

STEPS ON HOW TO APPLY FOR OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) STEM Extension

Step 1. Apply no more than 90 days before the end of the initial OPT approved date

Important considerations: You will need to factor in at least 90 days to process the application for OPT in order to get your new EAD (Employment Authorization Document). Remember, you must have a job with an employer who is an E-verify Company when you apply for OPT STEM Extension.

Step 2. Prepare the following documents from the checklist:

- Be on Active OPT with a STEM Related Major
- Complete Form I-983 (Employer Training Document) with your employer
 - [Form I-983 Overview and Instructions](#)
 - *Note: leave page 5 blank for now*
 - **Form must be emailed to DSO prior to recommendation of OPT STEM Extension**
 - Email form to international@utpb.edu
- A completed USCIS Form I-765 with a signature ([Form I-765](#))
 - The appropriate eligibility codes for question #16 on Form I-765:
 - STEM OPT Extension: (c)(3)(C)
 - *Do NOT submit the application until you have requested & received the OPT recommended I-20 from your DSO.*
- Photos which meet the specifications outlined in the I-765 instructions:
 - [Photo Tips](#)
 - [Photo Tool](#)
- Provide evidence of degree and STEM Major by providing an official transcript with graduation date
- The fee amount for filing Form I-765 is located on the USCIS web page: [Fee calculator](#)
- I-94 record form [Form I-94](#)
- Copy of the previous EAD Card (front and back)
- A photocopy of the passport pages including the page with your picture and name and the most recent visa page

Step 3. Make an appointment with your DSO to receive the I-20 issued by UT Permian Basin with the OPT recommendation.

Email international@utpb.edu to request an appointment (in person or via Teams)

Step 4. Submit the application.

Step 5. Email a pdf copy of your submitted I-765 to international@utpb.edu so it can be saved in your file. You will find this pdf in your USCIS student portal after your application has been submitted.

Step 6. Expect to receive a receipt notice from USCIS. Please retain this notice for your records.

Step 7. With the receipt notice, use the online case status check to track your application status.

Step 8. Receive your EAD card and update your employer.

- SEVP recommends that you maintain evidence for each job documenting the position held, proof of the duration of that position, the job title, contact information for the student's supervisor or manager, and a description of the work.
- If it is not clear from the job description that the work is related to the student's degree, SEVP recommends that the student obtain a signed letter from his/her hiring official, supervisor, or manager stating how the student's degree is related to the work performed.

Step 9. Provide the employer information to International Student Services *and* upload employer information on your SEVP account (an email will be sent to you allowing you create a SEVP OPT portal).

- Report changes in employment and your personal contact information (such as address, phone number, etc.) as soon as possible to International Student Services.
- SEVP recommends that the student report any change within 10 business days of the change to avoid situations where a DHS official may determine the student is out of status.

Step 10. Complete the Evaluation on Student Progress in Form I-983.

- During the course of the STEM OPT employment, the student is required to submit self-reported evaluations and assessments.
 - Student evaluations are a shared responsibility of both the student and the employer to ensure that the student's practical training goals are being satisfactorily met.
 - The student is responsible for conducting a self-evaluation based on his or her own training progress.
 - The employer must review and sign the self-evaluation to attest to its accuracy.
- These evaluations are required at the following times:
 - First evaluation (page 5 of Form I-983) required after completion of 12 months of STEM OPT period
 - Enter the range of the student evaluation dates: Start and end dates for first 12 months of STEM OPT training period
 - Final evaluation (page 5 of Form I-983) due at conclusion of 24-month STEM OPT period
 - If you change employers at any time, please share the new I-983 with International Student Services and submit the first and final evaluations at the appropriate times. (10/12/22)