

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Certain graduates from science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) programs who are currently participating in post-completion OPT for a period of 12 months, are eligible to apply for a **24-month extension** prior to the end date of their current OPT. This extension, if approved, allows F-1 visa holders to engage in post-completion OPT for a maximum of **36 months**. Students may participate twice in the STEM OPT extension over the course of their academic career. To be eligible for the 2nd STEM Extension, a student must earn a second qualifying STEM degree at a higher level and be on 12-month post-completion OPT at the time they apply to USCIS.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE**

US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) must receive the 24-month STEM OPT extension application packet before the expiration date of the 12-month post-completion OPT. UCF Global recommends to apply early – **applications may be filed with USCIS up to 90 days before your 12-month OPT expires (please review expiration date on your EAD Card)**. A student who has applied for a STEM extension can continue working for up to 180 days beyond the expiration of the prior post-completion OPT EAD while the STEM extension application is pending, as long as that employment conforms to STEM conditions.

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- » Student must currently be engaging in 12-month post-completion OPT and have earned a bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral program from an accredited SEVP-certified U.S. Institution in a STEM program that appears on the [DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List](#)
- » STEM Degree based on a previously earned degree may be considered (minor degrees are not eligible)
- » Job must be a paid position for at least 20 hours per week and relate to the student’s STEM field of study. Volunteer/unpaid positions are not supported under the STEM OPT rule
- » Student and Employer must complete **Form I-983 Training Plan** and submit to an UCF Global Immigration Advisor (DSO).  
**To download the Training Plan and review Instructions please visit <http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub>**
- » Student must be a **bona fide employee of the employer** signing the Form I-983. The employer that signs the Form I-983 must be the same entity that employs the student and provides the practical training experience. **Staffing companies (temp agencies) or employment through consulting firm arrangements that provide labor for hire are not considered eligible types of employment** under the STEM OPT rule.
- » Employer must be enrolled in USCIS E-Verify employment verification program and have an IRS Employer Identification Number (EIN). Student may not be self-employed

**STUDENT AND EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION**

*This section is to be completed by student*

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

UCF ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**STEM OPT Extension**

- I am currently on 17-month STEM Extension and am applying for an extension of an additional 7 months. The end date listed on my current EAD Card is after October 6, 2016 and I must have at least 150 days of valid work authorization remaining on my current EAD Card at the time my application is filed with USCIS. **Application window to file: May 10 - August 8, 2016.**
- I have applied for 17-month STEM Extension and received a Request for Further Evidence (RFE) from USCIS with the request for an updated I-20 for the 24-month STEM OPT period
- I am currently on 12-month post-completion OPT and am applying for 24-month STEM OPT Extension

Job Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer (Company) Name (may not be self-employed): \_\_\_\_\_

Employment Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Hours per week (must be at least 20 hours/week): \_\_\_\_\_ Is this a paid position?  Yes  No

Are you being employed through a staffing- (temp agency) or consulting firm?  Yes  No

Does your employer have both an Employer Identification Number (EIN) and an E-verify Number?  Yes  No

### APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Make an appointment with an UCF Global immigration advisor and have all items below prepared **before** the appointment (incomplete OPT Packets may be delayed).

- Form I-765. Visit [www.uscis.gov/forms](http://www.uscis.gov/forms)
- Completed G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance (optional). Visit <http://uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/g-1145>
- Form I-983 Training Plan – Must be completed and signed by both student and employer. Visit <http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub>
- All immigration documents (I-94, valid passport, and visa)
- Any correspondence with the Department of Homeland Security
- All previous I-20s
- Previous and current Employment Authorization Documents (EAD Cards)
- Two recent 2 x 2 inches full frontal color passport photos with your name and I-94 card number written in pencil on the back. See the US Department of Homeland Security specifications at [www.travel.state.gov/passport/pptphotos/index.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/pptphotos/index.html)
- Check, money order, or bank check for **\$410 made out to the US Department of Homeland Security** and indicate I-94 number for identification reasons. USCIS fees are subject to change. To verify, please visit [www.uscis.gov/forms](http://www.uscis.gov/forms)
- Copies of transcripts and degree certificate (diploma) showing the degree level and program of study
- New form I-20 (issued by UCF Global during STEM OPT application)

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### AGREEMENT

Please print your name, initial, and sign.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that while on the 24-month STEM OPT Extension I will be required to abide by all immigration regulations governing the F-1 visa. I also understand, agree and accept the following specific items:

\_\_\_\_\_ I will provide a copy of the extended EAD card (front and back side) to an UCF Global Immigration Advisor.

\_\_\_\_\_ Should my employment during the 24-month STEM OPT period change, I must remain employed with an employer who is registered in the E-Verify, has an Employer Identification Number (EIN), and meets all requirements under the 24-month STEM OPT rule.

\_\_\_\_\_ I cannot accrue an aggregate of 150 days of unemployment during the entire 36-month period of post-completion OPT.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will report to an UCF Global Immigration Advisor any changes of address, legal name, employer's name and address **within 10 days** of the change by using the STEM OPT Status Form.

\_\_\_\_\_ I must submit an updated Form I-983 training plan **within 10 days** when 1) beginning a new job with a new employer or 2) any time there is a "material change" in the terms and conditions of the original I-983. Material changes can include but is not limited to:

- » Any change of the employer's Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- » Any reduction in student compensation that is not tied to a reduction in hours worked.
- » Any significant decrease in hours per week that a student engages in a STEM training opportunity.
- » Changes to the employer's commitments or student's learning objectives as documented on the Form I-983.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will report to an UCF Global Immigration Advisor **every 6 months** starting from the 24-month extension start date until the 24-month STEM OPT Extension ends by using the STEM OPT Status Form. I must also submit a 12-month and final 24-month Evaluation Report to a UCF Global Immigration Advisor by using pages 6 and 7 of the I-983 Training Plan.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand my responsibilities and reporting requirements during the 24-month STEM OPT period.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ UCF ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- » UCF Global  
[www.global.ucf.edu](http://www.global.ucf.edu)
- » US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) STEM OPT  
[www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment/stem-opt](http://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment/stem-opt)

**NOTE:** Students who properly file for an H-1B petition and whose regular post-completion OPT or extended STEM OPT expires prior to October 1 (H-1B start date), are eligible for cap-gap extension. Please note that although the extension is automatic for both employment and F-1 status, students must verify with their UCF Global Immigration Advisor that their SEVIS record and I-20 is updated.