STEM OPT Extension 101 Outline

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About STEM OPT

• STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math

• STEM OPT Extension:
  • Temporary employment that is directly related to an F-1 student’s major
  • Students in eligible STEM majors may apply for a 24-month extension during Post-Completion OPT upon meeting qualifications
  • STEM field must appear on the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) STEM-Designated Degree Program List

STEM-Designated Degree Program List
“Who decides if the job is related to my major?”
- Students must justify how the job is related to their major
- The training plan will document how your job is related to your major

Ask “Is there a clear connection between the job and my major?”
About STEM OPT

• Available to students who have completed an undergraduate or graduate degree in a STEM eligible field from a SEVP-certified and accredited school

• Students must apply during a current period of Post-OPT
  • Students may apply no earlier than 90 days before the end of Post-OPT
  • Use this site to help calculate when to apply - [https://www.timeanddate.com/](https://www.timeanddate.com/)
  • USCIS must have received and receipted your STEM OPT application before your Post-OPT expires

• Allowed twice in a lifetime
  • Students may be eligible for a second extension after earning another qualifying STEM degree at a higher level or obtaining a new initial period of standard 12-month Post-OPT
STEM Eligibility for a Previous Degree

- Students may apply for STEM OPT based on a previously obtained and directly related STEM degree
  - Must be a valid period of 12-month Post-OPT
  - Previous STEM degree must be fully conferred and awarded from an accredited and SEVP-certified institution
  - Previous STEM degree must have been awarded within 10 years preceding the date the DSO recommends the student for STEM OPT
  - Position must be directly related to the Previous STEM degree
  - STEM degree needs to be listed on DHS’s [STEM-Designated Degree Program List](#) at the time the student applies
Employer Requirements

• Employer must be enrolled in USCIS’s E-Verify employment eligibility verification program

• Form I-983 must clearly describe how the employment is directly related to the student’s STEM degree

• F-1 students must be employed full-time by the employer signing Form I-983
Employer Requirements

• Employer must assist with and sign the student’s Training Plan (Form I-983)

• By signing the form, the employer verifies
  • They have sufficient resources and trained personnel available to provide appropriate training in connection with the student’s major
  • The STEM OPT student will not replace a full-time, part-time, temporary, or permanent U.S. employee
  • The opportunity will help the student attain their training objectives

• In the event of termination or departure of a student on STEM OPT, the employer must report the change to ISSS within 5 business days with a letterhead from their HR department
Training Plan (Form I-983)

• Complete Form I-983 with your employer’s assistance
• Submit the form to UNT’s International Student and Scholar Services Office (ISSS) in Marquis 110 or via email to internationaladvising@unt.edu
• Students are responsible for completing this form and submitting it to ISSS with their STEM OPT request
  • The I-983 form must be submitted to ISSS before applying for STEM Extension

• Form Overview
Report Material Changes to Form I-983

• If there are any “material” or employer changes (e.g. different job), an updated I-983 form must be submitted to ISSS via the iNorthTX portal **within 10 days** during the 24-month extension.

• “Material” changes include:
  • EIN changes
  • Salary reduction
  • Hours significantly decrease
  • Worksite address change
  • Change in supervisor
  • A change that renders the training plan or employer attestation inaccurate

• **Both the students and employers** must sign the modified training plan.

• The modified form must be submitted to ISSS at UNT.
Report Material Changes to Form I-983

• Some job/assignment changes do not require modification to the I-983 form
  • Changes are not “material” unless they render inaccurate the information originally listed on the training plan:
    • Nature
    • Purpose
    • Oversight (e.g. change of supervisor)
    • Assessment of the OPT

• Contact ISSS if you have questions about “material” changes
  • internationaladvising@unt.edu
  • 940-565-2195
Change in Employment during STEM OPT

• If you change employers during your 24-month STEM OPT period, follow the instructions below. (If your STEM EAD has not yet been approved by USCIS, contact an advisor at ISSS for more information.)

• Do the following in iNorthTX:
  • Under F-1 Practical Training, click on the STEM OPT Change in Employment Report.
  • Add the new employer information and upload a new I-983 for the new employer.
  • Complete and upload the Final Self-Evaluation (found at the bottom of page 5 on your I-983) for your concluding (previous) employer.

