



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

STEM OPT Extension



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

INTERNATIONAL ADVISING



Overview

- Who Qualifies?
- What's Different?
- Mentoring and Training Program
- Procedures
- Resources



Who Qualifies?

- Students who are currently in post-completion OPT and hold a degree in an eligible STEM field. Find the most current STEM List here: <https://www.ice.gov/sevis/schools#dhs-stem-designated-degree-program-list-and-cip-code-nomination-process>
- Students may use prior STEM degree if
 - Obtained at a SEVP-certified school in the U.S.
 - Degree was at the bachelor's level or higher
 - Degree was earned less than 10 years from date of application
- Students must be employed by companies enrolled in the DHS E-Verify program



What's Different

- Job requirements are stricter
 - Must be full-time paid position at E-Verify enrolled employer
- Cannot be self-employed or start your own business
- Consulting or contracting *may* be okay
 - Must have some sort of supervisor-supervisee relationship
- Addition of a mentoring and training program



Mentoring and Training Program

- Federal regulations require that a formal training plan be created between the student and employer
- The training program must:
 - Clearly lists the student's learning objectives
 - Affirm the employer's commitment to helping the student achieve those objectives



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. 1663-XXXX
EXPIRATION DATE: 06-06-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: _____		

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:

- I have reviewed, understand, and will adhere to this Training Plan for STEM OPT Students ("Plan");
- 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;
- 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;
- My practical training opportunity is directly related to the STEM degree that qualifies me for the STEM OPT extension; and
- 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: _____

Printed Name of Student: _____ Date: (mm-dd-yyyy) _____



Form I-983

- Five Sections
 - Student Information (Completed By Student)
 - Student Certification (Completed By Student)
 - Employer Information (Completed By Employer)
 - Employer Certification (Completed By Employer)
 - Training Plan for STEM OPT Students (Completed By Employer)



Form I-983

- Training Plan for STEM OPT Students (The Plan)
 - The employer must complete this section
 - However, this should be a conversation between you and your employer
 - The Plan must contain:
 - Student Role
 - Goals and Objectives
 - Employer Oversight
 - Measures and Assessments
 - Employer must certify the plan



When to apply for STEM OPT

- Filing Window for STEM OPT: **Within 90 days of the standard OPT end date.** Students must submit their STEM OPT application to USCIS when within 90 days from the standard OPT end date. No applications will be accepted by USCIS outside of the filing window.
- Due to the Filing Window, International Advising will work with students on STEM OPT applications when within 90 days of the standard OPT end date.
- In addition, **students must file applications online with USCIS no later than 30 days after the recommendation for STEM OPT has been entered in SEVIS.**
- Students who submit their STEM OPT application to USCIS during the Filing Window (within 90 days of their standard OPT end date) may continue working up to 150 days beyond the standard OPT end date in cases where the STEM OPT is still pending with USCIS.



How to Apply

Step 1 – Complete Form I-983: <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/i983.pdf>

- This form and any updated forms during STEM OPT are kept on file with UNO International Advising;
- This form is not included in the STEM OPT application to USCIS at this time.

Step 2 – Submit the STEM OPT Request form in iGlobal – upload your completed and signed Form I-983 in order to receive an updated I-20 recommending STEM OPT from International Advising.

Step 3 - Go to <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765> and click on the “file online” button. Create or login to your account, prepare the I-765, and upload the documentation requested. Be prepared to upload the following:

- Copy of I-20 recommending STEM OPT from International Advising – signed by the advisor and you
- Copy of passport, visa, and I-94
- One passport photo taken within the past 30 days
- Official transcript showing STEM OPT degree and coursework
- Copy of your standard OPT EAD card

Step 4 – **It is strongly recommended to make an appointment with an international student advisor to review your I-765 and supporting documents before submitting your application on the USCIS website.**

In person is preferred when possible; bring your laptop to show an advisor your I-765 and supporting documents before paying and submitting your application to USCIS.

Step 5 – Submit your STEM OPT application on the USCIS website. This will include paying the filing fee. You can find the current filing fee here: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>

Important: You must submit and pay for your I-765 with USCIS within **30 days of the recommendation for STEM OPT** being entered in SEVIS by International Advising.



