STEM OPT EXTENSION

ONLINE WORKSHOP
Instructions

• View each slide completely

• It may be helpful to have the following document close by when viewing
  • Form I-983 Training Plan
    https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/employers-and-the-form-i-983

• After completing the workshop, please click the link on the final slide to submit proof of your participation
STEM OPT EXTENSION
STEM OPT Extension

• F-1 Students with degrees in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering or Math (STEM) may be eligible for an extension of their Post-Completion OPT work permission.

• On March 11, 2016 the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) published new expanded regulations which take effect on May 10, 2016.
What’s Different?

• Extension granted for 24 Months- Previously 17 Months

• Students may be eligible to have two STEM OPT extensions during their time in the U.S.

• Students currently in a non-STEM degree can be eligible for a STEM OPT extension based on a previous STEM degree obtained in the U.S. from an accredited institution.

• There is a new expanded list of STEM eligible CIP codes
What's Different?

- The student and employer will be required to use the new Form I-983 Training Plan
- Additional reporting requirements (evaluation, exit survey, etc…)
- Employers must provide a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)
- DHS is permitted to conduct employer site visits to confirm that training plan goals are being met
- Volunteering is no longer permitted on the STEM OPT extension
What’s Different?

- Students’ compensation must be commensurate to similarly situated U.S. workers
- Self-employment is not permitted
- Small start-up companies: There appear to be ways for some to qualify as long as the employer has an FEIN, student is considered an “employee” and a supervisor can complete the Form I-983
- Most temporary agency and contract work will not be eligible
- During the STEM OPT extension you could have up to 150 days of unemployment time (90 used during post OPT and 60 for STEM OPT)
THE STEM OPT APPLICATION
I want to file a new STEM OPT Application!

• All STEM extension applications, regardless of when they are filed, must be received by USCIS before your current Post-Completion OPT expires.

• Anyone considering a STEM OPT extension will be required to complete a Form I-983 with their employer. The form I-983 can be found here: https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/form-i-983-overview

• An I-20 will be provided by our office and you will mail this with your application.
PREPARING YOUR STEM OPT APPLICATION

Where to Start! What Forms to Prepare!
3 Steps to Take

- Complete STEM OPT Extension Online Workshop

- Log into istart.uga.edu and complete the 3-Part STEM OPT Extension request form.
  - I-20 Request Form
  - Download/Upload Form I-983 Training Plan
  - Complete STEM OPT Extension Certification Statement

- Prepare Materials- Review the Next Screen for List of Materials
Completing the Form I-983

- Visit [https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/form-i-983-overview](https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/form-i-983-overview)
- Click on this icon. Step-by-step instructions for completing the Form I-983 are included.
Completing the Form I-983

- When preparing the Form I-983, you will be asked to include UGA’s school code and the Designated School Official (DSO) recommending your STEM OPT
  
  UGA School Code: ATL214F00222000

  Using the last number of your UGA ID (81X Number); Example: 81XXXXXXXX
  
  Jennifer Beasley- 0, 1, 2
  Ashley Johnson- 4, 6, 7
  Linnea Tighe- 3, 5, 8, 9

Contact Information for all advisors is below:
  
  1324 S. Lumpkin Street, Athens, GA 30602
  
  Phone: (706) 542-2900
  Email: immigration@uga.edu
Prepare Supporting Materials

- Completed and **signed** I-765 application ([www.uscis.gov/i-765](http://www.uscis.gov/i-765))
- Completed G-1145 form ([www.uscis.gov/g-1145](http://www.uscis.gov/g-1145))
- Include I-20 signed by both your immigration advisor and yourself
- Copy of current EAD card (front and back)
- $410.00, payable to The Department of Homeland Security by check or money order OR use a completed G-1450 Form to pay by credit card ([www.uscis.gov/g-1450](http://www.uscis.gov/g-1450))
- Two identical passport-style color photos of yourself taken within 30 days of filing application.
- Copy of official UGA or Previous School’s transcript showing conferred degree
- Copy of Passport ID page
- Copy of I-94 card, both front and back, or copy of I-94 print out from [www.cbp.gov/I94](http://www.cbp.gov/I94)
- If you are applying using a previous degree, submit transcripts and previous I-20
STEM OPT I-20 Recommendation

• When all materials are complete, Immigration Services will create the required I-20 recommending the STEM OPT extension.

• An email notification will be sent when the documents have been processed with options for collecting the items needed for the application.