• Update your employment information on the SEVP Portal
• Request ISSS for an updated I20
Report Change in Employment in iNorthTX
Student Requirements

• No more than 150 days of unemployment are allowed between OPT and STEM OPT
  • 90 days on OPT, plus 60 days on STEM

• **Volunteer work is not allowed**
  • STEM Extension requires full-time, paid employment

• If you are employed concurrently by more than one employer while on STEM OPT, you must work a minimum of 20 hours per week with **each employer**
  • Each employer must participate in **the E-Verify system**
  • A **separate I-983** must be submitted for each employer
Report Employment Participation

• 6-Month STEM OPT Participation Reports
  • You must report to ISSS every 6 months with:
    • Legal Name
    • Residential and Mailing addresses
    • Employer name and address
    • Status of current employment/OPT experience

• Submit your 6-month and 18-month STEM OPT participation reports on iNorthTX
Report Employment Participation in iNorthTX
12 and 24-month Student Evaluations

- **12-month Self-Evaluation**
  - Complete top section, Evaluation on Student Progress, on page 5 of the I-983. Refer to sample.
  - Must be signed by hand by the student and employer.
  - Submit to ISSS via iNorthTX (STEM OPT Participation Report) no more than 10 days after the 12-month mark.

- **24-month Self-Evaluation**
  - Complete bottom section, Final Evaluation on Student Progress, on page 5 of the I-983. Refer to sample.
  - Must be signed by hand by the student and employer.
  - Submit to ISSS via iNorthTX (STEM OPT Participation Report) no more than 10 days after the completion of STEM OPT.
When to Apply

SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION DURING THIS TIME

No earlier than 90 days before Post-OPT expiration

USCIS must receive your application before this day

Post-OPT Expiration Date

Note: It can take USCIS about 90 days to process OPT applications - apply early!
After STEM OPT

24 months of STEM OPT

60-day grace period
(Choose from 4 options)

Change Levels: You must apply, be admitted and get a new I-20 before the end of the grace period

Transfer Schools: Receive your I-20 from the new school before the grace period ends! If you transfer while your OPT is valid, the rest of your OPT will be cancelled when the SEVIS is “released”

Change Status: OPT is often a transition to an H-1B visa
  • Contact ISSS if your employer files an H-1B application for you

Return Home
Completing Form I-765
The I-765 is an application you send to USCIS to apply for STEM OPT.

• You can get more information and download the I-765 here: https://www.uscis.gov/i-765

**IMPORTANT UPDATE**

• USCIS will be requiring an updated edition of the Form I-765 dated 08/25/2020 for applications postmarked on or after August 25, 2020.

• The current filing fee required with the application is $410.

• The proposed increase to the filing fee has not been implemented at this time. This situation is rapidly changing. Please monitor our website for up to date information.
I-765
p. 1

Advising
Note:

Type or print “N/A” if a question does not apply to you.

Use the latest edition of the form I-765 - 8/25/2020
Select reason 1.c.

Part 1. Reason for Applying

I am applying for (select only one box):

1.a. □ Initial permission to accept employment.

1.b. □ Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document, or correction of my employment authorization document NOT DUE to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) error.

NOTE: Replacement (correction) of an employment authorization document due to USCIS error does not require a new Form I-765 and filing fee. Refer to Replacement for Card Error in the What is the Filing Fee section of the Form I-765 Instructions for further details.

1.c. □ Renewal of my permission to accept employment. (Attach a copy of your previous employment authorization document.)
Fill in Part 2, 1.a., 1.b. and 1.c. with your legal name that matches your passport.

Fill in lines 2-4 if you have had any previous legal names or if you have used other names in the past. If you’ve changed your name for any reason, including marriage, please list your previous names here.
**Part 2. Information About You (continued)**

**Your U.S. Mailing Address**

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<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.a.</td>
<td>In Care Of Name (if any)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ISSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.b.</td>
<td>Street Number and Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1155 UNION CIR 311067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.d.</td>
<td>City or Town</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DENTON</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.e.</td>
<td>State</td>
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<td></td>
<td>TX</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.f.</td>
<td>ZIP Code</td>
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<td></td>
<td>76203</td>
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</table>

Enter your address information on lines 7.a. - 7.d. if you marked "no" to question #6.

