24-Month STEM OPT Extension

Presented by:

International Students and Scholars
Center for International Education
California State University, Long Beach

Updated: 4/19/2024

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.
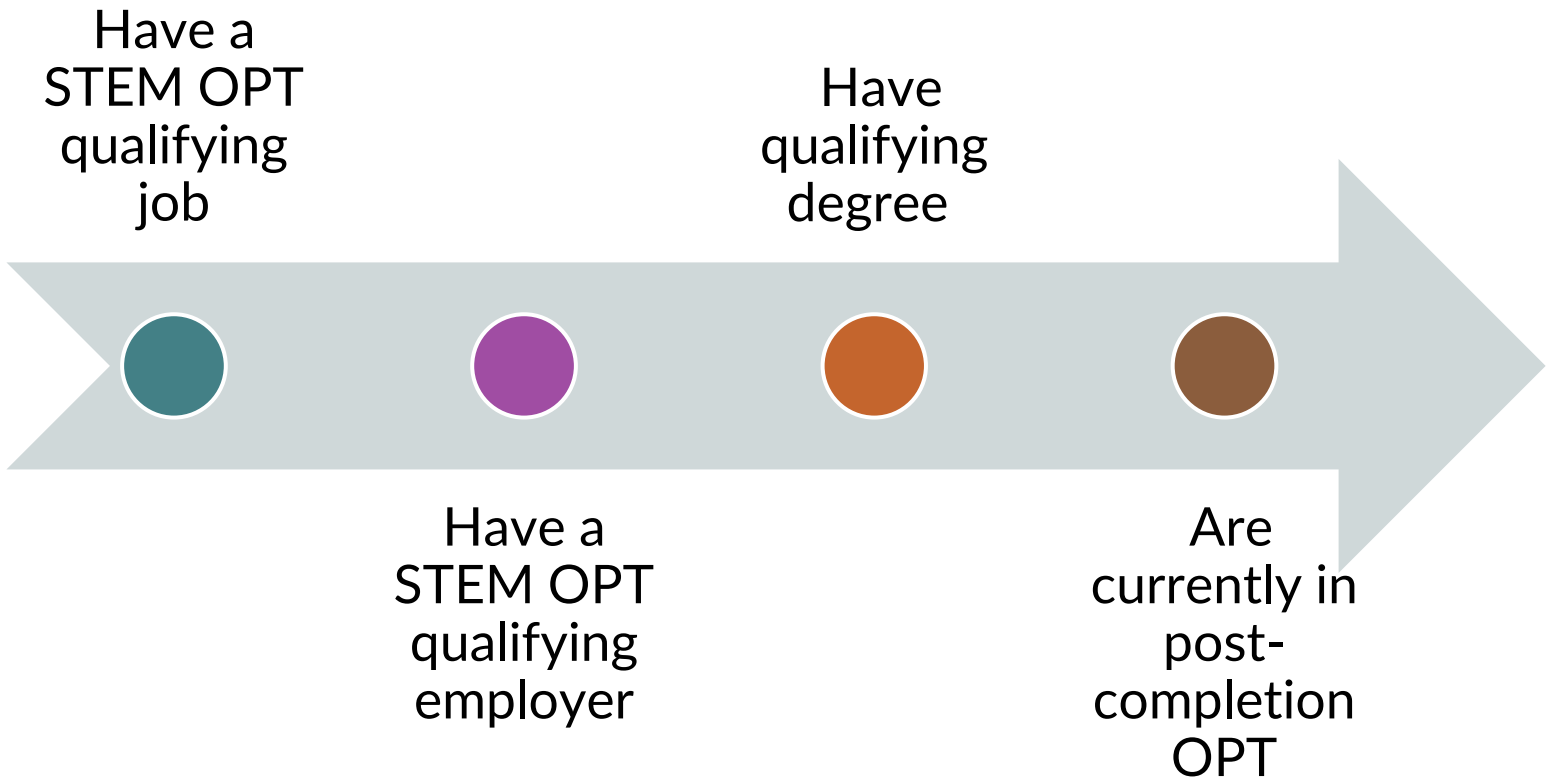
What is the 24-Month STEM OPT extension?

