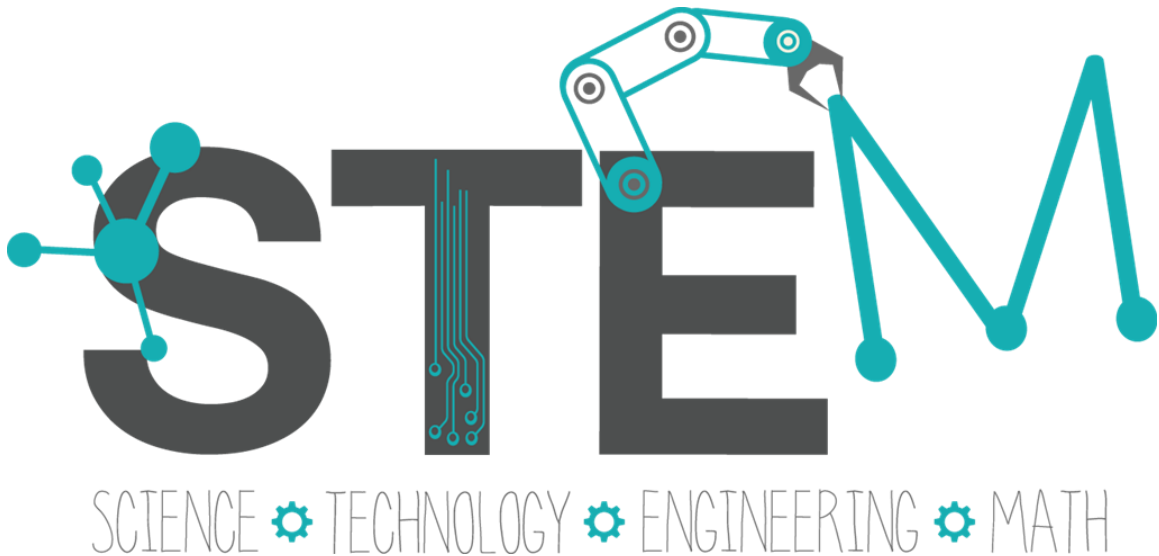


Optional Practical Training (OPT) STEM Application Instructions for STEM Eligible Students



The Department of Homeland Security grants STEM OPT extensions to eligible F-1 students who are currently in a period of post-completion OPT once per degree level (i.e., Bachelors, Masters, or Doctorate). A student may participate twice in the STEM OPT extension over the course of their academic career. To participate twice in the STEM OPT extension, a student must earn a second qualifying degree at a higher education level and must be participating in an initial period of OPT at the time they apply to USCIS for their second STEM OPT extension. In some cases, students may be eligible to use a prior STEM degree to qualify for their second STEM OPT extension.

When to Apply:

- No more than three months before the initial OPT expires
- Must be received at USCIS before the last day of initial OPT

OPT STEM Extension Qualifications:

- Have a degree in an eligible STEM field from a Student and Exchange Visitor Program certified school that is accredited at the time the student submits the OPT STEM extension application to USCIS
- Have a sponsoring employer that is enrolled in USCIS's E-Verify employment eligibility verification program
- Sponsoring employer must provide the student applicant with formal training and learning objectives
- Working minimum of 20 hours per week for the employer
- Employer must be paying you a prevailing wage
- Be in a valid period of OPT at the time of submission

STEM Designated Degree Program List:

The STEM Designated Degree Program List is a complete list of fields of study that the Department of Homeland Security considers to fall under Science, Technology, Engineering and Math fields of study for the purposes of the 24-month OPT extension. The list below designates the only CIP codes that qualify for STEM extension.

View the complete list here: https://www.cuny.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/stem-list_0.pdf

Previously Obtained STEM Degrees:

If you are an F-1 student participating in a 12-month period of post-completion OPT based on a non-STEM degree, you may be eligible to use a prior STEM degree earned from a U.S. institution of higher education to apply for a STEM OPT extension. You must have received both degrees from currently accredited and SEVP-certified institutions, and cannot have already received a STEM OPT extension based on this prior degree. The practical training opportunity also must be directly related to the previously obtained STEM degree.

Example: If you are currently participating in OPT based on a Master's degree in Business Administration but you previously received a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics, you may be able to apply for a STEM OPT extension based on your Bachelor's degree as long as it is from an accredited U.S. college or university and the OPT employment opportunity is directly related to your Bachelor's degree in Mathematics

Future STEM Degree:

If you enroll in a new academic program in the future and earn another qualifying STEM degree at a higher educational level, you may be eligible for one additional 24-month STEM OPT extension.

Example: If you receive a 24-month STEM OPT extension based on your Bachelors in Engineering and you later earn a Master's in Engineering, you may apply for an additional 24-month STEM OPT extension based on your Master's degree

Reporting Requirements:

You will be required to report your employment to the Department of International Student & Scholar Services every 6 months. You should use the link below:

<https://goo.gl/forms/mq7a0NfkEPmOW1G33>

As part of this reporting, STEM OPT student must confirm the validity of their Student and Exchange Visitor Program Information System information, including:

- Legal name
- Current address
- Employer name
- Employer address
- Status of current employment experience
 - Any material changes to, or material deviations from, the students formal training plan

Evaluation on the I-983 form must be submitted annually.

