Optional Practical Training (OPT) 24-Month STEM Extension Tutorial

Last updated on April 7, 2022. Updates are made frequently; do not download tutorial. Always access the latest version on BIO's website.

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Berkeley, CA 94704
(510) 642-2818

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COVID-19 Updates

- USCIS remains open for OPT/STEM I-765 application processing. Some USCIS locations *are* closed for in-person services. NO impact to OPT/STEM applications.
- For current USCIS COVID-19 information see: https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/uscis-response-covid-19
- OPT/STEM I-765 applications MUST be submitted *from inside the U.S.* You must be *physically present in the U.S.* when your application is *received by USCIS*. USCIS has NOT made an exception to this due to COVID-19.
- USCIS has NOT changed STEM application timelines and deadlines due to COVID-19.
- USCIS still requires a handwritten "wet" (made with your hand and a pen) signature for the I-765 *if filing by mail*. NO DIGITAL or ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES on the paper I-765!
- USCIS has NOT changed the 90 day unemployment rule due to COVID-19
- DHS has indicated that you DO NOT need to update your employer address information in SEVIS nor on the Form I-983 if you are working remotely. (use your normal employer/worksite address)

USCIS Updates: Processing Delays & USCIS Flexibilities

- USCIS is currently experiencing OPT processing and receipting delays. USCIS announced on 7/29/2021 and 2/26/2021 flexibilities for OPT/STEM OPT Extension applicants. These flexibilities apply *only* to applications received on or after **October 1, 2020, through October 31, 2021**.

- Policy flexibilities allow for students to have extended response times for refiling after a rejection, including past the original OPT end date.

- If your OPT application was rejected by USCIS, contact BIO immediately regarding your options to refile before **November 30, 2021**.

- Check current USCIS OPT/STEM processing times. Select "I-765" filed at "Potomac Service Center" SCROLL ALL THE WAY DOWN THE PAGE TO SEE THE PROCESSING TIME FOR F-1 ACADEMIC STUDENT EADS!

- See BIO's email to STEM OPT students explaining these flexibilities

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USCIS Updates: Forms & Fees

- USCIS has recently made the I-765 form and OPT/STEM OPT applications available for e-filing. See the Preparing Your Application section for more information.

- USCIS may make updates to forms and fees. See the Fees and I-765 sections of the tutorial for more information about the *current* form and fee changes. If filing by mail, make sure you are paying the correct fee and using the correct form on the date you are mailing your package to USCIS.

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OPT 24-Month STEM Extension Tutorial

Please note that this tutorial is for instructional purposes only.

An OPT STEM application to USCIS is <u>your own personal application</u>. You alone are responsible for timely filing with full documentation, understanding F-1 rules regarding OPT STEM Extension, and properly maintaining F-1 status.

Please review the entire tutorial and ask your BIO adviser if you have questions.

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STEM OPT Tutorial Outline

- STEM Eligibility & Allowable Employment
- Application Process Overview
- Step 1: I-983
- Step 2: Updating SSU
- Step 3: BIO STEM I-20 Request Process
- Step 4: Preparing your OPT Request to USCIS
  - E-filing the I-765
  - Application Deadlines
  - Mailing your Application
- Step 5: Receiving Your EAD & USCIS Documents
  - I-797C receipt Notice
  - Application, Tracking Problems,

- Denials & Requests for Evidence
  - Your EAD card
- Step 6: Maintaining Your F-1 Status & STEM Reporting Requirements
  - BIO SSU Hub & Reporting
  - Changes in Employer
  - Material Changes to the I-983
  - 6 Month Updates and Annual Evaluations
  - Travel during STEM OPT
  - Completing OPT and Grace Period
  - H1-B and STEM Extension
- Frequently Asked Questions

OPT STEM Extension Eligibility

Requirements:

- You must be a recipient of a U.S. Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral degree in a STEM (science, technology, engineering, or math) designated degree program. See this list of STEM Majors. (You can check the CIP code listed on your I-20.)
- You are currently authorized for 12-month OPT and have not exceeded 90 days of unemployment.
- Can apply based on any previous STEM degree from an SEVP, accredited U.S. institution within the last 10 years
- Employed or have a job offer directly related to your field of study from an employer who is registered in the USCIS E-Verify Program. Must complete Form I-983 with employer and all employers must have an EIN number.
- Your employer can work with you to fully complete the Form I-983 and abide by all employer obligations, including Dept. of Homeland Security Site visits.
- You are applying no more than 90 days before your 12-month OPT expires and no later than the expiration of your 12-month OPT*.

Two 24-month STEM extensions may be granted per lifetime.

* For E-filed applications, USCIS uses UTC or Coordinated Universal Time to determine the time/date filed. If you are filing CLOSE to your deadline check the UTC time/date of filing!

Types of Allowable Employment

- Volunteer/Unpaid positions and self employment are NOT allowed by the 24-Month STEM OPT Extension.

- STEM-eligible employers must have e-Verify & EIN numbers and the student must have a ″bona fide employer-employee relationship″. To establish a bona fide relationship, the employer may not be the student's "employer" in name only.

- Cannabis Industry- be aware that use and sale of cannabis is illegal at the *federal* level, although it may be legal in some U.S. states. To avoid possible deportation or inadmissibility form the US, students should avoid positions related to federally illegal substances.

According to USCIS updates August 2018:

- Under no circumstances would another F-1 student on OPT or a STEM OPT Extension be qualified to train another F-1 student on a STEM OPT Extension.

- The employer that signs the Form I-983 *must be the same entity* that provides the practical training experience to the student.

- The employer has sufficient resources and personnel available to provide appropriate training in connection with the STEM opportunity at the location(s) specified in the Form I-983.

- The "personnel" who provide/supervise the training experience may be either employees of the employer, or contractors who the employer has directly retained to provide services to the employer; they may not be employees or contractors of the employer's clients or customers.

- DHS will review on a case-by-case basis whether the student will be a bona fide employee of the employer signing the Training Plan, and verify that the employer that signs the Training Plan is the same entity that employs the student and provides the practical training experience.

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Temp/Staffing Agencies, 3rd Party Worksites

- Staffing and temporary agencies may employ students under the STEM OPT program, but only if they will be the entity that provides the practical training experience to the student and they have and maintain a bona fide employer-employee relationship with the student.

- STEM OPT participants may engage in a training experience that takes place at a site other than the employer's principal place of business as long as all of the training obligations are met, including that the employer has and maintains a bona fide employer-employee relationship with the student.

- A STEM OPT employer may not assign, or otherwise delegate, its training responsibilities to a non-employer third party (e.g., a client/customer of the employer, employees of the client/customer, or contractors of the client/customer).

- According to prior guidance from the Student and Exchange Visitor Program If a student uses a temporary or staffing agency to place them in a training opportunity, the agency cannot complete and sign the Form I-983, "Training Plan for STEM OPT Students." Only the E-verified employer that provides the actual training relevant to the student's qualifying STEM degree is authorized to sign and complete the Form I-983.

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Unemployment During STEM OPT

- As long as you have submitted a timely filed STEM application to USCIS, you can continue working for up to 180 days after the expiration of your original OPT EAD while you wait for the STEM EAP approval.

- During **12-month OPT** you have a maximum of 90 days of unemployment over the 12 month period. During the STEM period you are allowed an additional 60 days of unemployment.

- **Starting from the first date of your STEM OPT period**, the total allowed unemployment days extends to a maximum of 150 days of unemployment during the entire OPT/STEM period, *beginning from the start of your original OPT EAD card.*

- This is NOT just 150 days at the *beginning* of OPT or STEM. You are only allowed 150 total days over the entire 3 years.

- If you exceed 90 days of unemployment during your original 12-month OPT you are not eligible to apply for the STEM OPT Extension.

Example: OPT EAD Dates: Jan 1-Dec. 31, 2020. STEM EAD Dates: January 1, 2021-December 31, 2022.

You used 60 days of unemployment during your **12 month OPT period** from Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2020. Your **STEM period** begins on Jan. 1, 2021. You continue your work after Jan. 1, 2021 with Company A. On March 1, 2021 you end your job with Company A. You later apply for a new STEM I-20 authorization for a job with Company B that begins on April 30. You have used another 60 days of unemployment, for a total of 120. You now have only 30 more days of unemployment remaining for the rest of your STEM period until December 31, 2022.

Warning! Increased OPT/STEM OPT Scrutiny by DHS

- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has recently applied increased scrutiny to the OPT and STEM OPT programs, resulting in recent arrests for students who reported fraudulent employment with non-existent employers or false employment information.

- Falsifying your OPT employment records or reporting employment that is not legitimate may result in serious repercussions.

- SEVIS may also automatically terminate F-1 records for students who have more than 90 days of unemployment.

- During the STEM period, DHS has the right to conduct a site which is part of the agreements included on the I-983

When to Apply

STEM OPT I-20 Timing Considerations:

- You may apply as early as 90 days before your OPT EAD end date.
- You must submit your STEM I-20 request AT LEAST 2 weeks before your current OPT EAD expires.
- USCIS must receive your application before the expiration date of your OPT*. Check your OPT EAD card for the expiration**.
- USCIS processing ranges from 3-5 months, with an observed average of 90-120 days. See current USCIS processing times for Form"I-765" for "Potomac Service Center" here: https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-time/ SCROLL ALL THE WAY DOWN THE PAGE TO SEE THE PROCESSING TIME FOR F-1 ACADEMIC STUDENT EADS!
- If you are applying for an OPT STEM Extension *at the same time* you are filing for an **H-1B** employment visa you <u>MUST</u> review both the <u>H-1B & STEM Extension</u> information at the end of this tutorial and the <u>Cap-Gap webpage</u>.

   IMPORTANT!
   * Your OPT employment authorization will be automatically extended for 180 days after your OPT EAD end date while your OPT STEM application is pending.

   ** For E-filed applications, USCIS uses <u>UTC or Coordinated Universal Time </u>to determine the time/date filed. If you are filing CLOSE to your deadline check the UTC time/date of filing!

Application Process Overview

In most cases we recommend beginning the OPT STEM application process 90 days before the expiration of your 12-month OPT period. The following slides will give you detailed information about each step.

1. **Complete the I-983 with your employer.**

2. **Access SSU Hub to update employment, complete the Apply for STEM form and pay your BIO Post-Completion Services Fee.**
   This step can be completely entirely online in your SSU Hub.

3. **Receive STEM OPT I-20 from BIO.**
   The I-20 will be ready for pick up 5 business days after submitting your complete application and payment in SSU. Arrangements can be made to send you the new I-20 by mail. Please allow enough time for mailing USCIS must receive your application within 60 days of BIO recommending you, which is the date on the school attestation section of your I-20.

4. **Prepare, collect & submit your application materials to USCIS.**
   Allow approximately 1 week to gather and organize your materials for submission to USCIS. You can either e-file the application online, or submit a paper application through the mail. A complete application must be received by USCIS before the end date of your current OPT as noted on the EAD card. You must be in the United States to file the OPT STEM application with USCIS.

5. **Receive your STEM Extension Employment Authorization Document (EAD).**
   Processing time for USCIS is approximately 3-5 months. The observed average processing time is 90-120 days, but can take longer in some cases. However, you may continue to work on OPT for up to 180 days while the STEM application is pending. See current USCIS processing times for Form"I-765" for "Potomac Service Center" here:
   https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-time/ SCROLL ALL THE WAY DOWN THE PAGE TO SEE THE PROCESSING TIME FOR F-1 ACADEMIC STUDENT EADS!

6. **Maintain your F-1 status while on OPT STEM Extension.**
   You must report general address and employer updates to Berkeley International Office within 10 days of any change. 24 Month STEM Extension students must also submit a validation report every six months and training evaluations each 12 months. Find information about STEM Reporting here. Your I-20 travel endorsement is valid for only 6 months while on OPT STEM. Failure to provide timely updates may result in termination of the F-1 record.

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Can I do anything about the long USCIS processing time?
There is nothing you can do about the USCIS processing time, other than to apply as early as possible! See USCIS Issues & Tracking for how to report a case processing longer than the current

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OPT STEM Application Timeline:
(Example: July 9th 12-month OPT end date)

STEM OPT I-20 processed by BIO in 5 business days; Submit I-765 & supporting materials to USCIS

Submit STEM OPT request in SSU to BIO as early as 90 days before OPT ends

12-month OPT end date (example); last possible date for USCIS to receive STEM application

24-month STEM EAD received; Upload image of STEM EAD card to SSU

Prepare I-983 w/employer; Update SSU

Several months ahead — **4/10** — **4/15** — **7/09** — **7/18**

Application processing with USCIS (3-4 month average)

You may continue to work on OPT for up to 180 days after your OPT expires while the STEM application is pending with USCIS

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Step 1: Complete Form I-983

The formal training plan must clearly articulate the OPT STEM learning objectives and affirm the employer's commitment to helping you achieve those objectives. To fulfill this requirement, you and your employer must complete and sign Form I-983 and then **submit pages 1-4* to BIO**.

*Do not upload page 5 of the I-983 at this time. See Annual Evaluation for when you will submit page 5.

The following slides provide specific details regarding the I-983; please confirm your application follows the requirements, even if your employer plans to prepare the form on your behalf.