- 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:

Have a STEM OPT qualifying job

Have qualifying degree

Have a STEM OPT qualifying employer

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

CIP CODE

CIP Code Two-Digit Series	2010 CIP Code	CIP Code Title
01	01.0308	Agroecology and Sustainable Agriculture
01	01.0901	Animal Sciences, General
01	01.0902	Agricultural Animal Breeding
01	01.0903	Animal Health
01	01.0904	Animal Nutrition
01	01.0905	Dairy Science
01	01.0906	Livestock Management
01	01.0907	Poultry Science
01	01.0999	Animal Sciences, Other
01	01.1001	Food Science
01	01.1002	Food Technology and Processing
01	01.1099	Food Science and Technology, Other
01	01.1101	Plant Sciences, General
01	01.1102	Agronomy and Crop Science

STEM Designated Degree Program List

CIP Code Two-Digit Series	2020 CIP Code	CIP Code Title
01	01.0308	Agroecology and Sustainable Agriculture.
01	01.0901	Animal Sciences, General.
01	01.0902	Agricultural Animal Breeding.
01	01.0903	Animal Health.
01	01.0904	Animal Nutrition.
11	11.0301	Data Processing and Data Processing Technology/ Technician.
11	11.0401	Information Science/Studies.
11	11.0501	Computer Systems Analysis/Analyst.
11	11.0701	Computer Science.
11	11.0801	Web Page, Digital/Multimedia and Information Resources Design.
11	11.0802	Data Modeling/Warehousing and Database Administration.

Your I-20

PROGRAM OF STUDY

EDUCATION LEVEL	**MAJOR 1**	**MAJOR 2**
MASTER'S	Computer Science 11.0701	None 00.0000

PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY	**ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES**	**EARLIEST ADMISSION DATE**
Required	Student is proficient	

START OF CLASSES | **PROGRAM START/END DATE**
21 JANUARY 2014 | 21 JANUARY 2014 - 20 MAY 2016

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 <u>E-Verify</u>
- 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 <u>Form I-983 Training Plan</u>, 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

E-Verify

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."

QUALIFYING JOB cont.

- 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

Students in OPT
Apply as early as **90 days** before the end of your   post-completion OPT authorization. You cannot apply during the 60 days grace period following the end of post-completion OPT
File application within 60 days from the day the DSO request the extension and before OPT EAD expires.

24-STEM OPT Extension Timeline

STEM OPT EXTENTION Start Date

STEM OPT EXTENTION End Date

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.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6