• NOTE: Your I-20s will not be issued without submitting the Form I-983 in iStart. Click Here for more I-983 information.
COMPLETING THE I-765

You should have Form I-765 in front of you for the next few slides.

Full Instructions and the Form I-765 is on the USCIS website: https://www.uscis.gov/i-765

Immigration Services encourages you to fill your form out while reviewing these next few slides. Completing this form is the applicant’s responsibility. Immigration Services cannot offer legal advice regarding USCIS applications.
NEW: I-765 Update

• On September 17, 2018, the new I-765 version must be submitted.

• The most recent I-765 form can be found: www.uscis.gov/i-765

• This PDF form is mostly fillable, but must be signed. Some sections may require you to enter information by hand.

• Detailed Instructions can be found on the I-765 webpage, as well.
NEW: SSN Request within I-765

- The revised USCIS form I-765 includes additional questions that allow applicants to apply for an SSN or replacement card without visiting a Social Security office. Starting today, USCIS will transmit the additional data collected on the form to the SSA for processing.

- Moving forward, applicants who receive their approved EADs from USCIS should receive their Social Security card from SSA within the following two weeks.

- EADs serve as documentation to show employers that an individual is authorized to work in the U.S. for a specific time period.

- SSNs are used to report wages to the government, and to determine an individual’s eligibility for certain benefits.
Form I-765- Part 1: Reason for Applying

• 1.a. Select “Initial permission to accept employment”
Form I-765- Part 2: Information About You

• 1.a-c: Your Full Legal Name: Enter your full legal name as it is shown in your passport.

• 2.a-4.c: Other Names Used: Enter other names you have used, if any.

**NOTE: The name on your I-20 should also be the same as the name written on the passport biographical page. If your name is different, inform an advisor at time of application.
Form I-765- Part 2: Information About You

• 5.a-f: Your U.S. Mailing Address: We recommend using OIE's address for the mailing address:

  5.b. Office of Global Engagement
  5.c. 1324 S. Lumpkin Street
  5.d. Athens
  5.e. GA
  5.f. 30602

• *Note: You may need to fill in portions of the address by hand due to limitations of the fillable PDF.
Form I-765- Part 2: Information About You

• If you provide an address that is not OIE’s address, please be aware that if you move residences while your application is pending, the US Postal Service cannot forward government mail to a new address. If your mailing address changes while the application is pending, follow the instructions on the USCIS Change of Address Information website.

• 6. Your U.S. Mailing Address: If the address you provided is where you physically reside, select “Yes”. If you do not physically reside at the address provided (i.e. you used the OIE address), select “No” and complete 7.a-e.

• 7.a-e: U.S. Physical Address: Enter your address where you physically reside.
Form I-765 - Part 2: Other Information

- 8. Alien Registration Number (if applicable)
- 9. USCIS Online Account Number (if applicable)
- 10. Gender: Select the appropriate box.
- 11. Marital Status: Select the appropriate box of your marital status at the time of filing your application.
- 12. If you have applied for employment authorization through USCIS in the past, select “Yes” and provide copies of previously issued EAD cards.
• 13.a-b: If you have a Social Security Number (SSN), select “Yes” and provide the SSN number in 13.b. If you do not have a Social Security card, select “No”.

• 14-17.b: If you have not already been issued a SSN and would like to apply for a SSN with your OPT application, answer “Yes” and answer questions 15-17.b. If you do not wish to apply for a SSN, select “No” and skip to question 18.

• You are not required to request an SSN using this application. Completing Item Numbers 14-17.b is optional. However, you must have an SSN properly assigned in your name to work in the United States.
Form I-765 Part 2: Your Country & Place of Birth

- 18.a-b: List all countries where you are currently a citizen or national.

- 19.a-c.: Place of Birth: Prove information about city, state and country of birth. Enter the name that your country held at the time of your birth (in case the name of your country has since changed).

- 20: Date of Birth: Use MM/DD/YYYY format.
Form I-765 Part 2: Last Arrival in the U.S.

21.a: You can find your most recent I-94 number here.


26: Enter your current SEVIS number. You can find this number on the top left side of your I-20. If you have had more than one SEVIS number, use Part 6 on Page 7 to list all previously used SEVIS numbers (see instructions below).
Form I-765 Part 2: Information about Your Eligibility Category

- 27: "(C)(3)(A)" should be used if you are applying for **pre-completion** OPT.