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Signatures on the I-983 during Covid-19

During COVID-19 shelter in place restrictions, BIO can accept your and your employer's e-signatures on the I-983.

Acceptable e-signatures include Adobe Docu-signatures, Apple Pen signatures and hand-written signatures that have been scanned and pasted into the signature field.

BIO CANNOT accept an I-983 where a person's name has simply been typed into the signature line.

This exception applies only to the I-983. It does not apply to the I-765. The I-765 must be printed and then **signed and dated by hand in black ink.** USCIS does not accept any sort of e-signature on this document and has rejected application that include e-signatures.

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Complete I-983

Always download the current I-983 from the SEVP website. USCIS often updates the expiration date. If the expiration date is passed, that's OK- USCIS may be in the process of updating the form

Use the UC Berkeley School code found here, even if your STEM degree was from a different school.

If your STEM Degree is from a different school (NOT UC Berkeley), you will need to enter the name of the school where you obtained your STEM degree

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 CONTROL NO. 1653-0054
EXPIRATION DATE: 03/31/2019

SECTION 1: STUDENT INFORMATION (Completed by Student)	
Student Name *(Surname/Primary Name, Given Name):* Bear, Oski	Student Email Address: Oski@email.com
Name of School Recommending STEM OPT: University of California, Berkeley	Name of School Where STEM Degree Was Earned: University of California, Berkeley	SEVIS School Code of School Recommending STEM OPT (including 3-digit suffix): SFR214F00615000

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?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Employment Authorization Number: _____

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Complete I-983

Please write in the contact information of our SEVIS Manager, Mikaela, here. Please fill out this field EXACTLY as it appears here. (DO NOT use a different name). Please include ALL of the contact information. If there is not enough room, you can write it in by hand.

Note this is NOT the same name as the DSO who produced your I-20.

Your I-983 will be rejected if you write a different name.

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 CONTROL NO. 1653-0054
EXPIRATION DATE: 03/31/2019

SECTION 1: STUDENT INFORMATION (Completed by Student)	
Student Name (Surname/Primary Name, Given Name): Bear, Oski	Student Email Address: Oski@email.com

Name of School Recommending STEM OPT: University of California, Berkeley	Name of School Where STEM Degree Was Earned: University of California, Berkeley	SEVIS School Code of School Recommending STEM OPT (including 3-digit suffix): SFR214F00615000	
Designated School Official (DSO) Name and Contact Information: **Mikaela Auerbach** **2150 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 500,** **Berkeley, CA 94704** **510-642-2818 SEVISCoordinator@berkeley.edu**		Student SEVIS ID No.: Found on page 1 of your I-20	STEM OPT Requested Period: (mm-dd-yyyy) One day after current 24 months from From: EAD ends To: STEM start date i.e: - 05/10/2017 i.e.- 05/09/2019

Qualifying Major and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code: _____

Level/Type of Qualifying Degree: _____

Date Awarded: (mm-dd-yyyy) _____

Based on Prior Degree?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Employment Authorization Number: _____

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Complete I-983

The CIP code is a 6-digit code (XX.XXXX) found on your I-20
- Page 1 if I-20 issued on/after 6/26/2015
- Page 3 if I-20 issued before 6/26/15

Name of School Recommending STEM OPT: University of California, Berkeley	Name of School Where STEM Degree Was Earned: University of California, Berkeley	SEVIS School Code of School Recommending STEM OPT (including 3-d suffix): SFR214F00615000
Designated School Official (DSO) Name and Contact Information: **Mikaela Auerbach** **2150 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 500** **Berkeley, CA 94704** **510-642-2818 SEVISCoordinator@berkeley.edu**	Student SEVIS ID No.: Found on page 1 of your I-20	STEM OPT Requested Period: *(mm-dd-yyyy)* From: One day after current EAD ends i.e: - 5/15/2019 To: 24 months from STEM start date i.e.- 05/14/2021

Qualifying Major and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code: ___ Example: Computer Science, 11.0701 ___

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status
OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: N0012645978

SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME Bear	GIVEN NAME Oski	Class of Admission
PREFERRED NAME Oski	PASSPORT NAME	**F-1**
COUNTRY OF BIRTH CHINA	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP CANADA	
DATE OF BIRTH 1 JANUARY 1992	ADMISSION NUMBER 123456789	**ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE**
FORM ISSUE REASON CONTINUED ATTENDANCE - Updated Form I-20 or Name Conversion	LEGACY NAME	

SCHOOL INFORMATION

SCHOOL NAME University of California at Berkeley University of California at Berkeley	SCHOOL ADDRESS Berkeley International Office, 2299 Piedmont, Berkeley, CA 94720
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL Isela Pena-Rager International Student Advisor	SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE SFR214F00615000 27 JANUARY 2003

PROGRAM OF STUDY

EDUCATION LEVEL MASTER'S	MAJOR 1 Chemical Engineering 14.0701	MAJOR 2 None 00.0000
PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Required	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES Student is proficient	EARLIEST ADMISSION DATE 20 JULY 2015
START OF CLASSES 19 AUGUST 2015	PROGRAM START/END DATE 19 AUGUST 2015 - 13 MAY 2016	

FINANCIALS

ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 12 MONTHS		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR: 12 MONTHS	
Tuition and Fees	$ 31,395	Personal Funds	$ 0
Living Expenses	$ 18,000	Funds From This School	$
Expenses of Dependents (0)	$	Family Support	$ 49,395
Other	$	On-Campus Employment	$

What are CIP Codes? Classification of Instructions Programs (CIP) codes are published by the National Center for Education Statistics (NES) & are used by SEVIS to designate a student's major. Your CIP code determines whether your major has been designated as a STEM degree.

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Complete I-983

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

TRAINING PLAN FOR STEM OPT STUDENTS
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) Optional Practical Training (OPT)

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

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: _____ *I.e. Bachelors, Masters, PhD*

Date Awarded: (mm-dd-yyyy) _____ *Indicate your graduation date here*

Based on Prior Degree?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Employment Authorization Number: _____ *"USCIS #" listed on your 12-Month OPT EAD*

If your STEM degree is listed on your UC Berkeley I-20, check "no."

Check "yes" ONLY if your STEM degree is NOT the degree listed on your UC Berkeley 12-Month OPT I-20.

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Complete Form I-983

For detailed a detailed tutorial on completing the rest of the I-983, see:
https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/form-i-983-overview

Pages 3-4 contain the details of the required Training Plan to be determined by you and your employer. To avoid rejection of your application, think carefully about each question and answer fully and completely. *Imagine this is an essay exam to be graded- have you and your employer addressed all parts of each question, clearly and specifically? See the next 2 slides slides 14-15 for more details.*

Other points for consideration:

- We do not accept electronic signatures on the I-983. Please obtain handwritten signatures. [During COVID-19 period, *official* Digital Signatures- i.e Adobe, Docusign are acceptable)

- Please ensure all responses are visible and upload a corrected I-983. (fillable PDF cuts off. If you don't have enough room, please submit an attachment.)

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I-983 Training Plan Section 5

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.

- Responses that don't include the name of your STEM degree and a description of the relationship between your role and your degree will be rejected.
- Example of response: [Description of role]. The student's role enhances their knowledge related to their [STEM Degree] by [describe relationship].

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.

- Responses that don't include learning objectives or how they will be achieved will be rejected.
- Example of response: The student's work-based learning goals/work objectives related to their STEM degree are [describe goals & relation to degree] and they will be achieved by [describe methods].

I-983 Training Plan Section 5

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.

- Responses that do not include description method(s) of oversight and supervision will be rejected.

- Example of response: The employer provides oversight and supervision through [describe methods].

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.

- Responses that do not include description of how knowledge and/or skills are assessed will be rejected.

- Example of response: The employer will measure and assess the student's new knowledge and skills by [describe methods].

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Step 2: Update SSU

Log in to your Student SEVIS Update (SSU) account in order to submit your STEM I-20 request. (*Note: most processing delays are due to failure to update all new required fields in SSU.*)

Before applying for STEM, you must:
1.   Update your current address/email/phone
2.   Update all current & previous OPT employment
3.   Upload a copy of your OPT EAD (if you haven't already)

After you have done this, click the "*Apply for STEM OPT Extension*" link in the Other Requests and Reporting Forms section.

Other Request & Reporting Forms

- Apply For STEM OPT Extension
- Employer Evaluation Form Uploader
- H-1B Cap Gap Extension I-20 Request
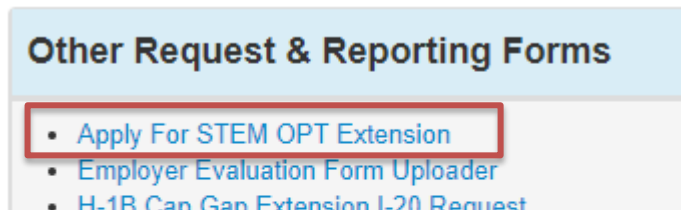
See next slide for instructions...

Step 2: Update SSU (Apply for STEM)

On the STEM OPT Application page SSU Indicate with which employer you will be applying for your STEM Extension

- If applying with a current employer, select the employer, and click "Apply with this Employer"
- If applying with a new employer, click "Add New Employer and Apply"

Employers:

Batch Number	Employer Name	Start Date	Select
22800	SAP America, Inc (employed by SAP Labs LLC)	02/27/2017	⦿ Apply with this Employer
59724	Microsoft Corporation	07/23/2018	○
			Add New Employer and Apply

Applying with current employer

Applying with new employer

This will lead you to the Employer Information form. See next slide…

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Step 2: Update SSU (Employer info)

Employer Information

IF YOU ARE UPDATING AN EXISTING EMPLOYER- Go back to the SSU main page and select the employer you wish to edit.
IF YOU ARE ADDING A NEW EMPLOYER, please do not over-write a previous employer's information below. If you see employment information below and wish to add a new employer, go back to the SSU main page and select "Employer" from the list.

1. Name of Company

This is a required field.

2. Start Date - The date you started your employment with this company

MM/DD/YYYY

This is a required field.

3. End Date – The date your employment ended with this company.

MM/DD/YYYY

4. Your Optional Practical Training is intended to further the knowledge gained in your area of study while you attended UC Berkeley. Please explain, in your own words, how this employment opportunity is related to the Major Field of Study listed on your OPT I-20.

*Limit 1000 Characters

5. Employer Address Line 1 – Street Address (e.g. 123 Sample St)

This is a required field.

6. Employer Address Line 2 - Unit number (e.g. Suite 6, Floor 10, etc…)

7. Employer Address City

This is a required field.

8. Employer Address State

California ▼

9. Employer Address ZIP

This is a required field.

10 Job Title

This is a required field.

11. Do you work more or less than 20 hours a week?
○ 20 or more hours a week
○ Less than 20 hours a week

12. Please indicate whether you are pursuing contract work or have started your own business.
○ Self-Employed
○ Volunteer/Unpaid
○ Employment through a Temp Agency or Consulting Firm
○ None of the Above

For Current Employer: you'll be asked to complete the extra STEM section of this form (see next slide)

For New Employer: you'll be asked to complete all fields

Address: We recommend that you verify the standard formatting of your employer's address by using the "look up a ZIP code" feature on USPS.com.

Address Street 1 **should NOT contain the suite or office number. Please enter that in the field** *Address Street 2.*

Step 2: Update SSU (Employer info)

For your STEM employer, please also complete sections 13-18. This information is required for STEM reporting.

13 *24-MONTH STEM REQUESTS ONLY- THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR ANYONE ON /REQUESTING A 24-MONTH STEM EXTENSION AND SHOULD MATCH THE INFORMATION AS LISTED ON YOUR FORM I-983.*

IF YOU ARE ON A 12-MONTH OPT & HAVE NO SUBMITTED A STEM REQUEST THESE QUESTIONS ARE OPTIONAL AND YOU DO NOT NEED TO FILL OUT A FORM I-983.

Enter the Company's E-Verify Number

Employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number: Your employer should be able to provide you with this information. More *information about the E-Verify program at* *http://www.uscis.gov/e-verify*

14 Enter the company's Employer Identification Number (EIN).

Employer Identification Number: Your employer should be able to provide you with this information.

15 Company Official's First Name (See I-983 Form section 5 for your Company Official's name & contact information)

Company Official Information: This should match the information you listed on I-983 form section 5.

16. Company Official's Last Name

17 Company Official's Phone Number

18 Company Official's Email Address

On the next pages, you will be give some instructions and asked to upload your I-983.

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Step 2: Update SSU (Upload I-983)

Upload Documents

Please upload your **completed** I-983(s) following the instructions below.

Important Points for consideration:

- The I-983 is a 5-page form and must be uploaded in ONE FILE, not as individual pages.
- We do not accept electronic signatures on the I-983. Please obtain handwritten signatures.
- Please ensure all responses are visible on the I-983. *The fillable PDF cuts off, so if your text exceeds the space allowed, please submit a separate attachment.*
- Does Section 1, DSO Name and Contact Information look like this? If no, please edit it before uploading.

Designated School Official (DSO) Name and Contact Information:

Mikaela Auerbach
2150 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 500,
 Berkeley, CA 94704
510-642-2818 SEVISCoordinator@berkeley.edu

TO UPLOAD:

1. Click the green Add Files button
2. Select the correct file to upload
3. Once file has been uploaded, identify your document by selected an option in the drop down menu under "Type of Document" on the right
4. Repeat this process for all required documents. You may upload more than one type of each document, if necessary
5. To finish the process, click Submit Uploads. You will not be able to make changes after you click Submit

According to your profile information, Granell, Vanina, we need the following documents from you:

- Additional I-983

Note: Maximum File Size limit is 10MB

+ Add files...   **Log Out**

Please select an option

Add any comments for the Advisor:	Click for Download:	Click for Preview:	10.45 KB	Type of Document:	
Comments upto 500 characters		files1.jpeg		--Select-- ▾	🗑 Delete
(No HTML)					

Select I-983

+ Add files...

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Step 2: Update SSU (Delivery Method)

After uploading, you'll be asked to provide a Delivery Method for your new I-20.

Answer the questions as applicable and continue through the form clicking **Continue** until you reach the Submission Summary page.

Note: **Express Mail** will require payment from you via E-Ship Global. You will need to follow the instructions given and provide an order number. BIO will use this order number to send your I-20 to you.

Delivery Method

Now, please **choose your Delivery Method** for your I-20 below. *If you a*

Delivery Method Choices
- **Express Mail**
  - Has priority (faster) delivery
  - Issues a tracking number so you can track your document
  - Requires payment from you via EshipGlobal Order Number (ins
- **USPS Airmail**
  - Can take up to 4 weeks to deliver
  - Has no tracking number
  - Is free for you
- **Pick Up**
  - Available for pick up in person from Berkeley International Office
  - You may designate someone to pick up on your behalf

How would you like to receive your STEM OPT I-20 from BIO?

- ○ Express Mail
- ○ USPS AirMail (tracking is not available)
- ○ Pick Up

This is a required field. Select at least one option.

Step 2: Submit Your SSU Form

Summary

← Go Back

⚠ **Warning!** Your application is not complete until you review your information and click "Submit" below ⚠

STEM Post Completion Services Payment Instructions (click here to edit this section)

The STEM OPT Post-Completion Services fee pays for all services related to your F-1 24-month STEM Optional Practical Training (OPT) visa status maintenance provided by BIO as required by DHS federal regulations.

The STEM OPT Post-Completion Services Fee is required only for students applying for F-1 24-Month Optional Practical Training (STEM OPT).

Note: This payment is **not** the only part of your **STEM OPT I-20 Request.** You must submit all your STEM Application materials via SSU Hub as instructed on our STEM OPT webpage.

STEM I-20 Requests will not be processed without payment or a complete application.

At the end, you will reach the summary page. Review your information and click Submit at the bottom of the page.
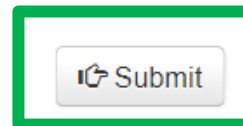
⇨ Submit

Lastly, you will get to the Submission Confirmation page

Submission Confirmation

✔ You have successfully submitted this form.

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Step 3: Submit STEM OPT Post-Completion Services Fee Payment

The STEM OPT Post-Completion Services fee pays for all services related to your F-1 24-month STEM OPT visa status maintenance provided by BIO as required by DHS federal regulations.

STEM I-20 requests will not be processed without payment or a complete application. **This fee is non-refundable.**

In your SSU Hub, submit your $530* Post-Completion Services Fee to Berkeley International Office via credit/debit card by clicking "**Submit your STEM OPT Payment**" link at the bottom of the SSU Hub homepage. You will receive a receipt via email.

Other Request & Reporting Forms

- Apply For STEM OPT Extension
- H-1B Cap Gap Extension I-20 Request
- J-1 Academic Training Final Evaluation (for J-1 students ONLY)
- Report EARLY End of OPT/Academic Training
- Submit STEM OPT Post-Completion Fee Payment (.

Receive your I-20 and check it for accuracy

STEM OPT I-20 processing time is 5 business days. This does not include mailing time.

Check your I-20 and notify BIO immediately if there are any errors with your I-20.

School Attestation
Make sure there is a BIO advisor signature. Check the date – USCIS must receive your application within 60 days of the ISSUE Date date listed on page 1.

Student Attestation
You should sign & date I-20. Students 18 and over do not need a parent's signature.

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Check your OPT I-20 for accuracy

I-20, Page 2

Employment Authorization Dates
Check 24-month STEM OPT start and end dates. Verify employer name for accuracy.

Travel Endorsements
Check for adviser signature. Endorsements are good for 6-month periods.

You will receive a new travel signature at the time you request your OPT STEM I-20.

Please note: USCIS must receive your application within 60 days of the DATE ISSUED date on PAGE 1, *not* the travel signature date. (The travel signature may be a later date.)

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status
OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: N0012645978 (F-1)   NAME: Bear Oski

EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATIONS

TYPE	FULL/PART-TIME	STATUS	START DATE	END DATE
POST-COMPLETION OPT	FULL TIME	APPROVED	15 JUNE 2016	14 JUNE 2017
STEM OPT	FULL TIME	REQUESTED	15 JUNE 2017	15 JUNE 2019

EMPLOYER INFORMATION

TYPE		AUTHORIZATION DATES		
POST-COMPLETION OPT		15 JUNE 2016 - 14 JUNE 2017		
EMPLOYER NAME	START DATE	END DATE	CITY & STATE	
Berkeley International Office	22 AUGUST 2016		Berkeley, CA	

TYPE		AUTHORIZATION DATES		
STEM OPT		15 JUNE 2017 - 15 JUNE 2019		
EMPLOYER NAME	START DATE	END DATE	CITY & STATE	
Berkeley International Office	15 JUNE 2017		Berkeley, CA	

CHANGE OF STATUS/CAP-GAP EXTENSION

AUTHORIZED REDUCED COURSE LOAD

CURRENT SESSION DATES

CURRENT SESSION START DATE	CURRENT SESSION END DATE
24 AUGUST 2016	13 MAY 2016

TRAVEL ENDORSEMENT

This page, when properly endorsed, may be used for re-entry of the student to attend the same school after a temporary absence from the United States. Each endorsement is valid for one year.

Designated School Official	TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE ISSUED	PLACE ISSUED
Adviser Name	DSO|Berkeley, CA	x *AdvisorSignature*	MM/DD/YYYY	
		X		
		X		
		X		

ICE Form I-20 (3/31/2018)   Page 2 of 3

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Step 4:
Prepare & Submit
Your Application Materials

Can I file my USCIS OPT/STEM OPT Extension online?

This tutorial provides instructions for submitting the OPT or STEM OPT application <u>by mail</u>. USCIS has recently made the <u>I-765 form</u> and OPT/STEM OPT applications available for e-filing. See the <u>USCIS e-filing website</u> for more information.

What is e-filing?

USCIS e-filing allows you to:
- Create a USCIS account
- Pay the USCIS I-765 fee online
- Complete the I-765 form online and upload documents

USCIS will send all notifications to you via your online account. These include pending notices, requests for evidence, denials and approvals. USCIS will also send you these notices in paper form through the mail.

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Can I file my USCIS OPT/STEM OPT Extension online?

Pros of e-filing:

- Lower risk of rejection due to payment issues, mistakes in filling out the application or forgotten documents
- Application moves to adjudicator faster than a paper application would
- No risk of your application documents lost in the mail, or mail delays
- Immediate receipt number
- You can receive and respond to requests for evidence or other problems online
- You can communicate with USCIS via your online account
- Students filing recently have reported no major problems and found the online process easy to understand

Cons of e-filing:

- BIO is not currently able to provide advising on the exact process, since we are not able to directly access the online application. (The questions in the online form should be similar to the paper I-765, so you can use this tutorial as a rough guide.)
- If you submit the I-765 online BEFORE you receive your STEM OPT I-20, your application will be DENIED. **Don't finish the I-765 until you have the STEM OPT I-20!**

Should I file my I-765 application online?

The e-file option is simpler and has less risks than filing by mail. But, BIO isn't able to provide high levels of support in reviewing your application. If you encounter problems, check with BIO and we will do our best to direct you to resources for support. The USCIS Ombudsman has a helpful website with a detailed Q&A about I-765 e-filing questions which may be helpful to you.

Required documents for STEM OPT application

All documents should be printed or copied single-sided

- ☐ 2 U.S. Passport Photos taken within the past 30 days. If filing by MAIL include your name and I-94 number written lightly in pencil on back of each.

- ☐ USCIS Fee. SEE the USCIS I-765 page for current filing fee.

- ☐ (ONLY IF FILING BY MAIL) Form G-1145 to confirm receipt and obtain case number in advance of paper notification: https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145

- ☐ Form I-765. IF FILING BY MAIL: Original, signed form I-765. https://www.uscis.gov/i-765 SEE I-765 SECTION FOR DETAILS regarding filing online or by mail.

- ☐ Copy of STEM OPT I-20 (pages 1-3) that was issued by BIO within the past 60 days. Don't forget to sign it!

- ☐ Copy of your previous OPT and/ or previous STEM OPT I-20s.

- ☐ Copy of any previous OPT EAD or STEM EAD. If you still have the approval notice (form I-797), attach a copy as well.

- ☐ Copy of passport biographical page and F-1 visa stamp, if applicable.

- ☐ Copy of expired passport biographical page if you used that document to enter the US most recently.

- ☐ Print out of electronic I-94 record (or photocopy of both sides of paper Form I-94)

- ☐ Proof of final STEM degree: Final Transcript and/or copy of your diploma showing the major and degree level that makes you eligible for the STEM extension.

- ☐ RARE: If the OPT STEM extension is **based on a prior degree (not the degree listed on your current OPT I-20)** include:
  - ☐ the I-20 from your previous school. If the I-20 is not available, request a screenshot of your SEVIS record
  - – Evidence that the previous school is currently accredited by the U.S. Department of education and is certified by SEVP

- ☐ Additional Documents- Check the BIO STEM webpage to see if you should submit additional support letters with your STEM application for concurrent H1-B filing or for certain specific majors

No documents are required for F-2 dependents.

Gather the required documentation

Passport Photo Requirements

The photos required to use for the OPT application must meet the specifications of U.S. style passport photos. To see a full description of these specifications, go to the U.S. Department of State website.

• Submit 2 identical color passport photos taken within 30 days of filing your application. The photos must have a white to off-white background, be printed on thin paper with a glossy finish, and be unmounted and unretouched. The passport-style photos must be 2" by 2". You must remove your glasses and your head must be bare unless you are wearing headwear as required by a religious order of which you are a member.

• E-FILING: you must either scan them or take a picture with your phone. See instructions in the online I-765 application!

• Filing by MAIL: Using pencil or felt tip (soft) pen, lightly print your name and I-94 number on the back of the photo. Do not damage the photo surface by pressing hard while writing.
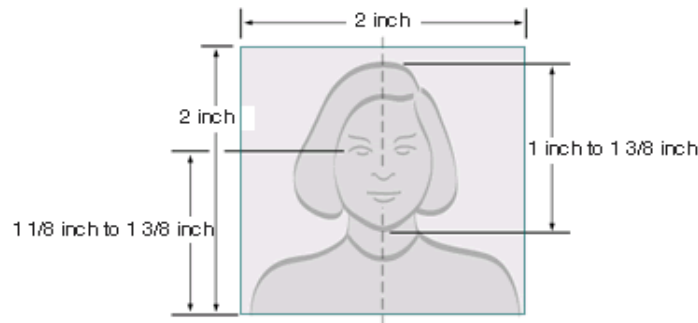
USCIS has been examining passport photos more strictly. BIO recommends students have their photos taken professionally. Recently, students have been visiting the following locations to obtain their photos.

Metro Publishing
2440 Bancroft Way
Berkeley, CA 94704
http://www.yelp.com/biz/metro-publishing-berkeley

Foto Shop
131 Berkeley Sq
Berkeley, CA 94704
http://www.yelp.com/biz/foto-shop-berkeley

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Preparing your USCIS fee payment method: E-filing

E-Filing

- If you e-file the form I-765, the online form will automatically calculate the correct fee and you will pay online when you submit the e-filed application.

- You must pay with a valid credit or debit card, or provide your bank routing and checking account numbers to have money taken directly from your U.S. bank account.

- Check the USCIS I-765 website for the current filing fee.

- DO NOT complete the submission of your I-765 or pay the fee until you have your OPT STEM I-20 and all other required documents!

Preparing your USCIS fee payment method: Filing by MAIL

- The current I-765 fee is **$410 but could change at any time.** You must pay the correct fee at the correct time. SEE THE I-765 FORM/FEE SECTION BEFORE MAKING YOUR PAYMENT!

- Check/Money Order should be made payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security" with SEVIS number in the memo line. Money orders can be purchased at banks, post office, and some local grocery stores. Make sure a name and address are printed on the check. If the address has changed, that is fine. Do not use "temporary checks" often issued by the bank when opening a new account. These checks have no name or address in the upper left hand corner.

- For Credit Card payment, submit form G-1450, authorized payment for the **correct fee amount**. You may only use a credit card account with a U.S. billing address—no foreign billing address is allowed. You can use cards with Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover. See Pay Your USCIS Fees with a Credit Card

- MOST DENIALS FOR APPLICATIONS FILED BY MAIL ARE DUE TO BAD PAYMENTS! IF YOU USE A CHECK OR CREDIT CARD MAKE SURE YOU MAINTAIN SUFFICIENT FUNDS IN THE ACCOUNT.

Money orders and cashier checks should include the same information as a personal check.

Check & money order examples are for application postmarked **BEFORE** 10/02/2020. Remember to check the fee before mailing!

Gather the required documentation

Form G-1145
(Use only if filing by Mail, NOT e-filing)

- Attach to the top of the OPT STEM Application Packet
- This is an optional form. Use this form to request text and email notification(s) regarding your application.
- Download the form at https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145

WARNING!

USCIS will <u>rarely</u> contact you by phone regarding the status of your application.

If you receive a phone call from a person claiming to work for USCIS or any other government agency, do not provide your personal information to them. Note the person's name and phone number and contact a BIO advisor before responding.

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I-765 FORM & FEEs

USCIS occasionally updates both the **I-765 FORM** and the **I-765 FEE**. Please pay attention if you are mailing your application to be sure you pay *exactly* the correct fee and use *exactly* the correct edition of the I-765 form.

- **If you are applying by Mail:** Check the USCIS I-765 website ON THE DATE OF MAILING to be certain you are using the correct form edition and paying the correct fee.
- **If you are applying by e-filing:** The online application will automatically be up-to date with the current form and fees.

Some parts of the I-765 can be confusing. The following slides will help you complete those "tricky" questions.

E-FILING: Please note that the paper I-765 mirrors the online I-765 when e-filing, but some questions for e-filing may be missing, since the form adapts as you answer. You can use the following section of the tutorial as a support for e-filing *or* filing by mail. The USCIS Ombudsman has a helpful website with a detailed Q&A about I-765 e-filing questions which may be helpful to you.

Contact BIO with ANY questions or uncertainties about completing the I-765.

I-765 Form & Fee- Applying by Mail (paper form)

Form I-765

Download the Form I-765 DIRECTLY from the USCIS I-765 web site and review the Instructions for Form I-765 found there.

You DO NOT need to complete the I-765WS (I-765 Worksheet).

Important: Use ONLY the I-765 version indicated under the "Edition Date" on the USCIS website.

1. Download I-765 form just before mailing the application since USCIS updates the form frequently.
2. Check the Filing Fee on the date of mailing!

Form Details

Close All   Open All

Edition Date

Where to File

Filing Fee

Checklist of Required Initial Evidence (for informational purposes only)

Special Instructions

Close All   Open All

Click to expand
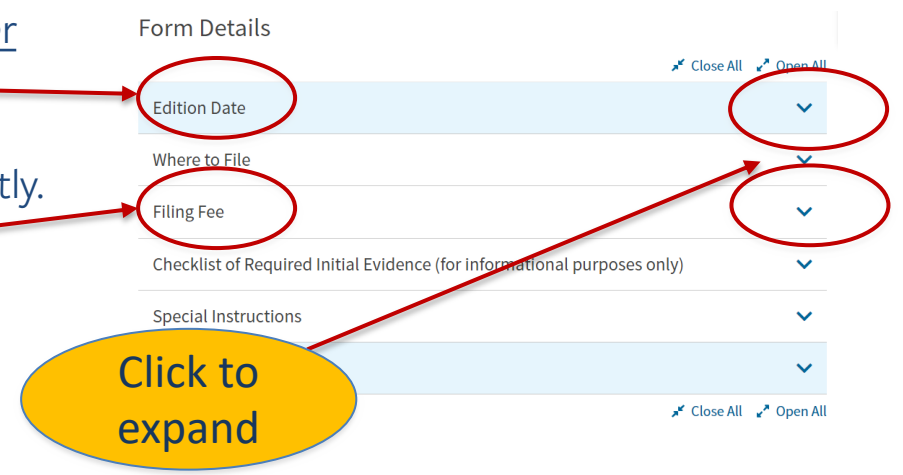
How to fill out paper Form I-765

- Type or print legibly in in black ink.
- Answer all questions fully and accurately.
- If a question does not apply to you, type or print "N/A"
- Print and complete ALL pages 1-7. If any pages are missing, your application will be rejected!
- Print all pages single-sided

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FORM I-765 (Paper form)

Where can I find the Form Edition date on the paper I-765?

The form edition date is found in the lower left hand corner of the I-765 form. This is an *example*. You are responsible for confirming the correct edition at the time of mailing.

Complete the Form I-765

Top Portion: leave this entire section blank

PART 1. Reason for Applying, pg. 1

Check the "1.a." box for "Initial Permission to accept employment."

Why shouldn't I select 1.c. since STEM is a renewal of my OPT authorization? Isn't Renewal more correct?

NO. The USCIS instructions for filling out the I-765 state that you should select 1a if you are "requesting employment authorization **for the first time under a specific eligibility category."** The OPT and STEM OPT eligibility categories are *different,* so this is your *first time* requesting permission to accept employment under the STEM OPT eligibility category. (You will write the STEM eligibility category on #27 of the I-765.)

Leave blank

> **START HERE - Type or print in** black ink. Answer all questions fully and accurately. If a question does not apply to you (for example, if you have never been married and the question asks, "Provide the name of your current spouse"), type or print "N/A" unless otherwise directed. If your answer to a question which requires a numeric response is zero or none (for example, "How many children do you have" or "How many times have you departed the United States"), type or print "None" unless otherwise directed.

Part 1. Reason for Applying

I am applying for (select **only one** box):

1.a. [x] Initial permission to accept employment.

1.b. [ ] Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document, or correction of my employment authorization document **NOT DUE** to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) error.

NOTE: Replacement (correction) of an employment authorization document due to USCIS error does not require a new Form I-765 and filing fee. Refer to **Replacement for Card Error** in the **What is the Filing Fee** section of the Form I-765 Instructions for further details.

1.c. [ ] Renewal of my permission to accept employment. (Attach a copy of your previous employment authorization document.)

Complete the Form I-765

PART 2. Information About You, pg. 1

#1 Name

Your entire family name should be in CAPITAL letters. Use upper and lower case for the first name. Please write your name exactly as it appears in the *Surname/Family Name* and *Given Name* fields on your I-20. Note your I-20 DOES NOT have the Middle Name field!

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status
OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: **N0004705512**

SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME	GIVEN NAME	CLASS
Doe Smith	John	
PREFERRED NAME	PASSPORT NAME	**F-1**
John Doe-Smith		
COUNTRY OF BIRTH	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP	
UNITED KINGDOM	UNITED KINGDOM	

#2-4 Other Names Used

Enter your previous names, including nicknames you have used in official records or documentation. If your I-20 *Preferred Name* is different then the names you wrote for #1, include that here. If none, write "N/A"

If you are typing out the I-765 electronically, be aware that the form does not allow you to write the "/" character into these fields. You will need to hand-write the "N/A" wherever this appears in the instructions.

Part 2. Information About You

Your Full Legal Name

1.a. Family Name (Last Name) — FAMILY NAME

1.b. Given Name (First Name) — First Name

1.c. Middle Name — N/A

Other Names Used

Provide all other names you have ever used, including aliases, maiden name, and nicknames. If you need extra space to complete this section, use the space provided in **Part 6. Additional Information.**

2.a. Family Name (Last Name) — N/A

2.b. Given Name (First Name) — N/A

2.c. Middle Name — N/A

3.a. Family Name (Last Name) — N/A

3.b. Given Name (First Name) — N/A

3.c. Middle Name — N/A

4.a. Family Name (Last Name) — N/A

4.b. Given Name (First Name) — N/A

4.c. Middle Name — N/A

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Complete the Form I-765

PART 2. Information About You, pg. 2

U.S. Mailing Address
This is where you would like the Receipt Notice and the EAD card to be mailed. ***This is very important!***

The address should be valid for at least 3-5 months, the length of time it will take to process the application. If you have plans to move during this time, use a reliable friend or family member's address to receive the EAD (indicate this in **#5.a.)** It is also possible to use a P.O. Box for mailing addresses.

OR- you can use your current address and update your address with USCIS. Keep in mind that address changes can take 10 business days to process, and could jeopardize your OPT EAD delivery. We recommend keeping the same address for your entire OPT processing, if possible.

#5.a. If the mailing address belongs to someone other than yourself, put their full name (First Name Last Name) here. This person MUST be listed as a resident of the address with the U.S. Postal Service. If this is your address, write "**N/A**."

#5.b-5.e Write a valid mailing address in the U.S. It may be a residence, commercial address, or PO Box. *You may not use BIO's address.*

#6 If you listed a mailing address that is **NOT** your current physical living address, select "No" and complete **#7.a-7.e.** with your current physical address. If "Yes", write "**N/A**" in **#7.a-7.e.** Physical address should reflect where you actually live.

Part 2. Information About You (continued)

Your U.S. Mailing Address

5.a. In Care Of Name (if any)
Oski Bear (*or N/A if this is your address*)

5.b. Street Number and Name
123 College Ave

5.c. [X] Apt. [ ] Ste. [ ] Flr.   **8**

5.d. City or Town   **Berkeley**

5.e. State **CA**   **5.f.** ZIP Code   **94720**
(USPS ZIP Code Lookup)

6. Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?
[ ] Yes [X] No
If no, complete 7.a-7.d
NOTE: If you answered "No" to **Item Number 6.**, provide your physical address below.

U.S. Physical Address

7.a. Street Number and Name   **987 Example Street**

7.b. [x] Apt. [ ] Ste. [ ] Flr.   **45A**

7.c. City or Town   **Oakland**

7.d. State **CA**   **7.e.** ZIP Code   **94604**

Complete the Form I-765

PART 2, pg. 2, continued...

Other Information

8. F-1 students do not have an A-Number, leave this blank.

9. F-1 students do not have a USCIS Online Account Number, leave this blank.

10-11. The responses to these questions should be straightforward. Please complete them accurately.

12.
Check "Yes" since you have previously applied for an EAD. You will need to provide copies of your previous EADs. If you have previously applied for OPT or STEM OPT and have been Rejected or Denied, you will also need to provide a copy of the rejection/denial notice. (See Slide 50 for further details.)

Other Information

8. Alien Registration Number (A-Number) (if any)
   ▶ A- [Leave blank]

9. USCIS Online Account Number (if any)
   ▶ [Leave blank]

10. Gender   [x] Male   [ ] Female

11. Marital Status
    [x] Single   [ ] Married   [ ] Divorced   [ ] Widowed

12. Have you previously filed Form I-765?
    [x] Yes   [ ] No

You will need to provide copy(s) of your previous EAD(s). If you have been rejected or denied for OPT/STEM OPT, you will also need to provide a copy of the rejection notice.

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Complete the Form I-765

PART 2, pg. 2, continued...

#13.a.-17.b. **Social Security Number (SSN)**

#13.a.-13.b.

You will already have an SSN from your previous OPT. Check "Yes" and enter your SSN with one letter in each box.

#14.

Since you probably already have an SSN, you will not need to apply for one. Check "No" and leave questions #15-17 blank.

Check "Yes" if you need a replacement SSN card and complete **#15-17.b**

13.a. Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?

If yes, complete 13.b ☒ Yes   ☐ No *If no, skip to 14*

NOTE: If you answered "No" to Item Number 13.a., skip to Item Number 14. If you answered "Yes" to Item Number 13.a., provide the information requested in Item Number 13.b.

13.b. Provide your Social Security number (SSN) (if known).

► **1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9**

14. Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card? (You must also answer "Yes" to **Item Number 15.**, **Consent for Disclosure**, to receive a card.)

If no, skip to 18

If yes, complete 15-17.b   ☐ Yes   ☒ No

NOTE: If you answered "No" to Item Number 14., skip to **Part 2., Item Number 18.a.** If you answered "Yes" to Item Number 14., you must also answer "Yes" to **Item Number 15.**

15. **Consent for Disclosure:** I authorize disclosure of information from this application to the SSA as required for the purpose of assigning me an SSN and issuing me a Social Security card.   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

NOTE: If you answered "Yes" to Item Numbers 14. - 15., provide the information requested in **Item Numbers 16.a. - 17.b.**

Father's Name

Provide your father's birth name.

16.a. Family Name (Last Name)

16.b. Given Name (First Name)

Mother's Name

Provide your mother's birth name.

17.a. Family Name (Last Name)

17.b. Given Name (First Name)

You should receive your Social Security card from SSA about 2 weeks after receiving your approved EAD from USCIS.

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Complete the Form I-765

PART 2, pg. 2-3 continued...

The responses to these questions are straightforward. Please complete them accurately.

#18 Countries of Citizenship, pg 2

List all as applicable (*use Part 6 of the I-765 if needed*) or write "N/A" in **18.b.** if you do not have multiple citizenships.

#19-20 Place of Birth, pg 3

List the name of the country as it was named when you were born, even if it's name has changed

Make sure your Date of Birth is in the correct format of MONTH - DAY - YEAR. (*01/31/1998 not 31/01/1998*)

Your Country or Countries of Citizenship or Nationality

List all countries where you are currently a citizen or national. If you need extra space to complete this item, use the space provided in **Part 6. Additional Information**.

18.a. Country
Australia

18.b. Country
N/A

Place of Birth

List the city/town/village, state/province, and country where you were born.

19.a. City/Town/Village of Birth
Brisbane

19.b. State/Province of Birth
Queensland

19.c. Country of Birth
Australia

20. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)
01/31/1998

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Complete the Form I-765

PART 2, pg. 3 continued...

Information About Your Last Arrival

#21.a. I-94 Number
Use your current I-94 number. This is at the number found on the electronic I-94 record or on the top left corner of the paper Form I-94 card (see example). I-94 numbers issued prior to May 2019 are 11 characters long and contain only numbers. Example: 01234567890. I-94 numbers starting in May 2019 have a format of 9 numbers, followed by a letter, then another number. Example: 012345678A1.

#21.b-e. Passport Information
Enter the information directly from your passport. This passport should match the country on your I-20.

In cases where you entered the US on a passport that is now expired, **enter the number of your expired passport**. (You will provide information on the **new** passport on pg. 7 of the application.)

#21.c. Travel Document
Write "none" here

Complete the Form I-765

PART 2, pg. 3 continued...

#22 Date of Last Entry into the U.S.
Your most recent entry date can be found on your passport admission stamp, electronic I-94 record, or paper I-94 card.

#23 Place of Last Arrival into the U.S.
Name of the Port of Entry city from your most recent entry. This information can be found on your passport admission stamp, travel history section of your electronic I-94 record, or paper I-94 card (usually as a code , i.e. "SFR" for San Francisco). If you drove across the border, write the name of the city where entered the U.S.

#24 Immigration Status at Last Entry
Status in which you entered the U.S. If you entered with an I-20 as a student, write "F-1 Student."

#25 Current Immigration Status
Current status should be "F-1 student." If not, talk to a BIO advisor, and this status should be reflected in your current I-94.

#26 SEVIS ID
Your SEVIS ID appears on the top left side of your I-20 and starts with N00...

22. Date of Your Last Arrival Into the United States, On or About (mm/dd/yyyy)   **12/19/2017**

23. Place of Your Last Arrival Into the United States   **SFR**

24. Immigration Status at Your Last Arrival (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, or no status)   **F-1 Student**

25. Your Current Immigration Status or Category (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, parolee, deferred action, or no status or category)   **F-1 Student**

26. Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)   ► N-   **0023104289**

Complete the Form I-765

PART 2, pg. 3 continued…

Information about your Eligibility Category

#27 Eligibility Category
Use the code (c) (3) (C) for STEM OPT.

#28.a. Degree: Indicate your degree level AND the name of your UC Berkeley STEM-qualifying Major as it appears on your transcript or diploma (NOT your I-20).

* RARE: If you are applying based on a previous degree (not the degree listed on your UC Berkeley OPT I-20) indicate that degree

Note that for some programs, the name of your Major differs from the way it appears on your I-20. This will be addressed LATER in section 6 of the I-765.

You cannot qualify based on a minor.

#28.b. Employer's Name: Your employer should be able to provide you with this information.

#28.c. E-Verify Number: Your employer should be able to provide you with this information.

For more information about the E-Verify program, see http://www.uscis.gov/e-verify

27. **Eligibility Category.** Refer to the **Who May File Form I-765** section of the Form I-765 Instructions to determine the appropriate eligibility category for this application. Enter the appropriate letter and number for your eligibility category below (for example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii)).

(C) (3) (C)

28. **(c)(3)(C) STEM OPT Eligibility Category.** If you entered the eligibility category **(c)(3)(C)** in **Item Number 27.**, provide the information requested in **Item Numbers 28.a - 28.c.**

28.a. Degree *Degree level and Major (Example: Masters, Chemical Engineering)*

28.b. Employer's Name as Listed in E-Verify *Employer Name as listed in e-Verify*

28.c. Employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a Valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number *Employer's E-Verify Number*

Complete the Form I-765

PART 2, pg. 3 continued…

#29-31.b Other Eligibility Categories (c)(26), (c)(8)
Write "N/A" in these fields. These questions are for *other* types of I-765 applications for *other* visa categories.
Write "N/A" in these fields or leave check boxes blank as they are not applicable to applying for STEM OPT.

29. **(c)(26) Eligibility Category.** If you entered the eligibility category (c)(26) in **Item Number 27.**, provide the receipt number of your H-1B spouse's most recent Form I-797 Notice for Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker.

▶ *N / A*

30. **(c)(8) Eligibility Category** If you entered the eligibility category (c)(8) in **Item Number 27.**, provide the information requested in **Item Numbers 30.a. - 30.g.**

30.a. Have you **EVER** been arrested for, and/or charged with, and/or convicted of any crime in any country?

Leave blank ☐ Yes ☐ No

NOTE: If you answered "Yes" to **Item Number 30.a.**, refer to **Special Filing Instructions for Those With Pending Asylum Applications (c)(8)** of the Form I-765 Instructions for information about providing court dispositions.

30.b. Did you enter the United States lawfully through a U.S. port of entry and were you inspected and admitted or paroled after inspection by an immigration officer? (If you answer "Yes," you **MUST** provide evidence of your lawful entry.)

Leave blank ☐ Yes ☐ No

30.c. If you answered "No" to **Item Number 30.b.**, did you present yourself to the Secretary of Homeland Security or his or her delegate (DHS) within 48 hours of entry or attempted entry **AND** express an intention to seek asylum within the United States or express a fear of persecution or torture in your home country?

Leave blank ☐ Yes ☐ No

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Complete the Form I-765

PART 2, pg. 4: 30.d-31.b

These questions are for *other* visa categories, NOT for F-1 students applying for F-1 STEM OPT Extension.

If you answered "Yes" to **Item Number 30.c.**, provide the following information:

30.d. Date you presented yourself to DHS
N/A

30.e. Location where you presented yourself to DHS
N/A

30.f. Country of claimed persecution
N/A

30.g. Provide an explanation for why you did not enter the United States lawfully through a U.S. port of entry. If you need extra space to complete this item, use the space provided in **Part 6. Additional Information**.

N/A

NOTE: Refer to the **Special Filing Instructions for Those With Pending Asylum Applications (c)(8)** section of the Form I-765 Instructions for more information.

31.a. **(c)(35) and (c)(36) Eligibility Category.** If you entered the eligibility category (c)(35) in **Item Number 27.**, please provide the receipt number of your Form I-797 Notice for Form I-140, Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker. If you entered the eligibility category (c)(36) in **Item Number 27.**, please provide the receipt number of your spouse's or parent's Form I-797 Notice for Form I-140.

► *Leave blank*

Leave blank **31.b.** If you entered the eligibility category (c)(35) or (c)(36) in **Item Number 27.**, have you **EVER** been arrested for and/or convicted of any crime? ☐ Yes ☐ No

NOTE: If you answered "Yes" to **Item Number 31.b.**, refer to **Employment-Based Nonimmigrant Categories**, Items **8. - 9.**, in the **Who May File Form I-765** section of the Form I-765 Instructions for information about providing court dispositions.

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Complete the Form I-765

PART 3. Applicant's Statement, pg. 4

#1.a. Select 1.a. to indicate that you have read and understood the questions.

#3-6 Provide your information as requested

Part 3. Applicant's Statement, Contact Information, Declaration, Certification, and Signature

NOTE: Read the **Penalties** section of the Form I-765 Instructions before completing this section. You must file Form I-765 while in the United States.

Applicant's Statement

NOTE: Select the box for either **Item Number 1.a.** or **1.b.** If applicable, select the box for **Item Number 2.**

1.a. ☒ I can read and understand English, and I have read and understand every question and instruction on this application and my answer to every question.

1.b. ☐ The interpreter named in **Part 4.** read to me every question and instruction on this application and my answer to every question in

Leave blank

a language in which I am fluent, and I understood everything.

2. ☐ At my request, the preparer named in **Part 5.**,

Leave blank

prepared this application for me based only upon information I provided or authorized.

Applicant's Contact Information

3. Applicant's Daytime Telephone Number
1234567890

4. Applicant's Mobile Telephone Number (if any)
1234567890

5. Applicant's Email Address (if any)
oskibear67@gmail.com

6. ☐ Select this box if you are a Salvadoran or Guatemalan national eligible for benefits under the ABC settlement agreement.

Complete the Form I-765

PART 3, pg. 4-5

Applicant's Declaration and Certification

Read the entire declaration carefully.

Applicant's Signature

#7.a.-7.b. Hand sign your name and provide the date of the signature in black ink.

Important!
Because your signature will be scanned at USCIS, it must fit within the box. It must NOT touch the box outline. If it touches a line, your application could be delayed.
You must sign and date by hand in black ink. Do NOT use any form of e-signature including those that are replicas of your exact hand-written signature. Print the form and sign it with an actual pen. USCIS will DENY applications with e-signatures.

Troubleshooting Signature Line:
In some cases the "Don't forget to sign!" automatic reminder will not disappear when you print the form. You should remove the auto filled "Don't forget to sign!"

Applicant's Declaration and Certification

Copies of any documents I have submitted are exact photocopies of unaltered, original documents, and I understand that USCIS may require that I submit original documents to USCIS at a later date. Furthermore, I authorize the release of any information from any and all of my records that USCIS may need to determine my eligibility for the immigration benefit that I seek.

I furthermore authorize release of information contained in this application, in supporting documents, and in my USCIS

Applicant's Signature

7.a.   Applicant's Signature
➡   *Your signature here* (**don't touch the lines**)

7.b.   Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy)   MM/DD/YYYY

NOTE TO ALL APPLICANTS: If you do not completely fill out this application or fail to submit required documents listed in the Instructions, USCIS may deny your application.

We recommend trying to…
- open the form in the most recent version of Adobe Reader.
- print a blank version of the form's second page from your web browser.

Complete the Form I-765

PARTS 4 and 5, pgs. 5-6

These sections are not applicable to you, since you've completed the form yourself, so write "N/A." This section is for those who use an interpreter or translator, or other paid preparer (i.e. an attorney) to complete the form.

Part 4 pg. 5

Part 5 pg. 6

Complete the Form I-765

PART 6, Additional Information, pg. 7

#1.a.-1.c. Provide your name again as listed in Part 2, 1.a-1.c.

#2. Leave blank

#3.a-3.c. Reference Pg. 2, Part 2, Item 12

#3.d.

- Write "Previous OPT/STEM Authorizations" and list your previous OPT and STEM OPT start & end dates and receipt numbers

- Write "See attached documentation for previous OPT/STEM authorizations"

- Include copies of all previous and OPT/STEM I-20s and EAD cards with your application.

- If your previous OPT/ STEM OPT application was **Rejected or Denied** write "See attached documentation for previous I-765 STEM OPT rejection or denial." Include a copy of the STEM OPT rejection notice with your application.

Part 6. Additional Information

If you need extra space to provide any additional information within this application, use the space below. If you need more space than what is provided, you may make copies of this page to complete and file with this application or attach a separate sheet of paper. Type or print your name and A-Number (if any) at the top of each sheet; indicate the **Page Number**, **Part Number**, and **Item Number** to which your answer refers; and sign and date each sheet.

1.a. Family Name (Last Name): FAMILY NAME

1.b. Given Name (First Name): First Name

1.c. Middle Name: N/A

2. A-Number (if any) ▶ A-

3.a. Page Number: 2
3.b. Part Number: 2
3.c. Item Number: 12

3.d.
Previous OPT/STEM Authorizations:
OPT 1/8/2015-1/7/2016; WAC4565250057
OPT 8/8/2017-8/7/2018; SRC45985652500
(*These are examples only*)
See attached documentation for previous OPT/STEM authorizations.

See attached documentation for previous I-765 STEM OPT rejection or denial.

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Complete the Form I-765

Page 7, Part 6 if you:

- most recently entered the US on a passport that is no longer valid and you now have a renewed passport

If this does not apply to you skip to the next slide.

PART 6, Additional Information, pg. 7

#1.a.-1.c. Provide your name again as listed in Part 2, 1.a-1.c.

#2. Leave blank

#3.a-3.c. Reference Pg. 3, Part 2, Item 21.b.
(If you already used sections **3.a-3d** use the next available section, 4a-d, etc.)

#3d. Write an explanation that clarifies that you have two passports: one that you used for entry but is no longer valid, and one that is currently valid.

#3.d. Include copies of both passports and your I-94 with your application.

Part 6. Additional Information

If you need extra space to provide any additional information within this application, use the space below. If you need more space than what is provided, you may make copies of this page to complete and file with this application or attach a separate sheet of paper. Type or print your name and A-Number (if any) at the top of each sheet; indicate the **Page Number**, **Part Number**, and **Item Number** to which your answer refers; and sign and date each sheet.

1.a. Family Name (Last Name) — FAMILY NAME

1.b. Given Name (First Name) — First Name

1.c. Middle Name — N/A

2. A-Number (if any) ▶ A-

3.a. Page Number — 3

3.b. Part Number — 2

3.c. Item Number — 21.b

3.d. I most recently entered the US on MM-DD-YYYY with passport ######## and was issued I-94 #######. Since this date, I have renewed my passport. The number of my new passport is #######. See attached copies of both passports and the I-94.

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Complete the Form I-765

PART 6, pg. 7, continued...

#4.a-4.c. Reference Pg. 3, Part 2, Item 28

(If you already used sections **4.a-d.** use the next available section, 5a-d, etc.)