*By choosing the UNT ISSS office address as your mailing address in the I-765, you authorize the ISSS staff to open all USCIS correspondence including receipt notices and EAD cards and make a copy for your file.*
**Other Information**

8. Alien Registration Number (A-Number) (if any)
   - A- 

9. USCIS Online Account Number (if any)

10. Gender
    - Male
    - Female

11. Marital Status
    - Single
    - Married
    - Divorced
    - Widowed

12. Have you previously filed Form I-765?
    - Yes
    - No

13.a. Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?
    - Yes
    - No

**NOTE:** If you answered “No” to Item Number 13.a., skip to Item Number 14. If you answered “Yes” to Item Number 13.a., provide the information requested in Item Number 13.b.
Enter your Social Security Number on line 13.b.

Answer ‘No’ on line 14.

Leave lines 15-17 blank.
Fill in your country of citizenship in line 18.a.

If you hold dual citizenship, enter your second country of citizenship on line 18.b.
Fill in your information on lines 19-20.

**Part 2. Information About You (continued)**

**Place of Birth**

List the city/town/village, state/province, and country where you were born.

19.a. City/Town/Village of Birth

   CITY WHERE YOU WERE BORN

19.b. State/Province of Birth

   STATE OR PROVINCE WHERE YOU WERE BORN

19.c. Country of Birth

   COUNTRY WHERE YOU WERE BORN

20. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)  

   01/01/1900
Fill in your most recent I-94 number on line 21.a.

If you don’t know your I-94, you can get it here: [https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/recent-search](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/recent-search)

Enter your passport information on lines 21.b - 22.e.

If your F1 visa was issued in a previous passport, see the instructions for page 7.

Enter your most recent travel information in lines 22-25.

Enter your most recent SEVIS ID Number in line 26. If you have had more than one SEVIS ID number, see the instructions for Page 7.
For STEM OPT, fill in the eligibility category (c)(3)(c) on line 27.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information About Your Eligibility Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27. Eligibility Category. Refer to the Who May File Form I-765 section of the Form I-765 Instructions to determine the appropriate eligibility category for this application. Enter the appropriate letter and number for your eligibility category below (for example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii)).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. (c)(3)(C) STEM OPT Eligibility Category. If you entered the eligibility category (c)(3)(C) in Item Number 27, provide the information requested in Item Numbers 28.a - 28.c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.a. Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.b. Employer's Name as Listed in E-Verify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.c. Employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a Valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advising Note:
The E-Verify number is different from the EIN number. Please request this information from your employer.

Reference to the Program of Study section on your I-20

Should match employer name on I-983

Application will be denied if this information is incorrect. Ask HR at your employer for their E-Verify number.
Enter your contact information on lines 3 - 4.

Answer question 1.a.

If you had an interpreter or a preparer help you with your application, follow the instructions for line 1.b. or line 2.
Do not fill in page 5 or 6 unless you have used an interpreter or preparer for your application.

Go to page 7 to enter information about your Post Completion OPT and if you have had a previous passport number or SEVIS ID number.

Sign your application!
This must be signed in **black** ink!

Date your application.
You will need to list your Post Completion OPT authorization here.

Fill in page 7 like this. Make sure to include your degree level, major and CIP code (found on your I-20), full-time authorization, SEVIS ID number, and approved OPT dates.
If your F1 visa was issued in a previous passport, you will need to list that passport information here.

Fill in page 7 like this.

If your F1 visa is in your current passport, please leave this blank.

If you have had to renew your passport or if your passport has been lost or stolen since your visa was issued, please list your old passport on your application.
If you have had a previous SEVIS ID number, you will need to list it here.

Fill in page 7 like this. Make sure to include your degree level, major and CIP code (found on your I-20), authorization, SEVIS ID number, and I-20 program dates.

If you have not had any previous SEVIS ID numbers, please leave this blank.
Completing 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)

SECTION 1: STUDENT INFORMATION (Completed by Student)

Student Name (Surname/Primary Name, Given Name): Last Name, First Name

Name of School Recommending STEM OPT: University of North Texas

Name of School Where STEM Degree Was Earned: University of North Texas

SEVIS School Code of School Recommending STEM OPT (including 3-digit suffix): DAL214F00610000

Designated School Official (DSO) Name and Contact Information: Elizabeth Ford internationaladvising@unt.edu 940-565-2195 1155 Union Circle #311067, Denton, TX 76203

Student SEVIS ID No.: Nxxxxxxxxxx

SEVIS ID # on your I-20: xxxxxxxxxx

STEM OPT Requested Period (mm-dd-yyyy): From: MM/DD/YYYY To: MM/DD/YYYY

Qualifying Major and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code: Major and xx.xxxx (CIP code on your I-20)

Level/Type of Qualifying Degree: Bachelor/Master/Ph.D

Date Awarded (mm-dd-yyyy): MM/DD/YYYY

Based on Prior Degree? Yes ☐ No ☐

Employment Authorization Number: USCIS # on your EAD card, 9 digits, XXXX-XXXX-XXXX

Note: Be as accurate as possible when completing the form. It can be filled out by hand or preferably typed.
SECTION 2: STUDENT CERTIFICATION

I declare and affirm under penalty of perjury that the statements and information made herein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that the law provides severe penalties for knowingly and willfully falsifying or concealing a material fact, or using any false document in the submission of this form.

