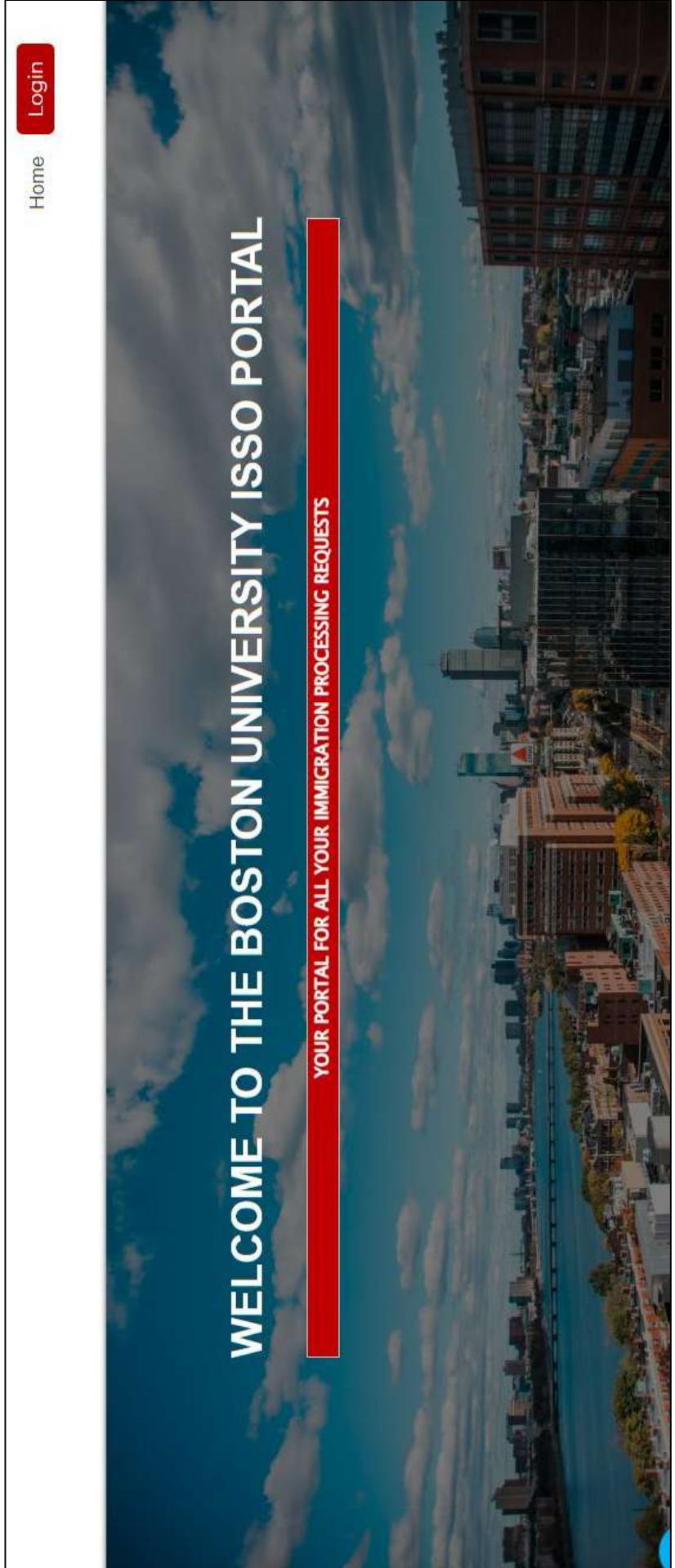
[✉ isso@bu.edu](mailto:isso@bu.edu)

Comparing OPT Reporting Requirements

	12-Month OPT	24-Month STEM OPT
Report U.S. address	Yes	Yes
Report OPT employer(s), job start/end date	Yes	Yes
Report how OPT job is related to major	Yes	Yes
Report end of OPT	Yes	Yes
6/18-Month Validation	No	Yes
I-983 Training Plan	No	Yes
Report Material Change in Training Plan	No	Yes – Student and employer must both report
12-Month Annual Evaluation	No	Yes – Self-Evaluation signed by supervisor
24-Month Final Evaluation	No	Yes – Self-Evaluation signed by supervisor

OPT Reporting – ISSO Portal

- Report Address Change
- Report OPT employer information
 - Including employer, employment dates, how OPT employment is related to major field



OPT Reporting – ISSO Portal



End OPT

Add Travel Signature

OPT - Add New Post-Completion



OPT - Cap Gap Extension



OPT - Update Employer



SEVIS Transfer Out

Report New Immigration Status

Program Completion Confirmation



Report EAD

• Report Change of Status



Update Dependent - Add New

Update Dependent - Change



• Report H-1B Approval and Cap Gap



STEM OPT - Report Validation

STEM OPT Reporting – What should I report?