Changing employers:

In order to properly change employers during your two-year OPT STEM Extension, you will need to submit a new and complete I-983 form to the Dept. of International Student and Scholar Services. This must be submitted within 10 days of beginning this new employment.

More You Should Know:

- During the initial OPT and subsequent 24 month OPT extension, you may be unemployed for no more than a total of 150 days.
- You may continue to work on your expired OPT approved EAD for up to 180 days while your STEM extension application is pending if you meet these conditions:
 - You are currently in a period of post-completion OPT
 - You submitted the proper application to USCIS prior to your OPT expiration date
- You must be participating in an initial period of OPT at the time that you apply to USCIS for the STEM OPT extension.

Please note: The Eligibility Category to be listed on the I-765 form is (c) (3) (C)

OPT Extension Acknowledgement Form

Student Information

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____ SEVIS Number: N _____

OPT Expiration Date: ___/___/___ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

NOTE: By default, your extension will be for 24 months after your current OPT ends. (There can be no gap between the end of your OPT and the start of your extension)

Student Acknowledgement

Please check each box after reading the statement and sign below:

- I understand that my employment must be related to my field of study.
- I understand that I am required to report changes, in my name, address, name/location of my employer and/or any periods of unemployment, to the international student office within 10 days of the change.
- I understand that my cumulative unemployment over the duration of both my OPT and STEM OPT extension cannot exceed 150 days.
- I understand that I must make a validation report of my employment every 6 months. I must also complete the mid-point and end of training evaluations in the form I-983 and submit these to the International student office.
- I understand that violation of any one of these terms can lead to the termination of my F-1 status.

By signing below, I certify that I have read and understood **all of the above**

Signature: _____

Date: _____

OPT STEM Extension Application Checklist

Submit to Dept. of International Student & Scholar Services

- OPT Extension Acknowledgement Form
- I-983 Training Plan for STEM OPT Students (Do not send to USCIS)
 - o <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/i983.pdf>

Prepare for Application

- Two passport sized photos (2x2, all white background)
 - o Lightly print your name and SEVIS ID on the back of each photo
 - o Photos must have been taken within the last 30 days and never been used
- Check or money order for \$410 made out to US Department of Homeland Security
- I-765 Employment Application (Typed)
 - o <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>
- Copy of the identity page in the passport
- Copy of your F1 visa
- Print out of your most recent I-94
 - o <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home#section>
- Copy of all of your CCNY I-20's
- Copy of EAD card from previously granted OPT (front and back)
- Official transcript from CCNY or copy of your degree
- Letter from sponsoring employer

Below only if Applicable:

- I-797 Notice of Action, if issued a change of status within the U.S.
- Copy of all I-20's from previous schools attended in the U.S.

To be completed by the Int'l Student & Scholar Services

- OPT Extension Request I-20

Notes: _____

Completing the form, I-983

Section 1:

DSO Contact information:

Angelique Cordero
acordero@ccny.cuny.edu
212-650-8106

OR

Maribel Morua
mmorua@ccny.cuny.edu
212-650-8106

Qualifying major and qualification:

CIP code: This is the number that is found on your I-20 it is directly following your major.

PROGRAM OF STUDY

EDUCATION LEVEL	MAJOR 1	MAJOR 2
MASTER'S	Economics, General 45.0601	None 00.0000

In this example the CIP code would be 45.0601

Employment authorization number:

This number is found on your current EAD card under the heading "USCIS#"

Section 2:

Compensation:

Here, enter the amount that you will be paid for your work, your salary. Please state how you are quoting the compensation, Ex. \$12/hour, \$4,000/month, \$48,000/year. Remember your wage must be comparable with market wages for your position.

Enter in the subsequent fields any other forms of compensation such as allowances and bonuses that you will be receiving.

Section 5:

Site name & address:

These details are specific to where you will be working, example if you are working for the subsidiary of a large company provide the information of the subsidiary of that company and the location of the subsidiary.

Student's role and the training program's direct relationship to the student's qualifying degree:

(What you plan to learn)

Clearly describe the tasks and assignments that the student will be carrying out during the training and how they relate to the student's STEM degree. This plan must provide an approximate timeline of the tasks and the goals and expected learning outcomes of those tasks.

Goals and objectives: (How you plan to learn it)

Clearly describe the specific skills the student will develop as well as the knowledge and techniques that the student is expected to learn from the tasks. Include how the tasks will help the student develop the skills, learn the techniques and gain knowledge, pertinent to the

student's STEM degree. Please include an approximate timeline of what the student should learn and by when.

Employer oversight:

Explain how the employer will go about supervising the student, this is to be explained generally of the organization, (how does the employer supervise anyone in the position that the student will be filling). If the employer has a training program or specific policies, example reporting on tasks etc. Detailing these procedures and/or policies will suffice for this section.

Measures and assessments:

Here you will explain how the employer intends to evaluate your work and how they judge your degree of success or failure. Similarly, to the oversight section, if the organization has a training program or specific policies in place that controls such measures and assessments, a description of these procedures and/or policies will suffice for this section.

Section 6:

Evaluation on Student Progress:

Student evaluations are a shared responsibility of both the student and the employer to ensure that the student's practical training goals are being satisfactorily met. The student is responsible for conducting the self-evaluation based on his or her own training progress. The employer must review and sign the self-evaluation to attest to its accuracy.

The student will submit the first assessment within twelve months and the final evaluation that recaps all the training and knowledge acquired during the complete training period.