



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. See the STEM List here: <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/stem-list.pdf>
- 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?



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



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)

OIS APPROVAL NO. 16E3-XXXX
EXPIRATION DATE: 30/00-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

- Student Information
 - Some of this information can be taken from your I-20
 - Only check “Yes” on Based on Prior Degree if your STEM degree was earned at a different educational level
 - Employment Authorization Number is the USCIS number on your OPT card
 - You must then certify your answers in section 2



Form I-983

- Employer information
 - Your employer must complete this information
 - Employer must certify and affirm in Section 3



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



Form I-983

- Self-evaluations – there are two required
 - You must complete a self-evaluation of your performance, according to your training plan, within the first 12 months of your STEM OPT. It is due no later than 10 days after your first year of STEM OPT ends.
 - You must also complete a final self-evaluation at the end of your STEM OPT. It is due no later than 10 days after your second year of STEM OPT ends.
 - You and your employer must sign the evaluation and submit the evaluation to international advising at unointladvising@unomaha.edu.



Procedures



When to apply for STEM OPT

- International Advising will work with students on STEM OPT applications when within 90 days of the standard OPT end date.
- Students may apply to USCIS when within 90 days from the standard OPT end date.
- Students must file applications by mail to the [USCIS Lockbox Facilities](#) no later than 30 days of your I-20 recommending STEM OPT being issued.
- Students must apply before standard OPT ends in order to continue working up to 150 days beyond your standard OPT end date while your STEM OPT may be pending.



Document Checklist

- Students must gather the following items to apply for STEM OPT:
 - **Completed** Form I-983: <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/i983.pdf>
 - This form is kept on file with UNO International Advising; it is not required in the application materials mailed to USCIS at this time.
 - **Official** transcript showing STEM degree and coursework
 - Completed Form I-765 printed from <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765> - must contain your original/wet signature in ink when sent to USCIS
 - Completed Form G-1145 printed from <https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145>
 - Check/money order payable to "U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security" for the Filing Fee: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765> - see Filing Fee for the current fee amount
 - 2 passport photos – taken within 30 days of application to USCIS
 - Copy of passport ID page and visa page
 - Print I-94 from i94.cbp.dhs.gov
 - Copy of your standard OPT EAD card
 - Copy of I-20 with recommendation for STEM OPT – this will be issued by International Advising after review of a completed and signed Form I-983.



Application Procedures

(if you choose to have International Advising review your application materials before mailing them to USCIS)

- Prepare the required documents and save them to a zip drive to show an international student advisor during your OPT zoom appointment.
- Request a zoom appointment [here](#).
- If you have provided a complete and signed Form I-983, an International Advisor will issue an I-20 recommending STEM OPT and email it to you following your OPT zoom appointment; SEVP is allowing for electronic issuing of I-20's at this time. You will need to print and sign the I-20 and send a copy with your application to USCIS.
- You must file your application by mail to the [USCIS Lockbox Facilities](#) no later than 30 days of your I-20 issue date and before your standard OPT ends.



Application Procedures

(if you choose not to have your application materials reviewed by International Advising)

- Submit your completed Form I-983 to unointladvicing@unomaha.edu.
- Form I-983 will be reviewed by an International Student Advisor within 5 business days; an I-20 recommending STEM OPT will be emailed to you.
- Print and sign the I-20 recommending STEM OPT; send a copy along with your application to USCIS.
- Gather your documents to send to USCIS.
- You must file your application by mail to the [USCIS Lockbox Facilities](#) no later than 30 days of your I-20 issue date and before your standard OPT ends.



After STEM OPT is Granted

- Provide your employer with a copy of your STEM OPT EAD card.
- Email unointladvising@unomaha.edu a copy of your STEM OPT EAD card; include the front and back side of the card.



After STEM OPT is Granted

- You may not accumulate more than 150 days of unemployment (90 days OPT + 60 days STEM OPT)



After STEM OPT is Granted 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 – submit a new I-983 to unointladvising@unomaha.edu within 10 days of beginning new employment. Include the date that your previous employment ended as well as the new employment start date. International Advising will update SEVIS; the SEVP Portal cannot be used for this update.
 - Loss of employment – email unointladvising@unomaha.edu within 10 days of losing your employment with your last date of employment. International Advising will update SEVIS.
 - I-983 changes or deviations – submit an updated training plan to unointladvising@unomaha.edu and specify what changed. International Advising will update SEVIS, if necessary.



After STEM OPT is Granted Six Month Reports and 12 and 24 Month Self-Evaluations

- 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.
- Students are also required to complete an initial self-evaluation within 12 months of STEM OPT and a final evaluation at the end of STEM OPT. See last page of the I-983 Training Plan.



After STEM OPT is Granted Six Month Reports and 12 and 24 Month Self-Evaluations

- Mark your calendar for every six months from the date your STEM OPT begins. Your STEM OPT begins the day after your standard OPT ends. After six months on STEM OPT, the first six month report is due. The report is due again at 12 months, 18 months, and 24 months.
- When you submit this report at 12 and 24 months, remember that your STEM OPT evaluation is also due.
- Complete the report, even if no information changed.
- Link to Six Month Report:
https://unomaha.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe3/form/SV_ac7mzIM7MQznCmN.
- International Advising will receive your report and verify your information in SEVIS.



Resources

- SEVP Help Hub: <http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov>
- STEM LIST: <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/stem-list.pdf>
- Form I-983: <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/i983.pdf>
- Form I-765: <http://www.uscis.gov/i-765>
- Form G-1145: <https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145>
- Find your I-94 here: <i94.cbp.dhs.gov>
- USCIS Lockbox Facility Addresses: <https://www.uscis.gov/forms/forms-information/uscis-phoenix-and-dallas-lockbox-facilities>
- Link to UNO's STEM OPT Six Month Report Form: https://unomaha.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe3/form/SV_ac7mzIM7MQznCmN



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unointladvising@unomaha.edu

<http://world.unomaha.edu>

6001 Dodge St, ASH 241

Omaha, NE 68132

Phone: (402) 554-2293

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha

