

STEM OPT Extension

How to Apply and Maintain Status

ISS strongly recommends reviewing this entire tutorial for detailed information about the STEM extension eligibility criteria, application processes, and requirements for maintaining status during the approved STEM extension period.

Contents:

STEM Eligibility	2-3
Summary of STEM Application Steps	4
When to Apply	5
Completing Form I-983	6-13
Submitting a STEM OPT Recommendation I-20 Request	14-18
List of Documents Needed for I-765	19
How to Complete the I-765	20-29
Maintaining Status on STEM	30-34
Frequently Asked Questions	35

What is the STEM Extension?

STEM OPT Extension extends an **existing post-completion OPT work authorization** for eligible F-1 students.

- The length of STEM extension is 24 months (2 years).
- **STEM Extension is NOT automatic.** Students on an approved period of post-completion OPT must apply for the extension.
 - Therefore, students with STEM degrees do not automatically get 3 years of OPT when they apply for post-completion OPT.
- A maximum of **two STEM extensions are allowed in a student's lifetime** based on two separate STEM-eligible degrees.
 - For example, if you receive an OPT STEM extension for a bachelor's degree and then complete a higher degree in a STEM field, you will qualify for a new STEM extension.

Am I eligible for STEM Extension?

- Only **federally-designated** STEM bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees from an accredited, SEVIS-certified U.S. educational institution are eligible.
 - Based on the most current DHS list of CIP codes that are eligible for STEM extension; every academic program (and thus, every I-20) has a CIP code, but not all CIP codes appear on the DHS STEM list.
- The applicant must be on a period of approved post-completion OPT to apply.
- The 90-day allotment of unemployment days for post-completion OPT must not be exceeded at the time of application.
- The applicant must have an offer of **paid employment for at least 20 hours per week in a role directly related to the degree program.**
- **Employers must be enrolled in the E-Verify program** and have an IRS Employer Identification Number (EIN).
- Self-employment is not permitted during the STEM extension period.
 - If a student is self-employed during the regular post-completion OPT period and plans to apply for STEM, they must find STEM-eligible employment (see previous two points) before applying for STEM extension.

Applying for STEM Based on a Prior Degree

If you previously earned a STEM degree lower than your current degree level, you still qualify for a STEM extension as long as you are eligible for post-completion OPT based on the new non-STEM degree.

- For example, if you are in an approved period of post-completion OPT for a master's degree program that is not a federally-designated STEM degree, but you previously completed a bachelor's degree program that was a federally-designated STEM degree, you may be eligible to apply for a STEM OPT extension.

Eligibility Checklist for STEM from a Previous Degree:

- You have received both degrees from **currently accredited and SEVP-certified institutions. Foreign STEM degrees are not accepted for this purpose.**
- Your previous degree was not conferred more than 10 years ago at the time of application.
- Your previous degree is a federally-designated STEM degree program.
- **You have not already received an OPT STEM extension from USCIS based on this previous degree.**
- The 90-day allotment of unemployment days for post-completion OPT is not exceeded at the time of application.
- Your practical training opportunity (job offer) is **directly related to the previously obtained STEM degree, and paid employment for at least 20 hours per week.**
- The employer for the practical training opportunity (see point above) is enrolled in the E-Verify program and has an IRS Employer Identification Number (EIN).

Steps to Apply for STEM Extension

Step 1: Think about your timeline (see next page).

- When does your OPT end?
- Do you have a STEM-eligible employer?
- Does your current employer need time to get enrolled in E-Verify or process the I-983?

Step 2: Collaborate with your STEM employer to complete the I-983: <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/i983.pdf>

Step 3: Submit **STEM OPT Recommendation I-20 request** to ISS to obtain I-20 here: <https://intlportal.depaul.edu/portal/>

- The request is not available until 90 days before your OPT end date.
- Please be sure to select the correct request. Do not submit a request with a different name, even if that request mentions something about STEM or OPT.
- **Upload your I-983 into the request. Do not email your I-983 to your ISS advisor in lieu of an official request.**

Please allow **7-10 business days** for review/processing. If your request is incomplete, it will require more time.

Step 4: Receive your I-20 from your ISS advisor **and sign it**. Prepare your STEM application forms and supporting documentation.

Step 5: Submit your complete STEM application (I-765) to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) through their online application: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>

Be sure to file within 60 days of your STEM I-20 issue date OR before your OPT end date, whichever is sooner.

When Should I Apply?

Applicants can submit the I-765 for STEM extension **no earlier than 90 days before the post-completion OPT end date.**

- The OPT end date is the end date shown on your OPT approval notice and your EAD card.
- Since additional processing is needed prior to submitting the I-983 depending on your employer, it is recommended that you start the process about 4 months before your OPT ends.

The deadline to submit the I-765 is your OPT end date.

- If it is past your OPT end date and you have not submitted the I-765, then you are no longer eligible for STEM extension and must make other plans for your status.
- The I-20 cannot be more than 60 days old at the time of submission.

Automatic 180-day Extension

- If you file your STEM OPT extension application on time and your OPT period expires while your extension application is pending, USCIS automatically extends your employment authorization for 180 days.
- This automatic 180-day extension ceases once USCIS adjudicates your STEM OPT extension application.

There are several situations that can delay the STEM application process, including but not limited to:

- Not having an employer at all: an offer for STEM-eligible employment is required before applying for STEM.
- Having employment that is acceptable for post-completion OPT, but not STEM-eligible: see previous sections for STEM eligibility requirements.
- Employer wants to employ a student for the STEM extension period but needs to enroll in E-Verify first.
- Employer is uncooperative with the I-983 process.
- The student submits a request for a STEM OPT Recommendation I-20, but there are errors that need to be fixed before the DSO/ISS advisor can create an I-20.
- Failing to provide adequate information or documentation in the I-765 application for STEM extension.

Be sure to take these possible delays into account for your process.

Completing Form I-983: Page 1

A blank version of the I-983 is available in the STEM Recommendation I-20 request on the ISS Portal.

SECTION 1: STUDENT INFORMATION (Completed by Student)			
1 Student Name (Surname/Primary Name, Given Name):		2 Student Email Address:	
3 Name of School Recommending STEM OPT:	4 Name of School Where STEM Degree Was Earned:	5 SEVIS School Code of School Recommending STEM OPT (including 3-digit suffix):	
6 Designated School Official (DSO) Name and Contact Information:		7 Student SEVIS ID No.:	8 STEM OPT Requested Period (mm-dd-yyyy): From: _____ To: _____
9 Qualifying Major and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code: _____			
10 Level/Type of Qualifying Degree: _____			
11 Date Awarded (mm-dd-yyyy): _____			
12 Based on Prior Degree? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
13 Employment Authorization Number: _____			
SECTION 2: STUDENT CERTIFICATION			
I declare and affirm under penalty of perjury that the statements and information made herein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that the law provides severe penalties for knowingly and willfully falsifying or concealing a material fact, or using any false document in the submission of this form.			
I certify that:			
1. I have reviewed, understand, and will adhere to this Training Plan for STEM OPT Students ("Plan");			
2. I will notify the DSO at the earliest available opportunity if I believe that my employer is not providing me with appropriate training as delineated on this Plan;			
3. I understand that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) may deny, revoke, or terminate the STEM OPT of students whom DHS determines are not engaging in OPT in compliance with the law, including the STEM OPT of students who are not, or whose employers are not, complying with this Plan;			
4. My practical training opportunity is directly related to the STEM degree that qualifies me for the STEM OPT extension; and			
5. I will notify the DSO at the earliest available opportunity regarding any material changes to or deviations from this Plan, including but not limited to, any change of Employer Identification Number resulting from a corporate restructuring, any nontrivial reduction in compensation from the amount previously submitted on the Plan that is not tied to a reduction in hours worked, any significant decrease in hours per week that I engage in a STEM training opportunity, and any decrease in hours below the 90-hours-per-week minimum required under this rule.			
14			
Signature of Student: _____			
Printed Name of Student: _____ Date (mm-dd-yyyy): _____			

1. List your Surname and Given Name in the specified order.
2. Provide your DePaul email address (the DePaul email address is default in SEVIS during OPT and STEM).
3. List DePaul University.
4. List the school you received your STEM degree from.
5. List the SEVIS school code shown on the first page of your I-20 under School Information.
6. List your ISS advisor's name, email address, and phone number (phone number for all ISS advisors is 312-362-8376).
7. List your SEVIS ID, shown at the top of your I-20.
8. List the STEM period start date as the day after your OPT end date; the STEM period end date is 2 years later minus a day. For example, if your OPT ends on 08/15/2025, your STEM OPT Requested Period is from 08/16/2025 to 08/15/2027.

Completing Form I-983: Page 1 Continued

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: _____			
Date Awarded (mm-dd-yyyy): _____			
Based on Prior Degree? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Employment Authorization Number: _____			
SECTION 2: STUDENT CERTIFICATION			
I declare and affirm under penalty of perjury that the statements and information made herein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that the law provides severe penalties for knowingly and willfully falsifying or concealing a material fact, or using any false document in the submission of this form.			
I certify that:			
1. I have reviewed, understand, and will adhere to this Training Plan for STEM OPT Students ("Plan"); 2. I will notify the DSO at the earliest available opportunity if I believe that my employer is not providing me with appropriate training as delineated on this Plan; 3. I understand that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) may deny, revoke, or terminate the STEM OPT of students whom DHS determines are not engaging in OPT in compliance with the law, including the STEM OPT of students who are not, or whose employers are not, complying with this Plan; 4. My practical training opportunity is directly related to the STEM degree that qualifies me for the STEM OPT extension; and 5. I will notify the DSO at the earliest available opportunity regarding any material changes to or deviations from this Plan, including but not limited to, any change of Employer Identification Number resulting from a corporate restructuring, any nontrivial reduction in compensation from the amount previously submitted on the Plan that is not tied to a reduction in hours worked, any significant decrease in hours per week that I engage in a STEM training opportunity, and any decrease in hours below the 80-hours-per-week minimum required under this rule.			
Signature of Student: _____			
Printed Name of Student: _____ Date (mm-dd-yyyy): _____			

9. List the entire program name and CIP code that qualifies you for the STEM OPT extension, shown on page 1 of your I-20 under Major 1. This program name and CIP code must be a federally-designated STEM program to qualify. This the numerical part of the CIP code first, then the program name.
10. Enter the academic level of your qualifying STEM degree. (For example, enter bachelor's, master's or doctorate.)
11. Enter the program end date for the qualifying STEM degree.
12. Check "Yes" if your STEM OPT application is based on a previously obtained STEM degree instead of the degree that is the basis for your current post-completion OPT. Check "No" if your STEM OPT participation is based on the STEM degree that is the basis for your current post-completion OPT. Most DePaul students select "No."
13. Enter your A-Number (same as the USCIS number on your EAD card).
14. Provide a valid signature (ink or electronic signatures are accepted), print your name, and list the date of signature.

Completing Form I-983: Page 2, section 3

**to be completed by the student and employer collaboratively*

8

SECTION 3: EMPLOYER INFORMATION (Completed by Employer)					
15	Employer Name:		Street Address:		Suite:
16	Employer Website URL:		City:	State:	ZIP Code:
	18	Employer ID Number (EIN):	19	Number of Full-Time Employees in U.S.:	20
			North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code:		
21	OPT Hours Per Week (must be at least 20 hours/week):		Compensation:		
22	Start Date of Employment (mm-dd-yyyy):		A. Salary Amount and Frequency: _____		
			B. Other Compensation (Type and Estimated Amount or Value):		
			1. _____		
			2. _____		
			3. _____		
			4. _____		

15. Enter the **official legal name** of the company or organization that pays you for your work.

- If you are currently applying for the STEM extension and already work with this organization on post-completion OPT, make sure you have already reported the employer in the **SEVP Portal** and that the name you provided there is also the **official legal name**.
- If you are unsure what the official legal name is, please check with your employer directly **PRIOR** to submitting the I-983.

16. Enter the URL of the employer's website, if available. If no website exists, enter N/A.

17. Enter the employing organization's **mailing address**.

18. Enter the Employer Identification Number (EIN) for the company or organization that pays you for your work. **The number should have the format XX-XXXXXXX and is NOT the same as the E-Verify Company ID/E-Verify number.**

19. Provide the number of full-time employees in the United States. If you are unsure, ask your employer.

20. Enter the employer's NAICS code. (Federal statistical agencies use the NAICS code to classify business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. business economy.) Information on NAICS codes is available at <https://www.census.gov/naics/>.

21. Enter the agreed-upon number of average training hours per week. In order to qualify for STEM OPT, the student must work **a minimum of 20 hours per week**.

22. If you are currently applying for STEM extension, the start date of employment on the I-983 must be **the same as your STEM OPT start date, even if you started employment with the employer during your initial OPT period/prior to your STEM extension period.**

- If you switch employers after STEM approval, the start date should reflect when the work starts with the new employer.

23. Enter the dollar amount of salary, stipend and/or other compensation and the frequency of compensation (for example, hourly, weekly, bi-weekly, monthly). Other compensation may include housing, tuition waivers or transportation costs, etc.

- The terms and conditions of a STEM practical training opportunity (including duties, hours and compensation) must be **commensurate with those applicable to similarly situated workers who are U.S. citizens**, except that a STEM OPT participant must work at least 20 hours per week while employed.

Completing Form I-983: Page 2, section 4

**to be completed by the employer*

SECTION 4: EMPLOYER CERTIFICATION

I declare and affirm under penalty of perjury that the statements and information made herein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that the law provides severe penalties for knowingly and willfully falsifying or concealing a material fact, or using any false document in the submission of this form.

I certify on behalf of the employer that this Training Plan for STEM OPT Students ("Plan") is approved and that:

1. I have reviewed and understand this Plan, and I will ensure that the supervising Official follows this Plan;

2. I will notify the DSO at the earliest available opportunity regarding any material changes to this Plan, including but not limited to, any change of Employer Identification Number resulting from a corporate restructuring, any reduction in compensation from the amount previously submitted on the Plan 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, and any decrease in hours below the 20-hours-per-week minimum required under this rule;

3. Within five business days of the termination or departure of the student during the authorized period of OPT, I will report such termination or departure to the DSO (Note: business days do not include federal holidays or weekend days; and an employer shall consider a student to have departed when the employer knows the student has left the practical training opportunity, or when the student has not reported for practical training for a period of five consecutive business days without the consent of the employer); and

4. I will adhere to all applicable regulatory provisions that govern this program (see 8 CFR Part 214), which include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. The student's practical training opportunity is directly related to the STEM degree that qualifies the student for the STEM OPT extension, and the position offered to the student achieves the objectives of his or her participation in this training program;

b. The student will receive on-site supervision and training, consistent with this Plan, by experienced and knowledgeable staff;

c. The employer has sufficient resources and personnel to provide the specified training program set forth in this Plan, and the employer is prepared to implement that program, including at the location(s) identified in this Plan;

d. The student on a STEM OPT extension will not replace a full- or part-time, temporary or permanent U.S. worker. The terms and conditions of the STEM practical training opportunity—including duties, hours, and compensation—are commensurate with the terms and conditions applicable to the employer's similarly situated U.S. workers or, if the employer does not employ and has not recently employed more than two similarly situated U.S. workers in the area of employment, the terms and conditions of other similarly situated U.S. workers in the area of employment; and

e. The training conducted pursuant to this Plan complies with all applicable Federal and State requirements relating to employment.

Note: DHS may, at its discretion, conduct a site visit of the employer to ensure that program requirements are being met, including that the employer possesses and maintains the ability and resources to provide structured and guided work-based learning experiences consistent with this Plan.

Signature of Employer Official with Signatory Authority: 24

Printed Name and Title of Employer Official with Signatory Authority: 25

26 Date (mm-dd-yyyy): Printed Name of Employing Organization: 27

At the bottom of page 2, the employer must review the Section 4: Employer Certification information.

The Employer Official with Signatory Authority, is an appropriate individual in the employer’s organization who is **familiar with the student’s goals and performance** and has **signatory authority for the employer**.

24. The Employer must provide a valid signature. Ink signatures and electronic signatures are accepted.

25. The Employer must print their Full Name **AND their title**. If the title is omitted, your ISS advisor will have you edit the form.

26. The date the employer signed the form.

27. The name of the company or organization that pays you. This should match the Employer Name at the top of page 2.

Completing Form I-983: Page 3

**to be completed by the student and employer, collaboratively*

10

SECTION 5: TRAINING PLAN FOR STEM OPT STUDENTS (Completed by Student and Employer)	
Student Name (Surname/Primary Name, Given Name):	
Employer Name:	
EMPLOYER SITE INFORMATION	
Site Name:	Site Address (Street, City, State, ZIP):
Name of Official:	Official's Title:
Official's Email:	Official's Phone Number:

28. List the student's Surname and Given Name in the specified order.

29. Enter the **official legal name** of the company or organization that pays you for your work. This should match the Employer Name provided on page 2, section 3.

30. Enter the employer's site name, which may be the same as the employer name listed on page 2, Section 3. However, if the student works for a branch or subsidiary of a large entity, or anywhere other than the employer's headquarters, provide the name of this work site.

31. Provide the **physical location** where the work takes place **the majority of the time**.

- If the student works at a branch location other than the headquarters, list the branch address.
- If the student works remotely from their residential address, list the residential address. If the student moves, then the Site Address must be updated to reflect the change in physical work location.

32. Enter the **name** of the appropriate individual in the employer's organization who is familiar with, and will monitor, the student's goals and performance. This may or may not be the same Employer Official listed on page 2, Section 4.

33. Enter the **title** of the official from #32.

34. Enter the email address of the official from #32.

35. Enter the phone number of the official from #32.

Note: the email address and phone number are mandatory. It is not possible for the DSO/ISS advisor to add STEM employment to SEVIS without the phone number and email address of the official. If your official does not have an email address or phone number, you must work with them to find suitable contact information that DHS can contact them at if needed.

Completing Form I-983: Page 3, continued

**to be completed by the student and employer, collaboratively*

<p>Note: for the remaining fields in this section, employers who already have an internal/pre-existing training plan in place may fill in the details based on that plan.</p>
<p>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.</p> <div data-bbox="709 407 825 520" style="text-align: center;">36</div>
<p>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.</p> <div data-bbox="709 739 825 852" style="text-align: center;">37</div>
<p>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.</p> <div data-bbox="709 1058 825 1171" style="text-align: center;">38</div>
<p>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.</p> <div data-bbox="709 1377 825 1491" style="text-align: center;">39</div>

All text on this page must fit in the given boxes without scrolling or overflowing.

36. Describe the role and **explicitly connect** it to the STEM degree the student earned.
37. Describe the specific skills, knowledge and techniques the student will learn or apply; **how** the student will achieve the goals set out for their training; and the training curriculum, including the timeline.
38. Follow the direction provided by the prompt to describe how this role is supervised.
39. Follow the direction provided by the prompt to describe how the role is measured and assessed.

Section 5, continued

**to be completed by the STUDENT and EMPLOYER, collaboratively*

40. If your employer has any additional information they want to include, they can add it in this optional section. It is okay to leave this area blank if there is nothing to add.

<p><u>Additional Remarks (optional):</u> Provide additional information pertinent to the Plan.</p> <div style="text-align: center; height: 100px; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; background-color: black; color: white; font-size: 40px; margin: 0 auto; width: 50px;">40</div>	
SECTION 6: EMPLOYER OFFICIAL CERTIFICATION	
<p>I declare and affirm under penalty of perjury that the statements and information made herein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that the law provides severe penalties for knowingly and willfully falsifying or concealing a material fact, or using any false document in the submission of this form.</p>	
<p>Employer Official with Signatory Authority - I certify that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have reviewed, understand, and will follow this Training Plan for STEM OPT Students (Plan); 2. I will conduct the required periodic evaluations of the student;* 3. I will adhere to all applicable regulatory provisions that govern this program (<i>see 8 CFR Part 214.2(f)(10)(ii)</i>); and 4. I will notify the DSO regarding any material changes to or material deviations from this Plan at the earliest available opportunity, including if I believe the student is not receiving appropriate training as delineated in this Plan. 	
<p>Signature of Employer Official with Signatory Authority: _____</p>	<div style="background-color: black; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 30px; height: 30px; line-height: 30px; margin: 0 auto;">41</div>
<p>Printed Name and Title of Employer Official with Signatory Authority: _____</p>	<div style="background-color: black; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 30px; height: 30px; line-height: 30px; margin: 0 auto;">42</div>
<p>Date (mm-dd-yyyy): _____</p>	<div style="background-color: black; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 30px; height: 30px; line-height: 30px; margin: 0 auto;">43</div>

Section 6

**to be completed by the EMPLOYER*

41. The individual who signs this section may be the same official who signed the Employer Certification on page 2 Section 4, or it may be another official. An employee with signatory authority for the employer should review the certification and affirm the statement with their signature. The employer must provide a **valid signature**. Ink signatures and electronic signatures are accepted.

42. The Employer must print their Full Name **AND their title**. If the title is omitted, your ISS advisor will have you edit the form.

43. The date the employer signed the form.

If you are APPLYING for STEM extension, do not write anything on page 5. It should still be included in the I-983 file you upload for your STEM OPT Recommendation I-20, but should not have answers or signatures.

The heading for the Evaluation on Student Progress, to be completed by the student at the 12-month mark of their approved STEM period.

EVALUATION ON STUDENT PROGRESS	
Provide a self-evaluation of your performance, using the measures previously identified, in applying and acquiring new knowledge, skills, and competencies identified in the Training Plan for STEM OPT Students. Discuss accomplishments, successful projects, overall contributions, etc., during this review period. Address whether there are any modifications to the objectives and goals for projects, or new areas for skill and competency development.	
Range of Evaluation Dates: From (mm-dd-yyyy):	To (mm-dd-yyyy):

The heading for the Final Evaluation on Student Progress, to be completed by the student at the 24-month mark of their approved STEM period.

FINAL EVALUATION ON STUDENT PROGRESS	
Provide a self-evaluation of your performance, using the measures previously identified, in applying and acquiring new knowledge, skills, and competencies identified in the Training Plan for STEM OPT Students. Discuss accomplishments, successful projects, overall contributions, etc., during this review period. Address whether there are any modifications to the objectives and goals for projects, or new areas for skill and competency development.	
Range of Evaluation Dates: From (mm-dd-yyyy):	To (mm-dd-yyyy):

Student evaluations are a **shared responsibility** of the student and the employer, to ensure that the student’s practical training goals are being satisfactorily met. **The student is responsible for completing the evaluation.** The employer must review and attest to their accuracy. **Both the student and employer sign and date the evaluation.**

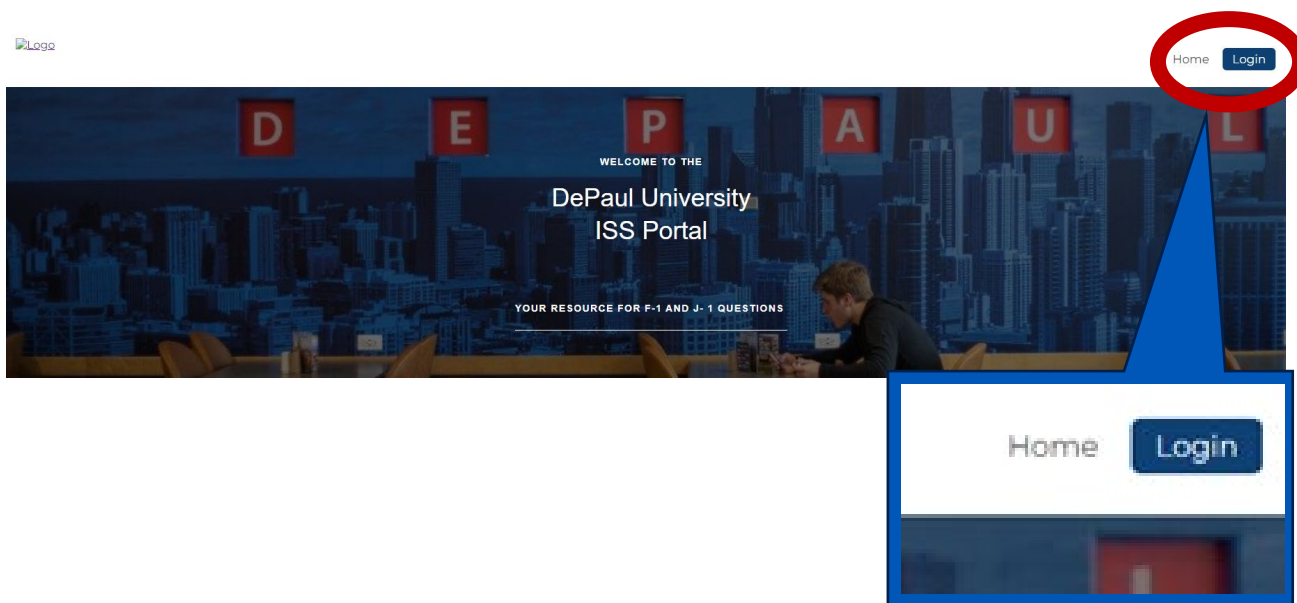
The student must complete their STEM reporting/validation **every six months** after their STEM OPT is approved. However, the Evaluation on Student Progress in the I-983 should only be completed 12 months after their STEM OPT start date. The Final Evaluation on Student Progress must be completed when the student stops working for the employer listed on the I-983, or 24 months after the STEM OPT start date (whichever is sooner).

- When completing the Evaluation on Student Progress and Final Evaluation on Student Progress on the I-983, the student must enter the date range covered by each evaluation.
- The student must physically, electronically, or digitally sign the evaluations; print their name; and enter the date of their signature.
- The Employer Official with Signatory Authority must physically, electronically or digitally sign the evaluations; print their name; and enter the date of their signature to show concurrence with the assessment information that the student has entered.

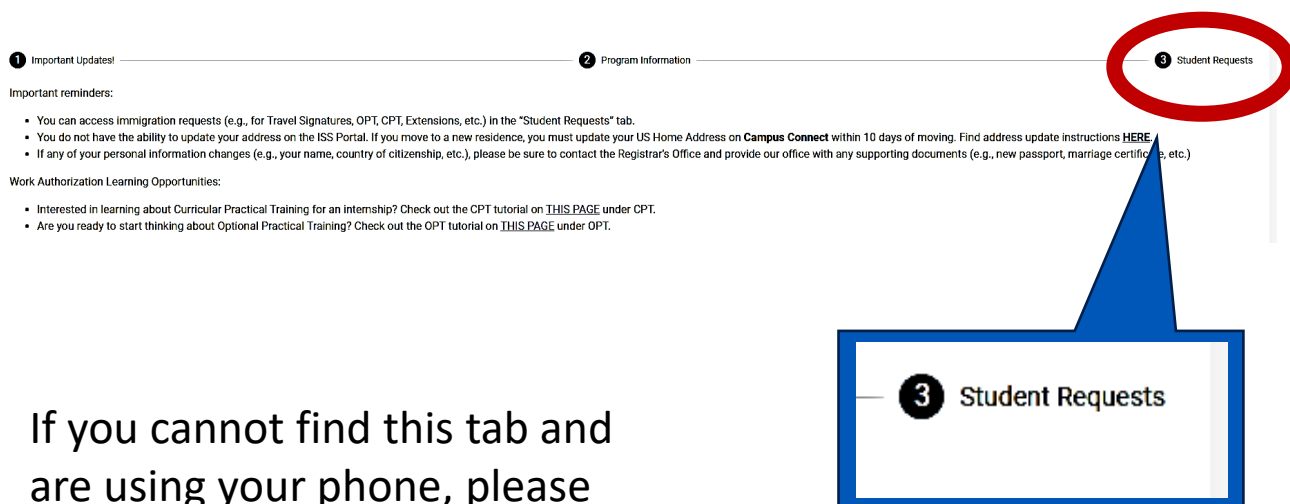
The student must submit STEM reporting/validation, including the evaluation sections of the I-983 when appropriate, no later than 10 days after the relevant reporting period.

Submitting a STEM OPT Recommendation I-20 Request

After completing the I-983 with your employer, go to <https://intlportal.depaul.edu/> and log in with your DePaul credentials.