Expectations after filing with USCIS

- You will receive a receipt immediately upon submission when filing online with USCIS.
- Generally, expect 2-3 months to receive your STEM OPT EAD card to begin working. However, processing time can be outside of this range – both faster or longer. We've seen a few weeks to five months. Premium processing is available for an additional cost – not advisable in most cases for STEM OPT applications.
- USCIS processing times: <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/>
- Check case status/update address here: [Tools | USCIS](#)



After STEM OPT is Approved

- Log into iGlobal here <https://iglobal.nebraska.edu>. Submit the e-form “Upload OPT/STEM OPT Card – Work Authorization EAD under F-1 Practical Training. Include the front and back of the card.
- Provide your employer with a copy of your STEM OPT EAD card.
- Unemployment during STEM OPT is limited to 150 days (90 days OPT + 60 days STEM OPT). SEVP may terminate records of students who have gone beyond 150 days of unemployment.



STEM OPT

General Reporting Requirements

- The following changes must be reported within 10 business days to an international student advisor:
 - **Legal name change**
 - **Residential local/current address change** (report this using the SEVP Portal and make the same update in MavLINK so that UNO has your address on file)
 - **Change of employment** – Within 10 days of your start date, submit a new I-983 for the new employer to International Advising through iGlobal (F-1 Practical Training – STEM OPT - Report a Change of Employer E-form). International Advising will update SEVIS; the SEVP Portal cannot be used for this update.
 - **Loss of or leaving an employer** – Within 10 days of your end date, submit the end date and a self-evaluation signed by you and the employer to International Advising through iGlobal (F-1 Practical Training – STEM OPT – Upload a Self-Evaluation). International Advising will update SEVIS.
 - **I-983 changes or deviations** – submit an updated training plan International Advising at unointladvising@unomaha.edu and specify what changed. International Advising will update SEVIS, if necessary.



STEM OPT Six Month Reports

- The student must report to an international student advisor every six months confirming (even if there have been no changes):
 - Legal name
 - Residential or local/current address
 - Employment information
- This requirement is extended if you are under the cap-gap extension.
- Submit the six month report in iGlobal (F-1 Practical Training – STEM OPT – Six Month Report).



STEM OPT

Annual Self-Evaluations

#1 – The first annual self-evaluation is required 12 months after the STEM OPT start date. This is a self-evaluation of your performance, according to your training plan. It is due no later than 10 days after your first year of STEM OPT ends and can be submitted up to 30 days early.

#2 – The final annual self-evaluation is required at the end of the STEM OPT two-year period. It is due no later than 10 days after your STEM OPT ends and can be submitted up to 30 days early.

You and your employer must sign the annual self-evaluations and submit the forms to International Advising using iGlobal – F-1 Practical Training – STEM OPT - Upload a Self-Evaluation E-form.



iGlobal Screenshots

Home

Currently Enrolled Student

F-1 Practical Training





J-1 Scholar Services

Letter Request

New Student

F-1 Practical Training

Tasks

-  Curricular Practical Training Request Form - UNO
-  Optional Practical Training (OPT)
-  **STEM Optional Practical Training**
-  Upload OPT/STEM OPT Card - Work Authorization EAD - UNO



iGlobal Screenshots

- Home
- Currently Enrolled Student
- F-1 Practical Training**
- J-1 Scholar Services
- Letter Request
- New Student

STEM Optional Practical Training

STEM Optional Practical Training

E-Forms

- OPTIONAL**
[STEM OPT Report a Change of Employer - UNO](#)
- OPTIONAL**
[STEM OPT Request Form - UNO](#)
- OPTIONAL**
[STEM OPT Six Month Report - UNO](#)
- OPTIONAL**
[STEM OPT Upload a Self-Evaluation - UNO](#)



Resources

- International Programs Student Portal: iGlobal: <https://iglobal.nebraska.edu>
- SEVP Help Hub: <http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov>
- STEM LIST: <https://www.ice.gov/sevis/schools#dhs-stem-designated-degree-program-list-and-cip-code-nomination-process>
- Form I-983: <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/i983.pdf>
- Form I-765: <http://www.uscis.gov/i-765>
- USCIS Processing Times: <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/>
- USCIS Tools (check case status, change address): [Tools | USCIS](#)
- Study in the States: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov>



International Advising

International Advisors are available to answer questions about applying for OPT by email or by appointment in person or on zoom.



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