- Any material changes on the Form I-983 (*change in employer, job duties, payment, supervisor*)
 - Change of Status approved (*upload approval notice*)
 - Cap-Gap Extension request (*receipt notice for H-1B petition required*)
 - Ending OPT
- Ongoing reporting:**
- Six-month STEM OPT validation (at month 6 and 18)
 - 12-month Evaluation
 - Final (24-month) Evaluation



Homeland
Security

STUDY in the STATES

OPT Reporting Tools

SEVP Portal

- **Optional – does not update ISSO**
- **Limited functionality**
- **Allows you to see your record and report directly**

- **No option to add new STEM OPT employer or upload Form I-983**
- **No option to complete STEM OPT 6-month validation or evaluations**
- **These updates must be submitted to the ISSO.**

SEVP PORTAL HELP

Students on post-completion practical training should use the SEVP Portal Help section to learn how to use the SEVP Portal and comply with reporting requirements.

STUDENTS: LEARN TO USE THE SEVP PORTAL

In this section you will find:

- Step-by-step instructions.
- Instructional videos.
- Additional SEVP Portal Help



Watch the SEVP Portal Help videos for step-by-step guides to navigating and updating the SEVP Portal.

MAINTAIN INFORMATION

- Navigate the SEVP Portal
- Update User Profile
- Update Employer Information

SEVP PORTAL: GETTING STARTED

- SEVP Portal Overview
- Create an SEVP Portal Account
- Make and Maintain User Password
- SEVP Portal User Guide

Termination of STEM OPT / F-1 Status



OPT authorization will be terminated if you...

Accrue more than **150 days** of unemployment
Change status in U.S. or Re-enter the U.S. in any other immigration status, including visitor status

Are physically absent from U.S. for **five months**

Begin a new program of study at BU or another school



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Periods of Unemployment

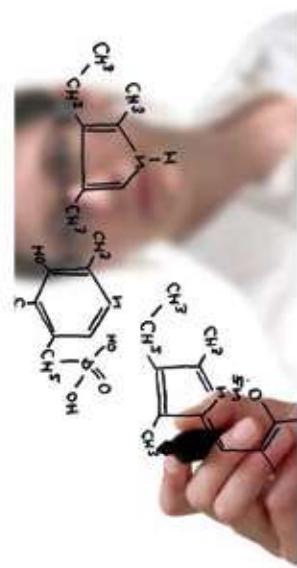
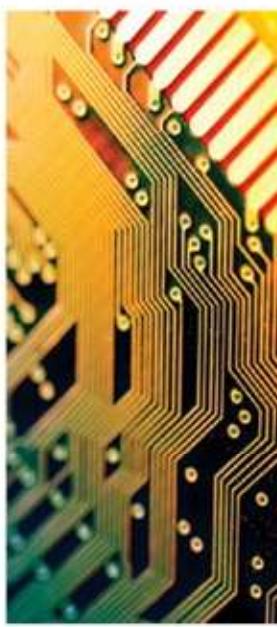
> **90 days** during regular OPT
Additional 60 days = **150 days** (cumulative) for
students approved for 24-Month STEM OPT



Documentation:

- ✓ Paystubs
- ✓ Employer Letter
- ✓ Verifying employment dates

Additional STEM OPT Resources



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

 Official website of the Department of Homeland Security



STUDY in the STATES

[STUDENTS](#)

[SCHOOLS](#)

[BLOG](#)

[TOOLS](#)

STEM OPT

Students, designated school officials (DSOs) and employers can use this page to learn about the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) rules and regulations for the optional practical training (OPT) extension for F-1 students with



Watch the Form I-983, "Training Plan for STEM OPT Students," Tutorial for a step-by-step guide



[About](#) | [Blog](#) | [Glossary](#) | [Contact Us](#)



[View Disclaimer](#)



[STEM OPT HUB](#)



Global Programs
International Students & Scholars Office

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 bu.edu/isso

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

TRANSITION PLAN

- Transition Plan Overview
- Students with STEM OPT Applications Pending on May 10, 2016
- Students with Existing 17-Month STEM OPT EADs on May 10, 2016

TRAINING PLAN

- Form I-983 Overview
- Students and the Form I-983 DSOs and the Form I-983 Employers and the Form I-983

STUDENTS

- Students: Determining STEM OPT Extension Eligibility
- Students: STEM OPT Reporting Requirements

SCHOOLS

- DSOs: Recommending Students for the STEM OPT Extension
- DSOs: STEM OPT Reporting Requirements

EMPLOYERS

- Why STEM OPT is Good for Small Business
- Employer Site Visits

MORE RESOURCES

- STEM OPT Frequently Asked Questions
- Eligible CIP Codes for the STEM OPT Extension

SEVIS Count of OPT Unemployment

Update!

New SEVIS Functionality to Count OPT Unemployment

The 90-day (or 150-day) unemployment periods have been part of the OPT and STEM OPT regulations since 2008.

Unemployment has been manually evaluated by USCIS during applications for change of status or on review of SEVIS records.

SEVIS added functionality to automatically calculate dates of unemployment from the information you have reported to SEVIS.

If your employment reporting is not up-to-date, your SEVIS record may be more easily terminated.



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Dankie Gracias شکر Merci Takk
Спасибо Merci Takk
Köszönjük Terima kasih
Grazie Dziękujemy Dékojame
Dakujeme Vielen Dank Paldies
Kiitos Tänanne teid 謝謝
Thank You Tak
感謝您 Obrigado Teşekkür Ederiz
Σας Ευχαριστούμ uəuədə
Bedankt Děkujemě vám
ありがとうございます Tack