24-Month STEM OPT Extension

Presented by:

International Students and Scholars
Center for International Education
California State University, Long Beach
This tutorial will help you:

- Learn the 24-Month STEM OPT extension Eligibility Requirements.
- Understand the application deadlines & process.
- Understand the key elements of Form I-983.
- Learn What is necessary to Maintain F-1 status including the Mandatory Reporting requirements.
- Review Frequently asked questions.
- Recognize key Resources.
What is the 24-Month STEM OPT extension?

- The 24-Month STEM OPT extension allows students with STEM designated degrees the opportunity to extend their current employment authorization for an additional 24-Months.
24-Month STEM OPT Eligibility
Eligibility is determined by 4 components:

1. Have a STEM OPT qualifying job
2. Have a STEM OPT qualifying employer
3. Have qualifying degree
4. Are currently in post-completion OPT
QUALIFYING DEGREE

- Degree program must be at one of the following educational levels: Bachelor's; Master's; or Doctoral.

- The major field of study of the degree program must have a CIP code that appears on the DHS STEM OPT Designated Programs List.

- The STEM OPT extension may be based either on the current degree or a STEM Designated degree conferred no more than 10 years prior.

### STEM Designated Degree Program list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIP Code Two-Digit Series</th>
<th>2018 CIP Code</th>
<th>CIP Code Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.0308</td>
<td>Agroecology and Sustainable Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.0901</td>
<td>Animal Sciences, General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.0902</td>
<td>Agricultural Animal Breeding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.0903</td>
<td>Animal Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.0904</td>
<td>Animal Nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.0905</td>
<td>Dairy Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.0906</td>
<td>Livestock Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.0907</td>
<td>Poultry Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.0909</td>
<td>Animal Sciences, Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.1001</td>
<td>Food Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.1002</td>
<td>Food Technology and Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.1099</td>
<td>Food Science and Technology, Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.1101</td>
<td>Plant Sciences, General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.1102</td>
<td>Agronomy and Crop Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEM Designated Degree Program List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIP Code Two-Digit Series</th>
<th>2020 CIP Code</th>
<th>CIP Code Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.0308</td>
<td>Agroecology and Sustainable Agriculture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.0901</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Agricultural Animal Breeding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.0903</td>
<td>Animal Health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.0904</td>
<td>Animal Nutrition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.0301</td>
<td>Data Processing and Data Processing Technology/Technician.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.0401</td>
<td>Information Science/Studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.0501</td>
<td>Computer Systems Analysis/Analyst.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.0701</td>
<td>Computer Science.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.0802</td>
<td>Data Modeling/Warehousing and Database Administration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your I-20

PROGRAM OF STUDY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION LEVEL</th>
<th>MAJOR 1</th>
<th>MAJOR 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MASTER’S</td>
<td>Computer Science 11.0701</td>
<td>None 00.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY</th>
<th>ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES</th>
<th>EARLIEST ADMISSION DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Student is proficient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

START OF CLASSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>START OF CLASSES</th>
<th>PROGRAM START/END DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 JANUARY 2014</td>
<td>21 JANUARY 2014 - 20 MAY 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUALIFYING EMPLOYER

The regulations require any job undertaken during a 24-month STEM OPT extension to be with an employer who meets the following conditions:

- The employer is enrolled in E-Verify
- The employer has an IRS Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- The employer has sufficient resources and personnel available to provide the training specified in the Form I-983
- The employer signs the Form I-983 Training Plan, agreeing to the wage, working conditions, supervision, site visit, and reporting obligations set forth on the form and in the regulations-
  - Employer will provide compensation to the STEM OPT student commensurate to that provided to similarly situated U.S. workers
QUALIFYING JOB

• The job must be directly related to the degree that qualifies the student for the STEM OPT extension.
• The job must be a paid job therefore volunteer or unpaid positions do not qualify.
• The job's compensation and working conditions must be "commensurate with terms and conditions applicable to the employer's similarly situated U.S. workers in the area of employment."
• The student on a STEM OPT extension cannot replace a full- or part-time, temporary or permanent U.S. worker
• Any job undertaken must be for at least 20 hours per week.
• The job must comply with "all applicable Federal and State requirements relating to employment."
The job must be in the context of a **bona-fide employer-employee relationship.**

- Self-employment does not constitute a qualifying job for purposes of a 24-month STEM OPT extension.
- F-1 students seeking STEM OPT extensions may be employed by new “start-up” businesses so long as all regulatory requirements are met.