#4.d. Academic Info

- Write "Name of major in SEVIS:" and list your major *as written on your I-20*

- Write "University of California, Berkeley Approved CIP Code for Major:" and list the **CIP Code as written on I-20**. (If your STEM degree was received from a different school, NOT from UC Berkeley, use your STEM degree school's name.)

- Write "See attached I-20 and diploma or transcript"

- Include copies of your I-20 and diploma or transcript

The CIP code is a 6-digit code (XX.XXXX) found on your I-20
- Page 1 if I-20 issued on/after 6/26/2015
- Page 3 if I-20 issued before 6/26/15
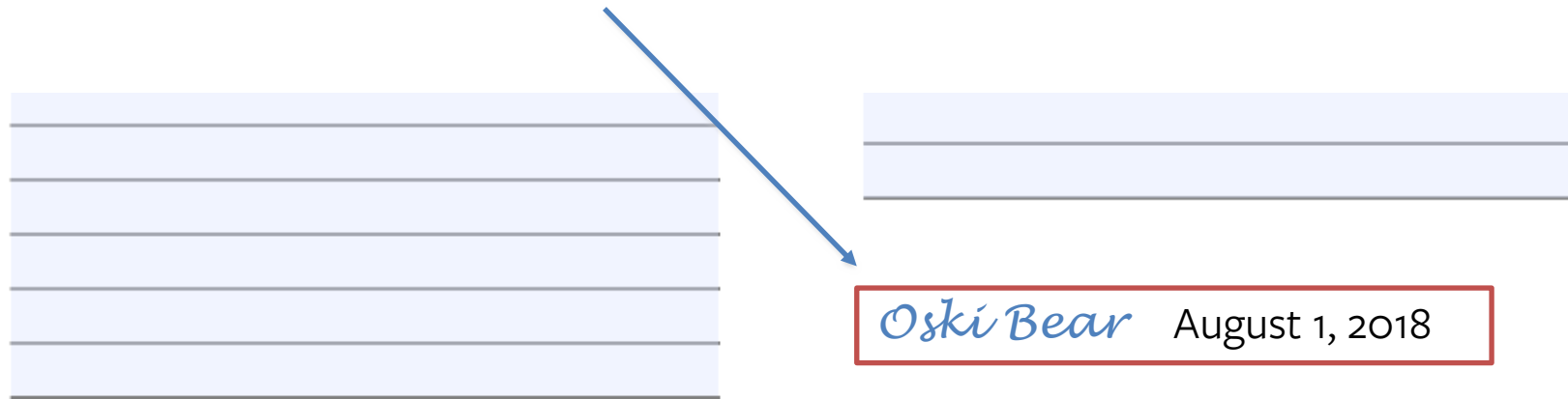
4.a. Page Number   **4.b.** Part Number   **4.c.** Item Number

3   2   28

4.d.

Name of major in SEVIS: *Civil and Environmental Engineering*

University of California, Berkeley Approved CIP Code for Major: *45.9595*

(*this is an example only*)

See attached I-20 and diploma or transcript

Department of Homeland Security   I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement   OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: N0012645978

SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME Bear	**GIVEN NAME** Oski	**Class of Admission**
PREFERRED NAME Oski	**PASSPORT NAME**	
COUNTRY OF BIRTH CHINA	**COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP** CANADA	**F-1**
DATE OF BIRTH 1 JANUARY 1992	**ADMISSION NUMBER** 123456789	
FORM ISSUE REASON CONTINUED ATTENDANCE - Updated Form I-20 or Name Conversion	**LEGACY NAME**	**ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE**

SCHOOL INFORMATION

SCHOOL NAME University of California at Berkeley University of California at Berkeley	**SCHOOL ADDRESS** Berkeley International Office, 2299 Piedmont, Berkeley, CA 94720
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL Isela Pena-Rager International Student Advisor	**SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE** SFR214F00615000 27 JANUARY 2003

PROGRAM OF STUDY

EDUCATION LEVEL MASTER'S	**MAJOR 1** Chemical Engineering 14.0701	**MAJOR 2** None 00.0000
PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Required	**ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES** Student is proficient	**EARLIEST ADMISSION DATE** 20 JULY 2015
START OF CLASSES 19 AUGUST 2015	**PROGRAM START/END DATE** 19 AUGUST 2015 - 13 MAY 2016	

FINANCIALS

ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 12 MONTHS		**STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR:** 12 MONTHS	
Tuition and Fees	$ 31,395	Personal Funds	$ 0
Living Expenses	$ 18,000	Funds From This School	$
Expenses of Dependents (0)	$	Family Support	$ 49,395
Other	$	On-Campus Employment	$

Complete the Form I-765

IF YOU ADDED ANY INFORMATION TO PAGE 7, PART 6, you must add your signature and the date to in the blank space at the bottom right-hand side of page 7.

You must sign and date by hand in black ink. Do NOT use any form of e-signature including those that are replicas of your exact hand-written signature. USCIS frequently denies applications with e-signatures.

Oski Bear   August 1, 2018

Form I-765

Page 7 of 7

Complete the Form I-765

You are done with the I-765!

1. Review all the information on the form for accuracy. You must submit **ALL** 7 pages of the paper I-765.

2. Make a copy of your completed I-765 application to keep for your records, in case there is a problem with the application.

3. Next, gather the required documentation and copies. See the following slides...

Gather the required documentation

Photocopy of UCB OPT STEM I-20 (all pages):

- Must be received by USCIS within 60 days of DATE ISSUED on page 1.

- Original must be signed by a BIO advisor *by hand before copying*.

- Original must be signed *by hand* by the student at the bottom of page 1 *before copying*.

- The requested OPT start and end dates will appear on page 2.

- Do not mail the original I-20.

Gather the required documentation

Photocopy of PREVIOUS OPT I-20 (all pages):

Page 2 should show your initial 12-month OPT authorization.
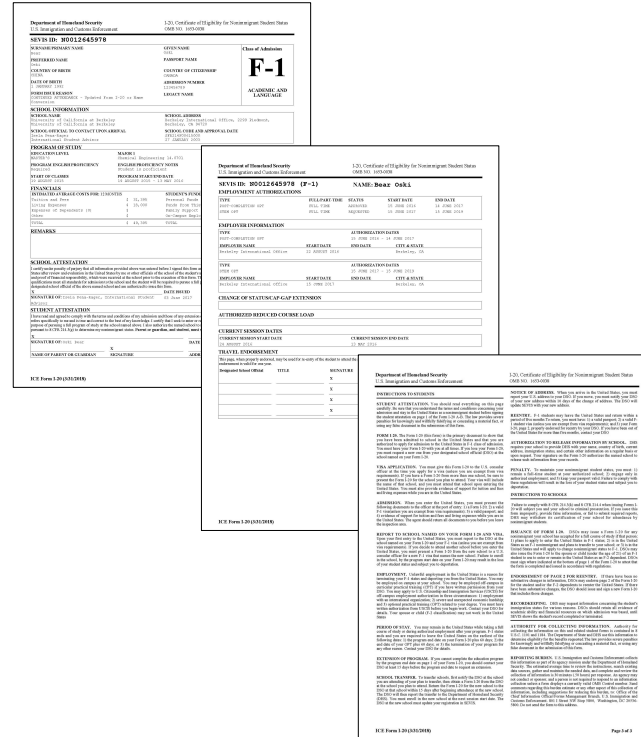
Do I need copies of my previous CPT I-20s?

No! USCIS doesn't need to review your previous CPT usage. They only need to review your **prior OPT and STEM authorizations**.

Gather the required documentation

Photocopy of Passport and Visa:

- Photocopy your current passport biographic page with the photo and passport expiration date.

- If this is not the passport you used on your last entry to the U.S., also include a copy of the passport you used when you made entry to the U.S., even if it is expired. (You will provide information on the expired passport on pg. 7.)

- Photocopy the F-1 visa, if applicable; visa does not need to be valid.

Gather the required documentation

Photocopy of I-94 Information:

The I-94 can be *either*:

- An electronic I-94 record. Visit: www.cbp.gov/i94 to access and print your record.

OR

- a paper I-94 card stapled into your passport. Include a copy of both sides, even though the back side may be blank.

OR

- a copy of an I-797 Change of Status Approval Notice which includes a new I-94.

Electronic I-94 Record

Paper I-94 (front)

Paper I-94 (back)

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Gather the required documentation

Photocopy of current OPT EAD:
(*and* previous STEM EADs if applicable)

- Include a copy of the front and back of the card.

- Include I-797 notice of approval if available.

Gather the required documentation

Photocopy of Diploma or Official Transcripts

- Your diploma or official transcripts must show the major and degree level that makes you eligible for the STEM extension. Final Transcripts are preferred.

- For information about obtaining your UC diploma if you do not have it, see http://registrar.berkeley.edu/diplomas.html

- For information about ordering official transcripts see: http://registrar.berkeley.edu/Default.aspx?PageID=tranalumni.html

THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

ON THE NOMINATION OF THE
GRADUATE COUNCIL OF THE BERKELEY DIVISION
HAVE CONFERRED UPON

Oski Bear

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN ENGINEERING
WITH ALL THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES THERETO PERTAINING

GIVEN AT BERKELEY THIS TWENTY-NINTH DAY OF JANUARY
IN THE YEAR NINETEEN HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FOUR

Gather the required documentation

Previous Degrees or Previous STEM Extensions

- If the OPT STEM Extension is based on a **previously earned STEM degree** (NOT the degree listed on your current 12- Month OPT) you must also include:
  - A copy of your I-20 from the previous school. If the I-20 is not available, either request 1) a screenshot of your F-1 SEVIS record from the previous school OR 2) a letter from your previous international office stating your name, SEVIS ID, the dates of your attendance, and your STEM major and CIP code.
  - Evidence that the previous school is currently accredited by the U.S. Department of education
  - Evidence that the previous school is certified by SEVP

- YOU DO NOT NEED TO SUBMIT THIS IF YOU ARE APPLYING FOR STEM WITH YOUR MOST RECENTLY EARNED DEGREE FROM UC BERKELEY, WHICH IS LISTED ON YOUR OPT I-20!

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Gather the required documentation

Additional STEM OPT Documents:

CIP Code/Major Name Mismatch

- In some cases, your UC Berkeley Major Name on your transcript/diploma and does not match the CIP Code name listed on page 1 of your I-20. (Example: Your Major title is "Journalism" the designated CIP code for the Journalism degree at UC Berkeley is 09.0702— Digital Communication and Media/Multimedia.)

- BIO recommends that students in these "CIP Code/Major Name Mismatch" programs submit a letter of explanation with the STEM application to avoid any confusion by USCIS.

- Review the **Additional STEM OPT Documents**, **CIP Code/Major Name Mismatch** section of the STEM webpage to see if a letter is recommended for your major.

> **What are CIP Codes?** Classification of Instructions Programs (CIP) codes are published by the National Center for Education Statistics (NES) & are used by SEVIS to designate a student's major. Your CIP code determines whether your major has been designated as a STEM degree.

Gather the required documentation

Additional STEM OPT Documents: Concurrent H-1B & STEM Applications

Filing an H-1B and a STEM applications concurrently can sometimes cause complications in your SEVIS record. If you are planning to file for an H-1B and STEM at the same time, you should submit your OPT STEM application on time, before the original 12 month EAD expires.

BIO recommends including the following letter with your STEM Extension application to USCIS:

- STEM/Cap-Gap Letter: Include this letter if a Cap-Gap Extension appears on your OPT STEM I-20.

- STEM/H-1B Letter : Include this letter if NO Cap-Gap Extension currently appears on your I-20, but your employer *has filed* for an H-1B for you and your OPT expires before 9/30.

- See H-1B & STEM Extension information at the end of this tutorial.

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Application Deadline

USCIS must receive the OPT STEM application:

- No later than **60 days after the OPT STEM I-20 ISSUE DATE** on page 1.

  - The issue date is located next to the advisor's signature on page 1 of the OPT STEM I-20.

- No later than the **end date** of your current 12-month OPT as noted by your EAD. Please account for mailing time.

- If you have received a [Cap-Gap Extension](#) of your I-20, you must still submit your STEM application to USCIS before the expiration of your 12 month EAD

- You may apply up to 90 days before your current OPT end date.

- **E-filed applications are immediately receipted on the day you fully submit the online request.**

- **For E-filed applications, USCIS uses [UTC or Coordinated Universal Time](#) to determine the time/date filed. If you are filing CLOSE to your deadline check the UTC time/date of filing!**

- Track the status of your mailed application to be certain it was delivered on time.

We recommend that you apply early.

Your application must be submitted to USCIS from within the U.S. If you exit the U.S. and do not re-enter and file BEFORE your OPT EAD end date you cannot return and will lose your option for STEM OPT.