I certify that:

1. I have reviewed, understand, and will adhere to this Training Plan for STEM OPT Students (“Plan”);

2. I will notify the DSO at the earliest available opportunity if I believe that my employer is not providing me with appropriate training as delineated on this Plan;

3. I understand that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) may deny, revoke, or terminate the STEM OPT of students whom DHS determines are not engaging in OPT in compliance with the law, including the STEM OPT of students who are not, or whose employers are not, complying with this Plan;

4. My practical training opportunity is directly related to the STEM degree that qualifies me for the STEM OPT extension; and

5. I will notify the DSO at the earliest available opportunity regarding any material changes to or deviations from this Plan, including but not limited to, any change of Employer Identification Number resulting from a corporate restructuring, any nontrivial reduction in compensation from the amount previously submitted on the Plan that is not tied to a reduction in hours worked, any significant decrease in hours per week that I engage in a STEM training opportunity, and any decrease in hours below the 20-hours-per-week minimum required under this rule.

Signature of Student: __________ [Student's handwritten signature]

Printed Name of Student: __________ [Student's name] Date (mm-dd-yyyy): __________ [MM/DD/YYYY]
### SECTION 3: EMPLOYER INFORMATION (Completed by Employer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer Name:</th>
<th>Street Address:</th>
<th>Suite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name of Employer</strong></td>
<td><strong>Employer address</strong></td>
<td><strong>Suite #</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer Website URL:</th>
<th>Employer ID Number (EIN):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employer website</strong></td>
<td><strong>Employer EIN # : XX-XXXXXXX</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Employer ID Number (EIN):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employer EIN # : XX-XXXXXXX</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Number of Full-Time Employees in U.S.:</th>
<th>North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code:</th>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>OPT Hours Per Week (must be at least 20 hours/week):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hours Per Week</strong></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Start Date of Employment (mm-dd-yyyy):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MM/DD/YYYY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Compensation:</th>
<th>Salary$</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Salary Amount and Frequency:</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Other Compensation (Type and Estimated Amount or Value):</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. If any.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4.</td>
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**Notes:**
- Enter the Employer’s official name. This will be how your employer’s name will be listed on your I-20.
- The Employer’s address does not have to match your worksite address.
- This section is asking for the EIN, not the employer’s E-Verify Number. The E-Verify number is needed on the I-765.
- Look up the NAICS code at [https://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/](https://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/).
I declare and affirm under penalty of perjury that the statements and information made herein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that the law provides severe penalties for knowingly and willfully falsifying or concealing a material fact, or using any false document in the submission of this form.

I certify on behalf of the employer that this Training Plan for STEM OPT Students ("Plan") is approved and that:

1. I have reviewed and understand this Plan, and I will ensure that the supervising Official follows this Plan;
2. I will notify the DSO at the earliest available opportunity regarding any material changes to this Plan, including but not limited to, any change of Employer Identification Number resulting from a corporate restructuring, any reduction in compensation from the amount previously submitted on the Plan that is not tied to a reduction in hours worked, any significant decrease in hours per week that a student engages in a STEM training opportunity, and any decrease in hours below the 20-hours-per-week minimum required under this rule;
3. Within five business days of the termination or departure of the student during the authorized period of OPT, I will report such termination or departure to the DSO (Note: business days do not include federal holidays or weekend days; and an employer shall consider a student to have departed when the employer knows the student has left the practical training opportunity, or when the student has not reported for practical training for a period of five consecutive business days without the consent of the employer); and
4. I will adhere to all applicable regulatory provisions that govern this program (see 8 CFR Part 214), which include, but are not limited to, the following:
   a. The student’s practical training opportunity is directly related to the STEM degree that qualifies the student for the STEM OPT extension, and the position offered to the student achieves the objectives of his or her participation in this training program;
   b. The student will receive on-site supervision and training, consistent with this Plan, by experienced and knowledgeable staff;
   c. The employer has sufficient resources and personnel to provide the specified training program set forth in this Plan; and the employer is prepared to implement that program, including at the location(s) identified in this Plan;
   d. The student on a STEM OPT extension will not replace a full- or part-time, temporary or permanent U.S. worker. The terms and conditions of the STEM practical training opportunity—including duties, hours, and compensation—are commensurate with the terms and conditions applicable to the employer’s similarly situated U.S. workers or, if the employer does not employ and has not recently employed more than two similarly situated U.S. workers in the area of employment, the terms and conditions of other similarly situated U.S. workers in the area of employment; and
   e. The training conducted pursuant to this Plan complies with all applicable Federal and State requirements relating to employment.