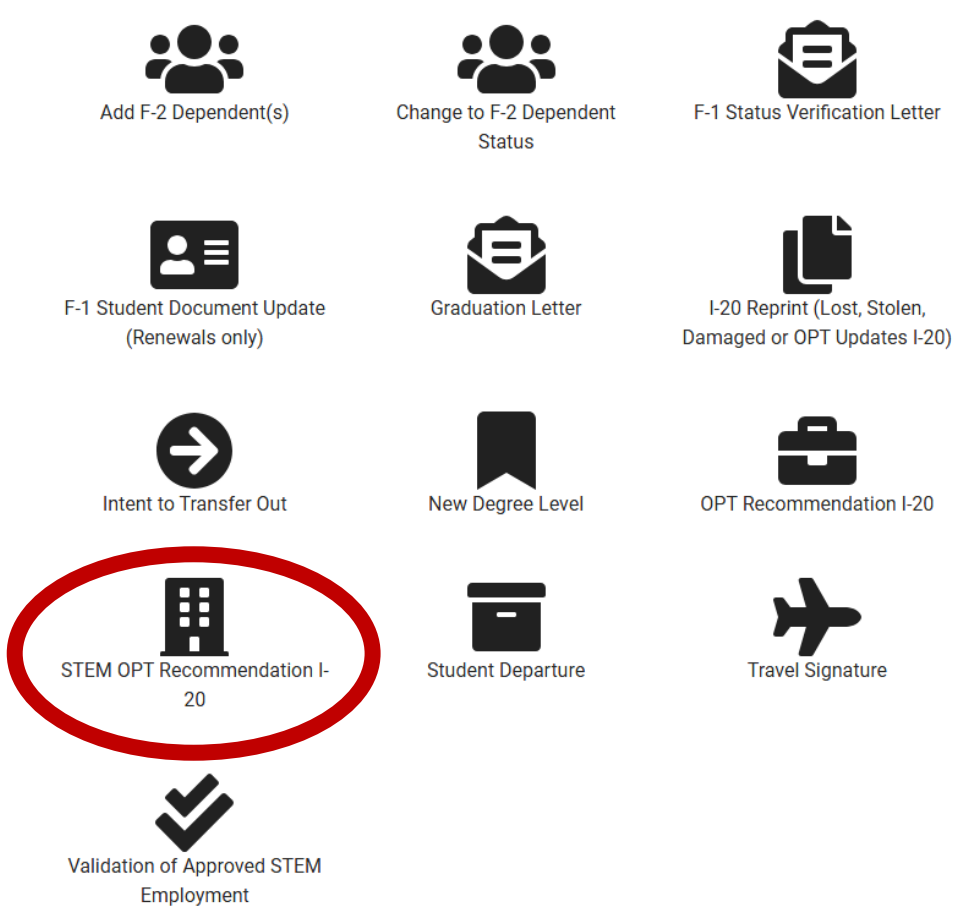
On the main page, select **3: Student Requests**



If you cannot find this tab and are using your phone, please rotate your phone horizontally or switch to using a computer.

Submitting a STEM OPT Recommendation I-20 Request

On the Student Requests page, find the STEM OPT Recommendation I-20 option on the left side and click on the icon.



The most common clarifications ISS advisors need to provide about the STEM OPT Recommendation I-20 are:

- When opening the form, click anywhere on the line displaying employment information, even if the information is incorrect. Sometimes the employment information from SEVIS does not sync with the ISS Portal; this does not affect your request.
- If you have completed the I-983, submit it in the STEM OPT Recommendation I-20 request, **even if you are unsure whether you have made mistakes**. ISS advisors have a system for reviewing the request and providing a list of the errors that need to be fixed; attempting to get I-983 feedback when you have not made an official request yet will make your process slower and more inefficient.

Submitting a STEM OPT Recommendation I-20 Request

Maintenance of Status Fee (Effective October 15, 2025)

Beginning October 15, 2025, DePaul University will implement a Maintenance of Status Fee for each year a DePaul F-1 student remains in F-1 status after graduation.

- The fee is \$125 per year, totaling \$250 for the two-year STEM OPT period.
- This fee is mandatory and nonrefundable.
- **The fee payment is included in the STEM recommendation I-20 request. This means you must complete the payment BEFORE advancing through the rest of the I-20 request.**

How to make the payment:

1 Payment (Payment) Required *

Beginning October 15, 2025, DePaul University will implement a Maintenance of Status Fee for each year a DePaul F-1 student remains in F-1 status following graduation.

The fee is **\$125 per year**, totaling **\$250** for the two-year STEM OPT period. This fee is **mandatory and nonrefundable**.

After your payment is successfully processed, please save a screenshot or download a copy of the receipt for your records. Please save a copy in case we need to help you retrieve your payment record later. Once the payment is complete, return to the ISS portal, locate your draft OPT Recommendation I-20 request, and continue the submission process.

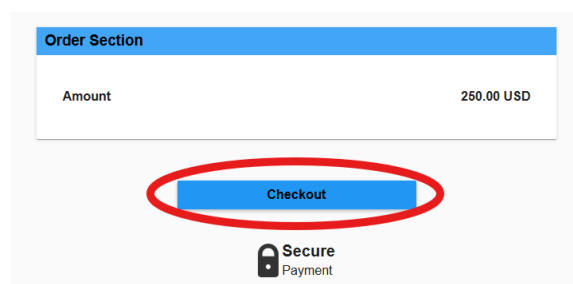
If you have any questions about this fee or encounter technical issues, please contact iss@depaul.edu

PAY TODAY - \$250

Select “Pay Today” to be redirected to the secure payment page.

Click Checkout to make the payment.

Enter your credit card information, billing address, and shipping address. You can simply check “Same as billing” to copy the billing details. No items will be mailed to you; this information is only required by the payment system to process the transaction.