Post Completion OPT

Application Window
90 days before post completion OPT expires

6 Months
• First Validation Report Due.

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

18 Months
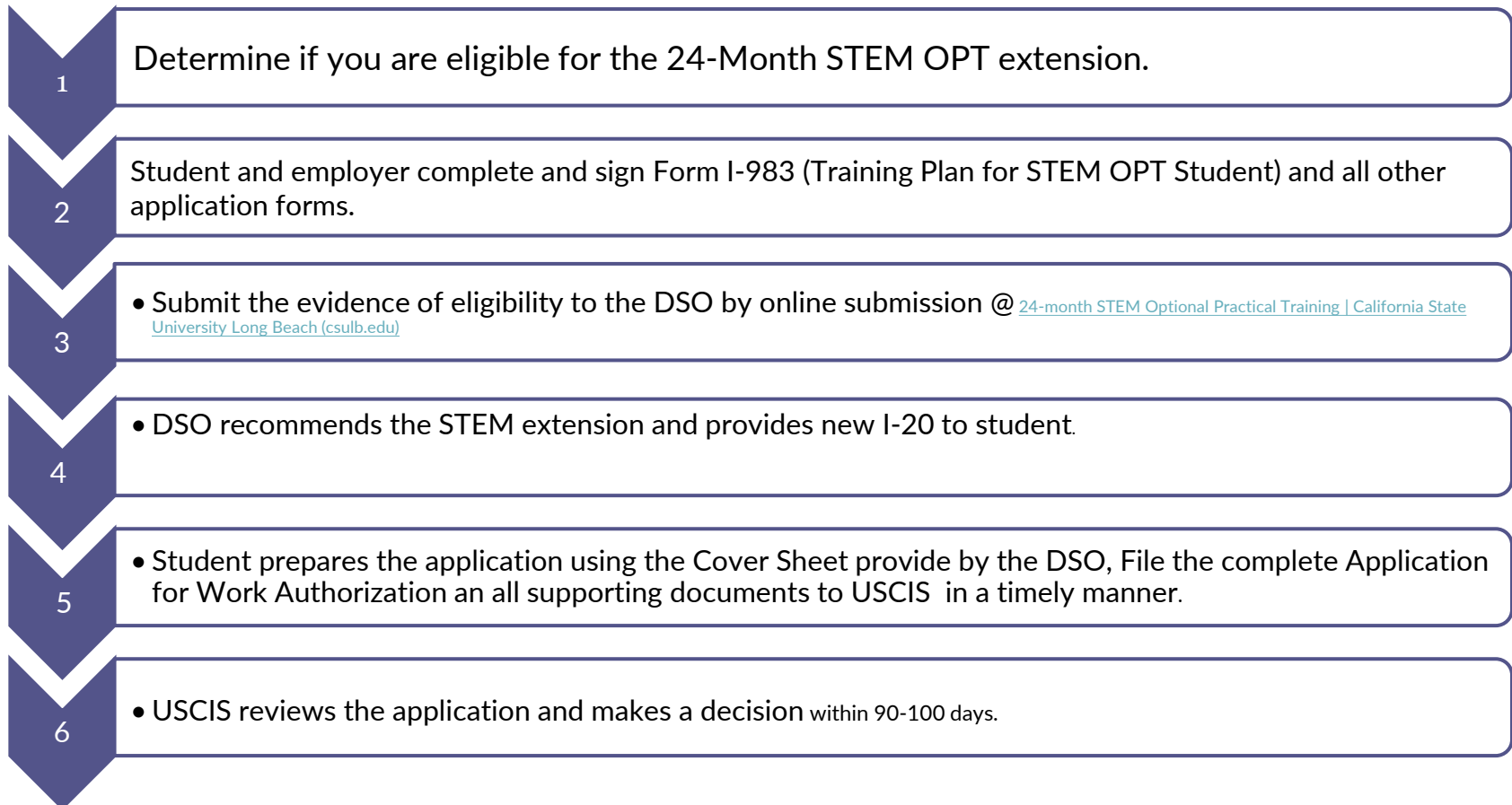• Third Validation Report Due.

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

Period of 24-Months STEM OPT Extension

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

General process to apply for the 24-Month STEM OPT extension

1 Determine if you are eligible for the 24-Month STEM OPT extension.

2 Student and employer complete and sign Form I-983 (Training Plan for STEM OPT Student) and all other application forms.

3 • Submit the evidence of eligibility to the DSO by online submission @ 24-month STEM Optional Practical Training | California State University Long Beach (csulb.edu)

4 • DSO recommends the STEM extension and provides new I-20 to student.

5 • 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.

6 • USCIS reviews the application and makes a decision within 90-100 days.

Prepare STEM OPT Application Forms

- **Find the application forms for STEM OPT at** STEM OPT | CSULB

 →**Click on: Application Instructions**

Submit Evidence of Eligibility

DSO will review the following documents to issue the STEM OPT I-20
➢ STEM OPT I-20 Request Form ➢ STEM OPT Calculator Sheet ➢ Form I-983 Training Plan ➢ Most recent I-94 record ➢ Copy of your qualifying STEM OPT degree only if it was issued by a school other than CSULB.
Visit the USCIS website to <u>confirm current applicable fees</u> for form I-765. USCIS's OPT (I-765) application fee is **$470** for online filings Prepare a copy of your <u>official transcripts</u> while you wait for your I-20.

DSO reviews Evidence & issues a New 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

RELATED TOOLS

MAKE UPDATES +
Change of Address

GET HELP +
Submit a Case Inquiry

INQUIRE +
USCIS Processing Times Information

LOCATE +
USCIS Office Locations

24-Month STEM OPT Extension EAD

Terms and Conditions
Stu: Stem Opt Only

❖ 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

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

OMB APPROVAL NO. 1653-0054
EXPIRATION DATE: 03-31-2019

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):
Joe Han

Student Email Address:
Joe.Han@csulb.edu

Name of School Recommending STEM OPT:
CSU, Long Beach

Name of School Where STEM Degree Was Earned:
CSU, Long Beach

SEVIS School Code of School Recommending STEM OPT (including 3 digit suffix):
LOS214F00361000

Designated School Official (DSO) Name and Contact Information:
Eugenia Kim
cie-student@csulb.edu

Student SEVIS ID No.:
N00XXXXXXXX

STEM OPT Requested Period (mm-dd-yyyy):
From: 05/22/2017
To: 05/21/2019

Qualifying Major and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code: Computer Science 11.701

Level/Type of Qualifying Degree: Master's of Science

Date Awarded (mm-dd-yyyy): 05/22/2015

Based on Prior Degree? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Employment Authorization Number: XXX-XXX-XXX

Write CSULB

Write CSULB unless you are using a prior degree from another school

Copy this Information exactly into Form I-983

This is the unique School Code for CSULB

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.