TOP 3 MOST COMMON OPT STEM DENIAL REASONS

1. **Payment problems (application by Mail):**
   - Check or Credit Card payment: Money is not in account at time of processing
   - incorrect fee amount. Check the current fee at: https://www.uscis.gov/i–765
   - Check, money order, or credit card form not completed properly
   - Wrong dates on check, money order (U.S Date style = MONTH/DAY/YEAR = MM/DD/YYYY)
   - If you e-file the I-765 USCIS will calculate the correct payment, and you will not be able to submit the request if there is a payment problem

2. **Copy of OPT STEM I-20 (pages 1-3) is TOO OLD**
   - **New OPT STEM applications**: USCIS must receive your complete OPT application no later than 60 days after the ORIGINAL OPT STEM I-20 ISSUE DATE on page 1 of the I-20.
   - **Resubmission after OPT STEM Rejection or Denial:** If your STEM OPT is REJECTED OR DENIED you must NOTIFY BIO that your OPT has been rejected or denied. You may need to request a NEW OPT I-20 recommendation FROM BIO **before** you resubmit your OPT STEM application. Again, USCIS must receive your new, complete OPT re-application no later than 60 days after the OPT I-20 ISSUE DATE on page 1 of the I-20 AND BEFORE the expiration of your OPT EAD.

3. **I-765 problems (application by Mail):**
   - Incomplete or incorrect form fields
   - Not signed, or not signed *in ink by hand*
   - Wrong version of the form

   Check the Current Edition of the form:
   https://www.uscis.gov/i–765

> Applications may be rejected or denied for other reasons. These are the most common reasons as observed by BIO advisers.
>
> If your application is rejected or denied you might still be able to re-apply to USCIS before the end of your OPT EAD.
>
> If you receive a Rejection or Denial (or Request for Evidence) notify BIO *immediately*, and ask for advice before your response. BIO sees many re-application denials which could have been avoided by consulting an adviser before response.

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Mailing the I-765 OPT Application

Review the current filing address for the I-765 ON THE DATE OF MAILING at https://www.uscis.gov/i-765-addresses

Home > Forms > All Forms > Direct Filing Addresses for Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Direct Filing Addresses for Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

If you are filing Form I-765 with another form, file both forms at the location specified by the other form. For example, if you are filing Form I-765 with a Form I-539, file both forms according to the Form I-539 Instructions. Use addresses below only when you are NOT submitting Form I-765 with another form.

⤢ Close All   ⤢ Open All

Asylees/refugees and their spouses and children ⌄

Categories based on nationality ⌄

Foreign students ⌄

Eligible dependents of employees of diplomatic missions, international organizations, or NATO ⌄

Foreign students ⌃

Eligibility Category 8 CFR 274a.12 This is the category you selected in question 27 on Form I-765	Category Description	Filing Location
(c)(3)(i) **SEE NOTE**	F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT) **NOTE**: Do not write (c)(3)(i) as your category on your application. Use one of the following categories instead: (c)(3)(A), Pre-completion OPT (c)(3)(B), Post-completion OPT (c)(3)(C), 24-month extension for an F-1 student who has received a degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) that appears on the STEM designated Degree Program List published on the SEVP website	USCIS Lockbox **U.S. Postal Service (USPS):** **FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries:** USCIS Attn: I-765 C03

1. Click on the Foreign Students section.

2. Find your eligibility category.

3. Choose the address based on your type of mailing: Either U.S. Postal Service or private courier (FedEx, UPS, DHL) Write the address EXACTLY as indicated on the webpage.

BIO recommends FedEx as a reliable option. If using US Postal Service, choose *Express or Priority Mail* option Be sure your mailing option includes *tracking and guaranteed delivery*.

Step 5:
Receive the Employment Authorization Document (EAD)

I-797C Notice of Action

Mail: You should receive the notice by mail within 2-4 weeks after mailing the OPT application to USCIS.

E-file: You will receive a receipt notice immediately via your USCIS online account, and later receive the paper receipt notice by mail.

- **The I-797C is very important.**
  If you lose the receipt, it may be very difficult to replace it.

- **The I-797C is necessary if you want to:**
  1. inquire about the status of your OPT application.
  2. travel outside the U.S. while your OPT is pending.

Receipt Number
The case number for the OPT application at USCIS. Check the status of the case on the USCIS web site at https://www.uscis.gov

Received Date
Date when USCIS begins processing the application. (It may not be the actual the application was received, but it is when the case was entered into the system.)

Address Information
Verify your name, date of birth, and address on the I-765 receipt notice. (Date of birth does not appear on e-filed notices.)
If incorrect, contact BIO immediately.

Contacting USCIS
If you have any problems or questions with the OPT application, contact a BIO advisor before calling the USCIS Customer Service.

USCIS Issues & Tracking Your Case

Sign up for an account at https://www.uscis.gov. This will allow you to receive automatic updates and monitor your case. Click "Check Your Case Status" and then select "Sign Up."

General Case Tracking:

If you don't sign up for an account, you can still track your case using the "Check Your Case Status" Tool.

Address Changes:

If your address changes, you can update it online through the "Change of Address" tool. Keep in mind that address changes can take 10 business days to process, and could jeopardize your OPT EAD delivery. We recommend keeping the same address for your entire OPT processing, if possible.

E-Filing

See what you can do with your USCIS online account when e-filing, including:

- Get your current case status and the history of your case;

- Respond to Requests for Evidence (RFEs);

- Access every notice USCIS sends you; and

- Send USCIS secure messages and get answers.

USCIS Issues: Case Inquiries & Expedites

Case Inquiries & Processing times:
You can submit inquiries and requests about your case using the Case Inquiry tool for these issues:

- If you don't receive your receipt notice, EAD or other notifications

- If your case is pending longer than the **normal** processing time. See current USCIS processing times for Form"I-765" for "Potomac Service Center" here: https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-time/ SCROLL ALL THE WAY DOWN THE PAGE TO SEE THE PROCESSING TIME FOR F-1 ACADEMIC STUDENT EADS!

- If there is an error on your receipt notice or EAD card

Expedites:
USCIS almost always denies F-1 student expedite requests for OPT. You can find expedite criteria here: https://www.uscis.gov/forms/how-make-expedite-request USCIS may consider expediting if the request meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Severe financial loss to a company or person, if expedite is not due to applicant's failure: (1) to file the benefit request in a reasonable time frame; or (2) to respond to any RFE in a timely manner;

- Urgent humanitarian reasons;

- Compelling U.S. Government interests (such as urgent cases for the Department of Defense or DHS, or other public safety or national security interests); or

- Clear USCIS error.

NOTE: 1) Severe financial loss to a company means the **company would be at risk of failing.** 2) The need to obtain employment authorization, standing alone, **without evidence of other compelling factors**, does not warrant expedited treatment

Application Problems: RFE or Rejection/Denial

RFE: If there is a problem with your application, the USCIS may send you a notice by mail called a "**Request for Evidence (RFE)**." An RFE does not mean that your application has been rejected. It simply means that you need to send in additional documents before your EAD can be issued.

- Getting an RFE will delay the processing of your application.

Rejection/Denial: In some cases, if too many items are missing from your application, USCIS will return the entire application to you. If this happens, you must make the corrections and send the application before the end date of your 60-day grace period.

Contact BIO IMMEDIATELY if you receive a RFE, rejection, or denial.

To avoid delays, review your application materials for completeness and sign all the forms before mailing them to USCIS.

The Employment Authorization Document (EAD)

USCIS takes approximately 3-5 months for processing. The observed average processing time at USCIS is 90-120 days, but processing can take longer in some cases.
See current USCIS processing times for Form"I-765" for "Potomac Service Center" here: https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times / SCROLL ALL THE WAY DOWN THE PAGE TO SEE THE PROCESSING TIME FOR F-1 ACADEMIC STUDENT EADS!

While waiting, keep these things in mind.

- Your F-1 status & employment authorization will be **automatically extended** for up to 180 days while your OPT STEM application is pending. You may work during this time.

- A change in employment will require a new BIO 24-Month STEM request AND a new I-983 with the new employer.

- You must work full time in your field of study while on your OPT STEM Extension

- You may accumulate up to 150 days of unemployment on OPT STEM inclusive of any time used during 12-month OPT.

- If you decide to return to school as a full-time student, you must request a transfer or a change of level from Berkeley International Office within 60 days of your EAD expiration date.

- Review card to make sure the information is accurate. If not, contact a BIO advisor.

- Present your EAD to employers as proof of your legal work authorization in the US.

- The EAD is a required document for entry to the U.S. during STEM OPT.

- Upload a copy of your EAD card at io.berkeley.edu/ssu
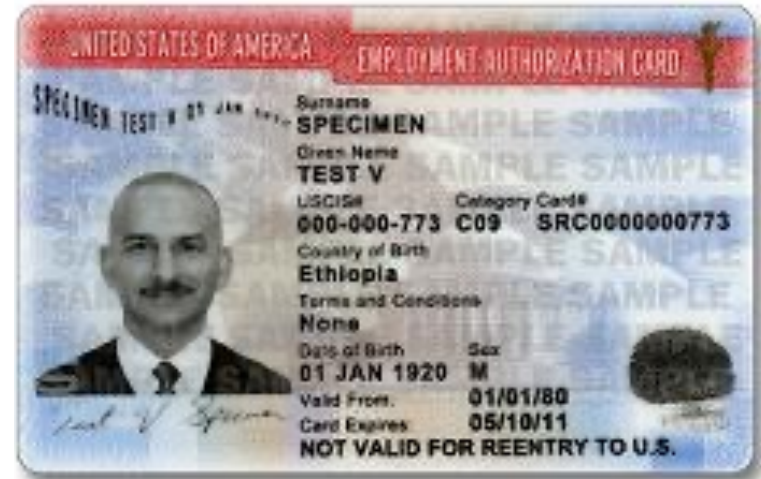
Driver License Applications & Renewal

- If your California Driver License has expired, you can only renew the license *after* your OPT EAD EAD has been approved.

- This is because your I-20 has expired, and without proof of the OPT approval (and continuing F-1 status) you won't qualify to renew the license.

- If you live in a state other than California, check with the local DMV regarding requirements for renewal
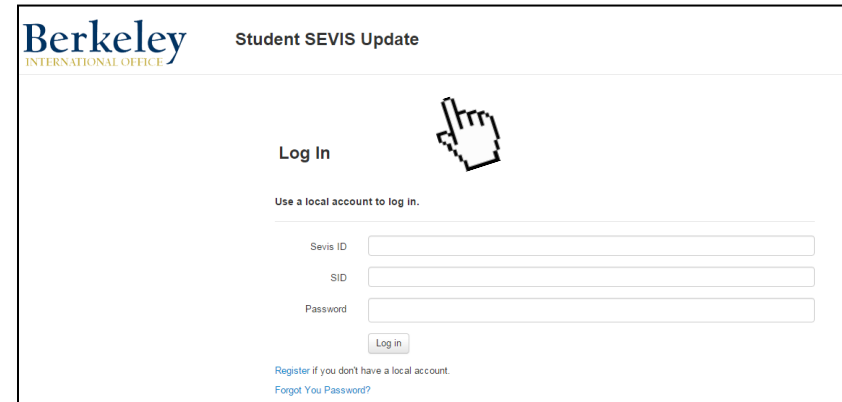
Avoiding Immigration Scams

- **It is very rare for USCIS or SEVP to contact you via phone regarding your application or your SEVIS record.** Most notices from SEVP Portal are sent by email, and most notices from USCIS are sent via mail. They will generally never ask you for money.

- **See USCIS's website on how to avoid immigration scams, report fraud, and find authorized legal services.**

- You can report immigration scams by contacting the FTC. Please visit the USCIS Avoid Scams Initiative website to learn more about avoiding immigration scams and reporting fraud.

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Step 6: Maintaining Your F-1 Status & STEM Reporting Requirements

Reporting Requirements

- Submit updates online at **io.berkeley.edu/ssu**

- You must report any changes to your employment, address, and/or name within 10 days.

- Complete 6 Month validation with BIO.

- Report Material Changes to your I-983 to BIO within 10 days.

- Annual Evaluation of Student Progress due at 12 and 24 Months

See STEM Reporting Requirements for instructions on how to submit updates, validations, and evaluations.

Reporting Your Information

While on OPT STEM, you must update the Berkeley International Office **within 10 days** of any changes to the following information:

- Your Name

- Your Residential Address

- Your Phone & Email Address

- Employer Name or Address

- Starting or Ending Employment

- Date of departure from the U.S. if you leave prior to OPT STEM end date and want to end your OPT.

- Change of status to another visa category

We recommend saving the website page showing your updated information.
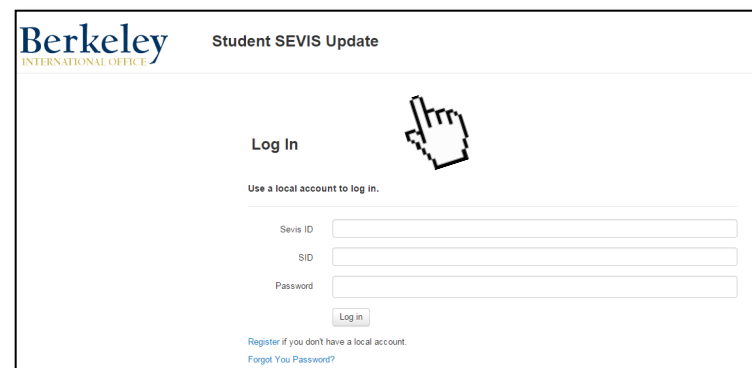
> **In order to update your information, you will need your UC Berkeley Student ID # and SEVIS #** (found on your I-20; starts with N00…)**.**

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Reporting Requirements:
BIO SSU HUB (MANDATORY)

- **ALL STUDENTS ON OPT/STEM ARE REQUIRED TO USE THE BIO SSU HUB TO SUBMIT OPT UPDATES. BIO SSU Hub is a BIO system.**

- **Submit updates online at io.berkeley.edu/ssu.**

SEVP Portal (OPTIONAL)

- The Student Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) has its own "SEVP Portal" for students on OPT/STEM. On day 1 of your approved OPT, you will receive an email from SEVP with instructions on how to create an account. This email will come from do-not-reply.sevp@ice.dhs.gov.