"(C)(3)(B)" should be used if you are applying for **post-completion** OPT

"(C)(3)(C)" should be used if you are applying for a **STEM extension** to your OPT.

- If you are applying for pre-completion or post-completion OPT, you do not need to answer questions 2831.b. Answer questions 28.a-c if you are applying for the STEM Extension using eligibility category (C)(3)(C).
Form I-765 Part 2: Information about Your Eligibility Category

• 28.a: STEM OPT Extension applicants only: Enter degree level (example: Bachelor’s)

• 28.b: STEM OPT Extension applicants only: Employer’s Name as Listed in E-Verify: Ask your company’s HR department to confirm the company’s E-Verify name.

• 28.c: STEM OPT Extension applicants only: Employer’s E-verify Company Identification Number is a 4-7 digit number issued by the Federal government. Ask your company’s HR department to confirm the number.

• 29-31.b: Enter NA
Form I-765 Part 3:
Applicant’s Statement, Contact Information, Declaration, Certification and Signature

• 1-2: Applicant’s Statement: If you have filled the I-765 out yourself, select 1.a. You do not have to answer Part 4 or 5 if you did not used an interpreter or preparer to fill out the I-765.

• 3-6: Applicant’s Contact Information: Provide your contact information.

• 7.a-b: Applicant’s Signature: Sign by hand in black ink inside the box and enter the date you completed the application.

Failure to sign the form could cause your application to be rejected.
• Enter NA if you completed the form yourself without the use of an interpreter or someone filling out the form on your behalf.
Form I-765 Part 6: Additional Information

- If you have been previously authorized for OPT, provide the SEVIS ID and academic level at which it was authorized. You will also need to provide copies of previously issued EAD cards. Reference Page 2, Part Number 2, Item Number 12.

- If you have been authorized for CPT, provide the SEVIS ID, start and end date, part-time/full-time, and academic level at which it was authorized. Reference Page 3, Part Number 2, Item Number 27.

- If you were previously in F-1 status, but had a different SEVIS number, provide all of the previously used SEVIS numbers and the academic level. Reference Page 3, Part Number 2, Item Number 26.
STEM EXTENSION EMPLOYMENT

What jobs? How many hours? Where to work?
Employment Limitations

• Employment must be paid.

• Employment must be a minimum of 20 hours per week.

• Employment must be directly related to your course of study.
Unemployment Limitations

- Students approved for the 24-month STEM OPT extension may not accrue more than a total of 150 days of unemployment throughout their entire 36 months on OPT.

- **Unemployment Caution:** SEVIS records soon will automatically terminate for students who have no employment reported for 150 days. Be sure that you have made alternate plans and communicated them to Immigration Services before your record is terminated. If you have any concerns, you can always contact your Immigration Services advisor.
STEM EXTENSION REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

You've been approved.....now what?!
Self-Evaluations

- Students must submit to Immigration Services self-evaluations via the I-983 during the first 12 months on the STEM OPT extension and at the completion of the 24-month extension period or at the conclusion of employment, whichever comes first.

- Evaluations should be submitted within 10 days of the required date.

- Visit istart.uga.edu to upload all reporting requirements.
Students & Employers Report Changes

- Student and employers must report to Immigration Services a change in any of the following via the I-983:
  - Employer name and address
  - Decrease in student's compensation
  - Reduction in hours worked to less than 20 hours a week
  - Employer's EIN
  - Termination of employment
Students Report

- Legal Name
- Residential address
- Employer name and address
- Change in status of current employment, including loss of employment, change of status to H-1B, transfer to another F-1 program, or change employers. If you change employers, you and your employer will need to complete a new I-983 and submit to Immigration Services.
Students Report- Every 6 Months

- Legal name
- Residential address
- Employer name and address
- Status of current employment
Keep Records of your Employment

Keep records of your employment history for your personal file, to present as evidence of maintaining lawful status should you apply for future immigration benefits.

• Examples of records to keep:
  • offer letters
  • contracts
  • payroll stubs
  • letters describing volunteer activity and hours
RESOURCES FOR STEM OPT EXTENSIONS
Online Resources for STEM OPT

• Study In the States STEM OPT HUB: https://studyinthesstates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub

• FORM I-983 Overview: https://studyinthesstates.dhs.gov/assets/stem-opt-hub/story.html

• Help from UGA Immigration Services: is.uga.edu or email immigration@uga.edu
Workshop Completion Page

To complete this workshop, please visit the link below

OPT STEM Extension Confirmation