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

USCIS # in your current EAD

Select NO, unless you are using a prior degree

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

SECTION 5: TRAINING PLAN FOR STEM OPT STUDENTS (Completed by Student and Employer)

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

Employer Name:

EMPLOYER SITE INFORMATION

Site Name:

Name of Official:

Official's Email:

Site name and location address should indicate where you physically perform the work.

Note: for the remaining fields in this section, employers who already have an internal/pre-existing training plan in place may fill in the details based on that plan.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Form I-983
Complete pages 1-4
Use complete Sentences & Answer each question fully!

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

DUE

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

Requirement	When to Report	How & What to Report or Validate
On-Going Reporting Requirements	Report any changes within 10 days	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.
6 Month Validation Reports	Every 6 Months, within 10 days of due date ❖ 6-Month Validation Report ❖ 12-Month Validation Report ❖ 18-Month Validation Report	Use CIE Employment Update Form: · Legal name. · Residential or mailing address. · Employer name and address. · Status of current employment.
Evaluation on student Progress	❖ 1st Self Evaluation– p.5 After 12 months on STEM OPT ❖ 2nd Self- Evaluation—p. 5 After 24 months on STEM OPT **or when terminate employment**	Form I-983 (page 5): 1. The student must evaluate his or her progress towards the training goals. 2. The supervisor must sign the evaluation. 3. The student must send the evaluation to the CSULB DSO.

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)
- Mark your calendar now for your **minimum required reporting** dates.

6 month validation report due		
...onth validation report & Evaluation on Student Progress (I-983) due		
18 month validation report due		
24 month Final Evaluation on Student Progress (I-983) due		

- 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:

Date	What is Due?	Current Status
Jul 12 2019	Validation report for address and employer information	
Jan 12 2020	Validation report for address and employer information	
Jan 12 2020	Evaluation of Student Progress (page 5 of Form I-983)	
Jul 12 2020	Validation report for address and employer information	

HOW TO REPORT

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

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
LONG BEACH

24-MONTH STEM OPT EXTENSION
EMPLOYMENT AND ADDRESS UPDATE FORM

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requires all international students to report changes to address and employment status within 10 days from the time of the change. Go to www.cpace.csulb.edu/STEMopt to review details regarding STEM OPT mandatory reporting requirements. All STEM OPT mandatory reports must be submitted to a DSO using this form.

Instructions: Fill out this form, and submit it online as a PDF docu ment.

Last Name:	First Name:	BEACH ID #:	Today's Date:

SECTION 1: Select the report(s) most appropriate for your request

☐ Change in Contact information	☐ Change of Employer	☐ Validation Report	☐ Evaluation and Progress
• Complete section 2.	• Complete sections 2, 3 & 4 • Attach the new employer's Form I-983 pages 1-4 • Attach the prior employer's Final Evaluation of student progress, Form I-983 page 5 .	• Complete sections 2 and 3	Complete section 2 & 3 Attached evaluation of student progress form I-983 page 5

SECTION 2: Student U.S Residential Address and Contact Information

Street Address:		
City:	State:	Zip Code:
Preferred e-mail address:	Phone number:	

SECTION 3: Current Employer Information

☐ Employed	☐ Unemployed (Skip to Section 4)

Name of the company/employer:	
Address (physical employment location):	

City:	State:	Zip Code:
Employer's Identification Number (EIN#):		E-verify number:
Job Title:		Employment Start Date:
Supervisor's Name:	Phone #:	Email:

Briefly explain how your work relates to course work taken while completing your program of study. Use complete sentences.

SECTION 4: Prior Employer Information

Name of the company/employer:		
Job Title:	Start Date:	End Date:

Center for International Education
Office of International Students & Scholars
6300 E. State University Dr., Suite 185-B, Long Beach, CA 90815 | 562.985.5555 | cie-student@csulb.edu | cpie.csulb.edu/iss

Form and submission instructions available here:

https://www.csulb.edu/international/current-students/request-documents-or-signatures

Unemployment Time

If you received...	You may be unemployed for...	For a total of ...
Post-completion OPT only	Up to 90 days	90 days
24-month extension	An additional 60 days	150 days

- 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 <u>vocational</u> and <u>recreational</u> 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 sesions- 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