Note: DHS may, at its discretion, conduct a site visit of the employer to ensure that program requirements are being met, including that the employer possesses and maintains the ability and resources to provide structured and guided work-based learning experiences consistent with this Plan.

Signature of Employer Official with Signatory Authority: **Employer’s handwritten signature**

Printed Name and Title of Employer Official with Signatory Authority: **Name and title of employer**

Date (mm-dd-yyyy): **MM/DD/YYYY** Printed Name of Employing Organization: **Printed name of company**

Notes: This form needs to be signed by a company employee with signatory authority; it does not need to be your supervisor.
### Notes:
- Enter the actual physical location where you will be employed, i.e. where will you be physically located. This may differ from the company’s headquarters or primary address. This address will be listed on your SEVIS record and I-20.
- The supervisor must be an employee of the same company where you are employed.
- If you are physically working at a client’s worksite, you should list the client’s worksite address. However, the supervisor still needs to be an employee of your company, not the client’s.

### Table: Employer Site Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employer Name</td>
<td>Enter the employer’s site name, which may be the same as employer name in Section 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Name</td>
<td>Enter the exact address of the work site where the STEM practical training will take place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor's Name</td>
<td>Official's Title: Supervisor's title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor's Email</td>
<td>Official's Phone Number: Supervisor's Phone Number</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Advising Note:** Collaborate with your supervisor when completing this section.

### Section 5 (cont’d)

**Student Role:** Describe the student's role with the employer and how that role is directly related to enhancing the student's knowledge obtained through his or her qualifying STEM degree. Describe what tasks and assignments the student will carry out during the training and how these relate to the student’s STEM degree. The plan must cover a specific span of time, and detail specific goals and objectives.

**Goals and Objectives:** Describe how the assignment(s) with the employer will help the student achieve his or her specific objectives for work-based learning related to his or her STEM degree. The description must both specify the student's goals regarding specific knowledge, skills, or techniques as well as the means by which they will be achieved. Describe the specific skills, knowledge, and techniques the student will learn or apply; how the student will achieve the goals set out for his or her training; and the training curriculum including the timeline.

**Employer Oversight:** Explain how the employer provides oversight and supervision of individuals filling positions such as that being filled by the named F-1 student. If the employer has a training program or related policy in place that controls such oversight and supervision, please describe. Explain how the employer provides oversight and supervision of individuals filling positions such as that being filled by the named F-1 student. If the employer has a training program or related policy in place that controls such oversight and supervision, a description of this program or policy may suffice to answer the question.

**Measures and Assessments:** Explain how the employer measures and confirms whether individuals filling positions such as that being filled by the named F-1 student are acquiring new knowledge and skills. If the employer has a training program or related policy in place that controls such measures and assessments, please describe. Explain how the employer measures and confirms whether individuals filling positions such as that being filled by the named F-1 student are acquiring new knowledge and skills. If the employer has a training program or related policy in place that controls such measures and assessments, a description of this program or policy may suffice to answer the question.
Notes:
• Additional remarks. Complete only if there are pertinent parts of your training that are not covered elsewhere on the form I-983.
Notes: Section 6 needs to be signed by a company employee with signatory authority; it does not need to be your supervisor.
The first 12-month evaluation is based off of EAD start date, not employer start date.

The top section of page 5 - Evaluation on Student Progress - needs to be completed 12 months after you started your STEM OPT work authorization, based off the start date on your STEM OPT EAD card. It does not matter when you actually started work at your current employer.

This needs to be signed by a company employee with signatory authority; it does not need to be your supervisor.
Notes:

- The bottom section of page 5 - Final Evaluation on Student Progress - needs to be completed 1) whenever you discontinue employment with a specific employer while on STEM OPT and 2) 24 months after you started your STEM OPT work authorization, based off the start date on your STEM OPT EAD card.
- This needs to be signed by a company employee with signatory authority; it does not need to be your supervisor.
How to Apply

• At the end of this presentation take a quiz (must score 100%) and fill out application documents.