According to DHS, the following do not constitute a bona-fide employer-employee relationship and are therefore not “apt” for the STEM OPT extension:

- "multiple employer arrangements"
- "sole proprietorships"
- "employment through “temp” agencies"
- "employment through consulting firm arrangements that provide labor for hire, and"
- "other relationships that do not constitute a bona fide employer-employee relationship"
Application Process
General Application Deadline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students in OPT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply as early as <strong>90 days</strong> before the end of your post-completion OPT authorization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You cannot apply during the 60 days grace period following the end of post-completion OPT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>File application within 60 days from the day the DSO request the extension and before OPT EAD expires.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**24-STEM OPT Extension Timeline**

1. **Post Completion OPT**
   - Application Window
   - 90 days before post completion OPT expires

2. **6 Months**
   - First Validation Report Due.

3. **12 Months**
   - Second Validation Report Due.
   - First Evaluation of Student Progress Due (Form I-983 P.5).

4. **18 Months**
   - Third Validation Report Due.

5. **24 Months**
   - Final Evaluation of Student Progress Due (Form I-983 P.5).

**On-going Reporting** within 10 days
- Termination of employment
- Change of employer
- Change of name/address/contact info
- Material changes to I-983
- Report to CIE office by filling out the [STEM Employment and Address Update Form](ccpe.csulb.edu/forms)

**GRACE PERIOD**
- 60 Days grace period to depart the U.S., transfer to another school, or change to another visa category
- If you are simply remaining in the U.S. for the grace period, you cannot leave and re-enter the U.S.
General process to apply for the 24-Month STEM OPT extension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Determine if you are eligible for the 24-Month STEM OPT extension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student and employer complete and sign Form I-983 (Training Plan for STEM OPT Student) and all other application forms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>• Submit the evidence of eligibility to the DSO by online submission @ [24-month STEM Optional Practical Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>• DSO recommends the STEM extension and provides new I-20 to student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>• Student prepares the application using the Cover Sheet provide by the DSO, File the complete Application for Work Authorization an all supporting documents to USCIS in a timely manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>• USCIS reviews the application and makes a decision within 90-100 days.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prepare STEM OPT Application Forms

• Find the application forms for STEM OPT at STEM OPT | CSULB

→ Click on: Application Instructions
Submit Evidence of Eligibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DSO will review the following documents to issue the STEM OPT I-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✔ STEM OPT I-20 Request Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ STEM OPT Calculator Sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Form I-983 Training Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Most recent I-94 record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Copy of your qualifying STEM OPT degree only if it was issued by a school other than CSULB.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visit the USCIS website to confirm current applicable fees for form I-765.

USCIS's OPT (I-765) application fee is $470 for online filings.

Prepare a copy of your official transcripts while you wait for your I-20.
All students requesting the 24-Month STEM OPT will receive the following from the DSO:

- Cover Sheet
- I-20

The Cover Sheet will include information about:

- How to file your application to USCIS online
- Reminders to maintain F-1 status
- What to expect after the application is filed
Track the application review progress

- You can use your USCIS account to track the progress of your application review.
- At any time, you may use the online tools to submit inquiries to USCIS about your application and review your case status.
- It is critical that you keep your mailing address always updated!

USCIS Contact Center
Dial 800-375-5283

Change of Address
Submit a Case Inquiry
USCIS Processing Times Information
USCIS Office Locations
Once your STEM OP is approved you will receive your new EAD by mail.
Review your EAD to ensure your name is spelled accurately and your approval dates are no more than 24 months in length.
The Form I-983
Form I-983

- Also called the Training Plan for STEM OPT Students
- Student and Employers Sign on it → DSO reviews it!
- A complete Form I-983 is required before a DSO makes the recommendation for the 24-Month STEM OPT extension, complete pages 1-4.
- Pg. 5 is due for submission ONLY when evaluation on student progress is due.
- Form I-983 stays with the DSO (it will not be mailed to USCIS).
- Material changes on Form I-983 must be reported in a timely manner.
### I-983 Form brief overview - CSULB