- Be aware of scams: SEVP will NEVER ask you for a payment to register for the optional SEVP Portal.

- Registration for SEVP Portal is OPTIONAL. BIO WILL NOT USE the SEVP Portal for OPT reporting purposes. BIO recommends using SEVP Portal as "*view-only.*"

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Changing Employment While on STEM OPT Extension

If you change employers during your 24-month STEM OPT period, follow the instructions below. (If your STEM EAD has not yet been approved by USCIS, contact a BIO advisor for more information.)

Log into SSU and do the following:

1. Update your address/phone/email.

2. Add the new employer information and upload a new I-983 form for the new employer. You will choose the delivery method for your new I-20.

3. Edit your previous employer and add end date and upload the Final Evaluation I-983 page 5.

4. Upload a copy of your STEM EAD (if we don't have it already).

Report Material Changes to Form I-983

Material changes may include, but are not limited to:

- Change in employer address or supervisor.

- 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 your compensation that is not tied to a reduction in hours worked.

- Any significant decrease in hours per week that you engage in a STEM training opportunity.

- Changes to the employer's commitments or your learning objectives as documented on the Form I-983.

- **Updated Material Changes via a revised I-983 needs to be submitted to BIO within 10 business days.**

6-Month Validation

- STEM OPT students must submit a validation report to BIO every six months starting from the date the 24-month extension begins and ending when the student's F-1 status ends.

- 4 validations in total over 24-month OPT STEM Extension time.

- Your F-1 record may be terminated if you fail to report each 6 months.

- Check your STEM OPT start date and mark your calendar for each 6 month interval of your STEM Extension for your reporting deadlines. (Example: Your STEM Extension Starts January 1, 2017. You must submit 6 month validations on July 1, 2017, on January 1, 2018, on July 1 2018 and on Jan 1, 2019 .)

- Be sure to check email reminders from BIO.

Annual Evaluation

- You must submit Form I-983 page 5 "Evaluation of Student Progress" to BIO *each 12 months* and/or *any time you leave an employer.*

- Your employer must review and sign the self evaluation to attest to the accuracy.

- Your F-1 record may be terminated if you fail to submit your evaluations.

- Check your STEM start date and mark your calendar for each 12 month interval of your STEM Extension for your reporting deadlines. (Example: Your STEM Extension Starts January 1, 2017. You must submit an annual evaluation January 1, 2018, and a final evaluation by January 1, 2019.)

- Be sure to check email reminders from BIO.

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SSU Hub Reporting

- You can see your reporting deadlines in the SSU Hub.
- Validation Report links will become available during your reporting period.

Open in new window

STEM Validation Report ❓

*While on STEM, you must complete a validation report every 6 months. Verify that all your Contact information and Employer information above is up-to-date then click **Validate**. The Validate link will only be available during the reporting window.*

Note: Older Validation Reports may not show here. To see all previous Validation Reports, click "See All your Form Submissions" below.

Validation Type	Due Date	Reporting Window ❓	Status ❓	Validation Report
6-month	4/3/2018	3/24/2018 - 4/13/2018		No Longer Available
12-month (Eval required)	10/3/2018	9/23/2018 - 10/13/2018	Accepted	View
18-month	4/3/2019	3/24/2019 - 4/13/2019	Submitted	View
Final (Final Eval required)	10/2/2019	9/22/2019 - 10/12/2019		Not Yet Due

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SEVP Portal Reminders

- SEVIS SEVP Portal will also email you reminders regarding your 6 Month Validations and Annual Evaluations. *Remember, you'll do this reporting through the BIO SSU Hub.*

- You can also check your reporting deadlines via the SEVP Portal.

STEM Student Due Date Announcement

Hello, [student name]

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?
Aug 6 2018	Validation report for address and employer information
Feb 6 2019	Validation report for address and employer information Evaluation of Student Progress (page 5 of Form I-983)
Aug 6 2019	Validation report for address and employer information
Feb 6 2020	Validation report for address and employer information Evaluation of Student Progress (page 5 of Form I-983)

Missing these deadlines may affect the state of your SEVIS record.
For more information, go to the STEM OPT Hub (https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub) pages on the Study in the States website.

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Important Information Regarding Travel

- **Avoid long absences from the U.S. during the STEM OPT period. Time spent outside of the U.S. while unemployed by a U.S. employer counts toward your 150 days of unemployment.**

- **Attempting to re-enter the U.S. close to the expiration date of your OPT can be risky.**

- **You must not enter the U.S. in a status other than F-1. This may result in the loss of your OPT eligibility.**

Travel While STEM OPT is Pending, But Before STEM OPT Card is Received

- There is a higher risk associated with travel and return while your STEM OPT is pending after the program completion date of your OPT EAD. If there are any problems with your application, you may not be able to respond to USCIS in a timely manner, which could delay processing of your EAD.

- If your STEM OPT application is denied while outside the U.S., and your original OPT EAD has expired, you will not be able to re-enter the U.S. in F-1 status and will not be able to reapply.

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Applying for an F-1 Visa on STEM OPT

If you are traveling abroad and your F-1 visa has expired, you must obtain a new F-1 visa before returning to the U.S. When going to your visa interview, bring the documents below. For more information, visit: http://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/visa_application.

1. Valid passport (at least 6 months in the future)

2. Valid STEM I-20 with travel endorsement from a Berkeley International Office advisor within the past 6 months

3. STEM EAD Card

4. Proof of current STEM OPT employment (employer should match employer info listed on the I-20)

5. Evidence of sufficient funds (e.g. a bank statement, a letter from a sponsor or a job offer letter)

Check the U.S. Department of State website for more information about getting a visa and specific requirements at the local embassy or consulate.

Completing OPT & Grace Period

- You have a 60 day grace period following the end of your STEM OPT EAD.

- The only additional extension of OPT available is the OPT Cap-Gap Extension, for students who have an accepted cap-subject H-1B application.

- Failure to exit, continue your F-1 status, or timely request a Cap-Gap Extension or USCIS Change of Status will result in accrual of days of unlawful presence.

- If you receive an extension of your OPT, the grace period will begin after the end of the extension period.

If you do not extend your STEM OPT via the H1-B Cap-Gap, and your EAD expires, you have the following options before the end of the 60 days grace period:

1. Exit the U.S. within 60 days.

2. Continue your F-1 Status & Studies: Transfer your I-20 to continue studies at another school OR request a Change of Educational Level to begin new studies at UC Berkeley.

3. Work with immigration legal counsel regarding a Change of Status application to a new visa category. *You will need to check with your legal counsel regarding your allowed period of stay or required exit date if you have a pending change of status when your grace period ends.*

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H-1B and STEM Extension

Can I file for an H1-B and a STEM Extension at the same time?

Yes, but filing these applications concurrently can sometimes cause complications in your SEVIS record. You can apply for an STEM OPT Extension before your OPT EAD expires. If you are planning to file for an H-1B and STEM at the same time, you should submit your STEM OPT application on time, before the original 12 month EAD expires. You should also be mindful to take extra steps when filing for your STEM OPT Extension and continuing your F-1 status:

- Before requesting a STEM I-20, check with your employer and the legal counsel working on your H-1B and confirm that your employer recommends that you file STEM/H-1B concurrently at this time.

- When submitting your STEM OPT Extension, include

the STEM/Cap-Gap Letter if a Cap-Gap appears on your OPT STEM I-20.

- If no Cap-Gap currently appears on your I-20, but your employer has filed for the H-1B and your OPT expires before 9/30, include the STEM/H1B Letter.

- Update BIO as soon as possible regarding any Withdrawal or Denial of your H-1B petition. These actions may have an impact on your SEVIS record, and a BIO adviser will need to review the record to see if any corrections need to be made.

- If your H-1B is approved, the STEM OPT Extension (or pending STEM OPT Extension) will end on the date your H-1B becomes effective. Report the end of your OPT via the SSU Hub. Select *"Report Early OPT/Academic Training Completion"* and provide your I-797 Approval Notice From USCIS. Your F-1 record will be completed after the effective date of your H-1B.

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H-1B and STEM Extension

My employer filed for my H-1B and the petition has been approved. Should I file for the STEM OPT Extension if my H-1B is already approved for Oct. 1?

You may not need a STEM OPT Extension if your OPT is ending, and your H-1B has already been approved. If this is your situation, check with a BIO adviser before submitting your STEM OPT Extension request. An adviser will need to review your record and H-1B approval notice. An adviser will determine whether a STEM OPT Extension or Cap-Gap I-20 is better for you.

Before contacting a BIO adviser, make sure that you have 1) uploaded a copy of your OPT EAD card to the SSU Hub and 2) have your H-1B I-797 Approval Notice From USCIS.

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):
Employment

What is considered full-time employment on the 24-month OPT STEM Extension? Students must work at least 20 hours per week for an E-Verify employer in a position directly related to the STEM degree, following the goals and objectives stated in the I-983 training plan. All employers must be authorized on the I-20 and in SEVIS.

I have two part-time jobs. One of the employers is enrolled in E-Verify but the other is not. Is this allowed? No, only full-time employment is allowed at your STEM-eligible E-Verify registered employer.

How many days of unemployment am I allowed while on the 24-month STEM OPT Extension? Students who receive a 24-month OPT STEM extension are given an additional 60 days of unemployment for a total of 150 days over their entire post-completion OPT period.

What counts as unemployment? Each day during the period when OPT authorization begins and ends that the student does not have qualifying employment counts as a day of unemployment.

Can I continue to work while my 24-month STEM OPT Extension is pending? If a student's EAD expires while the STEM Extension application is pending with USCIS, the student is authorized to work until USCIS makes a decision about the application, but not more than 180 days from the date the student's initial OPT EAD expires.

What documents should I present to my employer once my 12-month OPT expires and my STEM OPT is pending?
The student should present the employer with the expired EAD card, the form I-20 recommending the student for STEM OPT Extension, and proof of the timely filing with USCIS (STEM OPT I-797 receipt notice).

Can I change STEM employers after my STEM EAD is approved? Yes, see our OPT Reporting page for instructions on submitting a request to change employers. You should not start working before receiving authorization for the new employer.

Can I switch employers while my STEM OPT application is pending? Yes, but we do NOT recommend this. We recommend changing employers after the EAD is approved, if possible. Please contact BIO for instructions regarding how to change employers while your application is pending.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):
Travel & Re-Entry

Can I travel outside the US during my approved OPT STEM period? Yes.* However, if the student whose approved period of OPT has started travels outside of the U.S. while unemployed, the time spent outside the U.S. will count as unemployment against the 90/150-day limits. See the OPT Travel page for required documents.

If a student travels while employed either during a period of leave authorized by an employer or as part of their employment, the time spent outside the US will not count as unemployment.

Can I travel outside the U.S. while my 24-month STEM Extension OPT is pending?
Yes*, travel while your OPT STEM application is pending is possible if you have a valid F-1 visa and STEM I-20 signed within the past 6 months. You should travel with a copy of your I-797 receipt notice and proof of your STEM employment. See the OPT Travel page for required documents.

*If your employer has filed for an H-1B for you, please discuss your travel plans with your BIO adviser and with the legal counsel working on the H-1B request. BIO advisers can advise on travel as an F-1, but we cannot advise on how the travel might impact your H-1B application.

Can I renew my visa while on STEM OPT?
Yes, you are eligible to renew your visa while on STEM OPT. Remember, that you are still applying for an F-1 nonimmigrant visa, which means you must demonstrate ties to your home country. See Applying for a Visa for a complete list of documents and advice on renewing the visa during STEM OPT and feel free to discuss your concerns with an adviser. Be advised that you MUST have an approved STEM EAD to apply for a new visa.

What documents do I need to re-enter the U.S with approved STEM OPT?
If you are eligible for travel, you will need:
- A valid passport with an unexpired F-1 visa stamp (if applicable).
- Form I-20, signed on page 2 by an adviser at Berkeley International Office within the last 6 months.
- Unexpired EAD Card.
- Proof of employment (or employment offer).

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Final check of your STEM OPT application

Want to review all your documents in detail before mailing them to USCIS? Attend one of BIO's STEM OPT Document Check Workshops!

These group workshops allow you to follow along as a BIO adviser leads you through the application step by step and cover required documents, how to fill out the forms, and most common mistakes in the application. In addition, there is a Q&A portion during which you can ask specific questions about your own application.

See our **Events calendar** to sign up for an upcoming session.

Still have questions?

Come talk to a BIO advisor at Berkeley International Office **during advising hours**.

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Office Hours

internationaloffice@berkeley.edu

510-642-2818