• Submit quiz score to ISSS Office (Marquis 110) or via email to internationaladvising@unt.edu and apply for a STEM OPT I-20
  • You must submit Form I-983 with the request for the STEM OPT I-20
  • You are required to send your application to USCIS within 60 days of your I-20 being issued

• Pay OPT Case Management Fee online
  • This is separate from the USCIS application fee
  • Must be paid before picking up new I-20

• Send all required documents to the address listed on the application
Application Checklist

• $410 check or money order payable to Department of Homeland Security
• 2 color passport-style photos
  • Lightly write your name and I-94 number on the back of both
• Completed I-765 form (refer to the instructions listed in this tutorial on how to complete the I-765 form)
• Signed copy of pages 1 & 2 of the I-20 showing STEM OPT recommendation
• Copy of I-94 card (both sides) or electronic record
• Copy of passport (expiration/biographical page)
• Copy of F-1 visa stamp or I-797A (Approval Notice) if you changed status to F-1 while in the US
• Copy of your diploma and/or official transcript showing date degree was conferred
Assembling your Packet

• You will be emailed when your OPT I-20 is ready
  • The *OPT Case Management Fee* must be paid before you can receive your I-20

• If you bring or email (internationaladvising@unt.edu) all required STEM OPT packet documentation, an advisor will review the packet to ensure accuracy before you mail it
Mailing your Packet

• Copy the entire packet for your records
• If you listed an **address in Texas** on the I-765, mail the packet through one of the following methods:

**USPS Deliveries (Post Office)**
USCIS
P.O. Box 805373
Chicago, IL 60680
Mail “Certified mail, return receipt requested”

**For FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries**
USCIS
Attn: I-765 C03
131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor
Chicago, IL 60603-5517

• If your address on the I-765 is **not in Texas**, click [here](#) to find the nearest USCIS office and mail accordingly
• If you have any questions, contact ISSS
Next Steps

• USCIS will cash your check and send a receipt which helps in 2 ways:
  • Check your case status at uscis.gov (use the YSC number)
  • Confirms they received the application and are working on it
    • Normal processing time is 60-110 days

• Once processed, USCIS will send the EAD

The receipt and card will be mailed to the address you listed on the I-765
“Can I work while waiting on my STEM Extension EAD?”
• You may work up to 180 days after the end date of your Post-OPT as long as you have filed your STEM OPT application with USCIS timely and it’s pending

“How do I maintain status for STEM OPT?”
• Do not go to school or pursue a new degree while on OPT (both post-completion and STEM)
  • New degrees require a new I-20 and full-time enrollment
  • Do not accrue more than 150 days of unemployment during Post-OPT & STEM OPT combined
• You must report any changes in name, local address, or employment within 10 days of the change
  • [Report Changes here](#)
• Keep records of all employment
  • Employer, dates of employment, title, hours worked, relation to your degree, etc.
  • You will need this information when applying for future benefits through USCIS
Frequently Asked Questions

“What is my status while on STEM OPT?”
• F-1 status

“Do I still need to get my I-20 signed for travel after my program completion?”
• Yes, if you plan to travel outside the U.S. and the I-20 has not been signed within the last 6 months
• You may request a reprint from ISSS at least 3 weeks prior to your departure

“Can I travel while on STEM OPT?”
• Applied for STEM OPT, but no EAD: No. You should not travel while the application is pending.
• After approval with STEM OPT EAD: Yes. Travel with valid I-20 endorsed for travel within the last 6 months, passport, visa, EAD card, and letter from employer.
Frequently Asked Questions

“What if my visa is expired?”
• Visas do not impact your status while in the U.S.
• If traveling outside the U.S., you must renew your visa before returning
• Do not attempt to renew your visa without a job while on STEM OPT
• To renew your visa you will need:
  1. Valid I-20 endorsed for travel within the last 6 months
  2. Valid passport
  3. EAD
  4. Letter from employer

“What if I decide to return home permanently?”
• Notify ISSS by filling out an Ending Studies Form
Thank You and Good Luck!

• Review all the information in this presentation carefully before taking the quiz

• You can find the quiz and all application documents here
  • Remember, you must score a 100% on the quiz for it to be accepted!