Click here to see the Form I-983 Instructions

#### Key elements of page 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 1: Student Information (Completed by Student)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Name (Surname/Primary Name, Given Name):</strong> Joe Han</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name of School Recommending STEM OPT:</strong> CSU, Long Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name of School Where STEM Degree Was Earned:</strong> CSU, Long Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEVIS School Code of School Recommending STEM OPT:</strong> LOS214P00361000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Email Address:</strong> <a href="mailto:Joe.Han@csulb.edu">Joe.Han@csulb.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Designated School Official (DSO) Name and Contact Information:</strong> Eugenia Kim, <a href="mailto:cie-student@csulb.edu">cie-student@csulb.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qualifying Major and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code:</strong> Computer science 11.701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level/Type of Qualifying Degree:</strong> Master's of Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date Awarded (mm-dd-yyyy):</strong> 05/22/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Based on Prior Degree?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment Authorization Number:</strong> XXX-XXX-XXX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Write CSULB:**
  - Unless you are using a prior degree from another school.

- **This is the unique School Code for CSULB.**

- **Copy this Information exactly into Form I-983.**

- **USCIS # in your current EAD.**

- **Select NO, unless you are using a prior degree.**

- **10-digit number located in the top-left side of your I-20.**

- **CIP Code: 6-digit number next to the name of your major in your I-20.**

- **Indicate the period of time which you are requesting to work on STEM OPT:**
  - If you are in OPT: Day after EAD ends to 24 Months after.
Site name and location address should indicate where you physically perform the work.

**Key elements of page 4**

- **Student role**
- **Goals and Objectives**
- **Employer Oversight**
- **Measures and Assessment**
Signatures in Form I-983

Students and employers may continue to physically sign the Form I-983 or input their own electronic signature. Valid electronic signatures:

- electronic signatures produced with software programs or applications
- digitally reproduced copies of a signature example: a scanned image of a physical signature.
When is a new Form I-983 Due?

- When 24-Month STEM OPT is requested
- When there are any **material changes** to the original training plan
- When the Student stops working for an employer
- When Student changes employer
Maintaining F-1 Status
STEM OPT is approved now what...

1. Maintain your F-1 status by working as required by the regulations & follow through with all the Mandatory reporting requirements.

2. Avoid exceeding the unemployment time allowed.

3. It is never recommended that you travel while you have a pending application with USCIS.
## Mandatory Reporting Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>When to Report</th>
<th>How &amp; What to Report or Validate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>On-Going Reporting Requirements</strong></td>
<td>Report any changes within 10 days</td>
<td>Use the STEM OPT Employment and Address Update Form to update: Address, contact information and Employment Status updates. Use Form I-983: Material changes to your training plan or when changing employers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6 Month Validation Reports</strong></td>
<td>Every 6 Months, within 10 days of due date</td>
<td>Use CIE Employment Update Form:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 6-Month Validation Report</td>
<td>· Legal name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 12-Month Validation Report</td>
<td>· Residential or mailing address.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 18-Month Validation Report</td>
<td>· Employer name and address.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>· Status of current employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation on student Progress</strong></td>
<td>- 1st Self Evaluation—p.5 After 12 months on STEM OPT</td>
<td>Form I-983 (page 5):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 2nd Self- Evaluation—p. 5 After 24 months on STEM OPT or when terminate employment</td>
<td>1. The student must evaluate his or her progress towards the training goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. The supervisor must sign the evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. The student must send the evaluation to the CSULB DSO.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Review the reporting reminders available in our website: [Section: Maintaining F-1 status & Reporting Requirements](#)
STEM OPT Reporting due dates

- The STEM OPT calculator will help you determine the due dates for your mandatory reports.

![5. Regulatory Requirement to Report (ccpe.csulb.edu/employment)](image)
• Use your SEVP Portal to review a summary of due dates &
Ensure your information is accurate. You can access it at
https://sevp.ice.gov/opt

Your STEM OPT Reporting Deadlines
While on STEM OPT, you must give your designated school official (DSO):
1. Validation reports to confirm that your address and employer information in SEVIS is correct. These are due every six months.
2. Two Evaluations of Student Progress (page 5 of the Form I-983). These are due:
   a. 12 months after your STEM OPT starts and
   b. 24 months after your STEM OPT starts.
3. Evaluation of Student Progress (page 5 of the Form I-983) when you stop working for a STEM employer before your STEM OPT authorization ends. These are due within 10 days after you stop working for the employer.

Your reporting deadlines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>What is Due</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jul 12 2019</td>
<td>Validation report for address and employer information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 12 2020</td>
<td>Validation report for address and employer information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 12 2020</td>
<td>Evaluation of Student Progress (page 5 of Form I-983)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 12 2020</td>
<td>Validation report for address and employer information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW TO REPORT

Submit a completed STEM OPT Employment and Address Update form and supporting documents to ISS- online.

Form and submission instructions available here:
https://www.csulb.edu/international/current-students/request-documents-or-signatures
## Unemployment Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you received...</th>
<th>You may be unemployed for...</th>
<th>For a total of ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-completion OPT only</td>
<td>Up to 90 days</td>
<td>90 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-month extension</td>
<td>An additional 60 days</td>
<td>150 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The SEVIS System will automatically terminate students who exceed the unemployment time!
- Unemployment time begins with the start date in the EAD card.
- Unemployment days could be accrued at any time throughout the 24 months of STEM OPT if you are not employed.
Travel Outside the U.S.

- Travel is **NEVER** recommended when your application is pending and your Post-Completion OPT EAD has expired.
- Travel may be ok before your OPT EAD expires but always ask an International Student Advisor first!

**How to Re-Enter Safely**

- Valid Passport (valid for at least 6 months)
- Valid F-1 Visa Stamp
- Freshly Signed OPT I-20 (No more than 6 months old)
- Unexpired EAD Card
- Letter from your Employer
- Contact information for the designated school official (DSO) at your school
- Ensure you have not exceeded unemployment time

More information about travel can be found at:
http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2014/06/know-before-you-go-international-students-and-summer-travel
Frequently Asked Questions
Can you work while your application is still pending?

- USCIS may take up to 90 days to process your application. If you file your OPT STEM extension application in a timely manner, you will receive an extension of employment authorization while your application is pending for up to 180 days, or the date of the decision over your request, whichever date is earlier.

- You will not receive any special confirmation for this extension but your STEM OPT I-20 will show the authorization for employment continues after the end of your current EAD.
What are material Changes?

• Any change of the employer’s Employer Identification Number, (i.e., the company’s Federal Tax ID number) resulting from a change in the employer’s ownership or structure.

• Any reduction in student compensation 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.

• Changes to the employer’s commitments or student’s learning objectives as documented on the Form I-983.
Can I take classes while in STEM OPT?

- So far only vocational and recreational classes are allowed in part time basis (up to 6 units per semester).
- Classes cannot lead to a certificate or degree.
- You must get authorization from a DSO prior to registration.
What happens after STEM OPT?

- You have a 60-day grace period at the end of your STEM OPT extension.
- During this time you can depart the U.S., start a new academic program or change visa status.
Cap Gap Extension

- Students who are eligible for a Cap-Gap extension of post-completion OPT employment and F1-status may apply for a STEM OPT extension during the Cap-Gap extension period.
Resources

Support Services from ISS

STEM OPT/OPT e-Newsletter - Emailed twice per year

Meet with an Advisor or email your questions about the 24-Month STEM extension to an International Student Advisor in CIE-student@csulb.edu

Letter to the employer - Request a letter from ISS to better explain STEM OPT to your employer.

F-1 Student Information sessions - participate in a LIVE Webinars
Other Resources

- Review STEM OPT FAQs
- Browse SEVP's Study in the States STEM OPT Help Hub that contains resources to help students, schools, and employers.
- Visit U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) page on STEM OPT
Visit studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students
International Students and Scholars

Location  Foundation 185B
Contact   cie-student@csulb.edu
Web       www.csulb.edu/international
          www.facebook.com/csulbiss
          www.instagram.com/csulb_iss
Hours     Mondays – Thursdays
          9:00 am - 12:00 pm
          1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
          Fridays
          9:00 am - 12:00 pm
          1:00 pm - 3:00 pm