Order Section

Amount	250.00 USD
--------	------------

Checkout

Secure Payment

Shipping Address

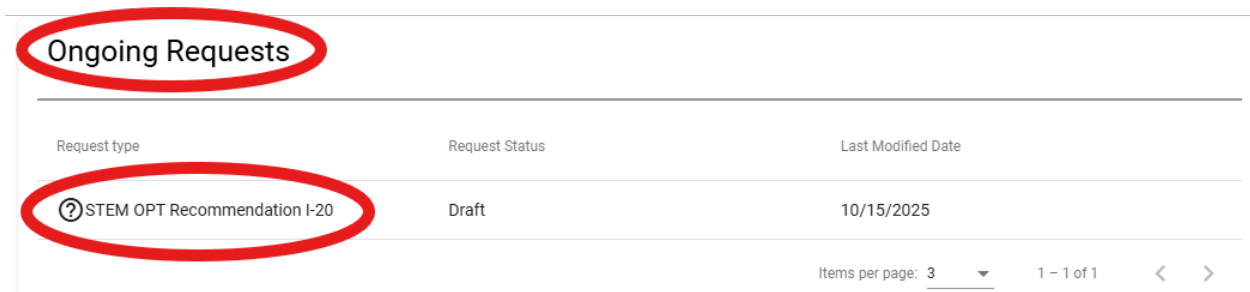
☐ Same as billing

Submitting a STEM OPT Recommendation I-20 Request

Once your Maintenance Fee payment is successfully processed, you'll see a confirmation page. Please save a screenshot or download a copy of your payment receipt for your records. You may need it later if ISS staff assist in retrieving your payment record.

- For questions about the fee, review [OPT and STEM OPT Maintenance of Status Fee FAQs.pdf](#)
- For technical issues during payment, email iss@depaul.edu.

Return to your STEM OPT request in the ISS Portal. You will find your draft STEM OPT Recommendation I-20 request under Ongoing Requests.



Ongoing Requests		
Request type	Request Status	Last Modified Date
STEM OPT Recommendation I-20	Draft	10/15/2025

Items per page: 3 1 - 1 of 1

Click on the Draft request and advance through the rest of the sections, uploading your I-983 where prompted. Once complete, click Submit.

Submitting a STEM OPT Recommendation I-20 Request

After you submit the request and all the errors on your I-983 have been resolved, you will receive an email that your STEM OPT Recommendation I-20 is ready.

To download the I-20, repeat the steps on page 14 of this tutorial; on the Student Requests page, find the Documents section on the left side and click on the document link to download the I-20.

The screenshot shows the SEVIS Student Requests page. At the top, there are two tabs: '1 Important Updates!' and '2 Program In'. Below the tabs, there are four main sections: 'Ongoing Requests', 'Completed Requests', 'Documents', and 'Practical Training'. The 'Documents' section is highlighted with a red oval. It contains a link to download the I-20. Below the 'Documents' section is the 'Practical Training' section, which includes a sub-section for 'Curricular Practical Training (CPT)'. At the bottom, there is a section for 'Optional Practical Training (OPT)'.

Immediately after downloading the I-20, **SIGN IT** and check that:

- Your information on the first page is correct.
- Your ISS advisor signed the I-20 on page 1 under SCHOOL ATTESTATION.
- The date listed under DATE ISSUED of that section is the day your STEM request was made in SEVIS by your ISS advisor. Your I-765 application will be denied if you submit it more than 60 days after this issuing date.
- On page 2, the STEM authorization and employment dates match your understanding.

Prepare Your Application Documents

- Passport-style photograph – see U.S. Department of State Passport Photos page for full guidance:
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/how-apply/photos.html>
- Your most recent Electronic I-94:
<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/recent-search>
- Copy of information page in passport
- Copy of your EAD for post-completion OPT
- I-20 showing STEM Request **that is less than 60 days old, signed by you and your ISS advisor**
 - If your I-20 is older than 60 days old when you submit the I-765, your I-765 will be denied.
 - If your I-20 is not signed by you and/or your ISS advisor, your I-765 will be denied.
- Copy of official transcript for your STEM-qualifying degree.
- Payment method for the filing fee – see
<https://www.uscis.gov/forms/filing-fees> for full guidance

If you are applying for STEM extension based on a previous degree, inform your ISS advisor. The I-765 requires applicants filing based on a prior degree to provide proof of institution accreditation and SEVP certification at the school where the STEM degree was earned.

Submit the I-765 Online

Instructions for the USCIS Online System

1. Go to <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>
2. Click “File Online”
3. Choose the “File Online” button again on the next page **for the I-765**
4. Tips for filing online can be found [here!](#) **We do not recommend applying via mail!**



Online Filing Benefits



Case status alerts and secure messages



See all case correspondence



Check your case status and update personal information



Upload evidence



[I-765 | Application for Employment Authorization](#)

Online PDF filing option available for these categories:

- (a)(12) – Temporary Protected Status granted;
- (c)(8) – Application for employment authorization based on pending Form I-589, Application for Asylum or for Withholding of Removal, and applicants for pending asylum under the ABC Settlement Agreement;
- (c)(9) - Certain family-based and employment-based applicants pending adjustment of status under Section 245 of the Immigration and Nationality Act;
- (c)(11) – Paroled for urgent humanitarian or significant public benefit purposes; or
- (c)(19) – Certain pending TPS applicants whom USCIS has determined are prima facie eligible for TPS and who may then receive an EAD as a “temporary treatment benefit” under 8 C.F.R. 244.10(a).

Note: If you are applying for a (c)(9) Pending Adjustment of Status category of Form I-765 that is [fee exempted](#), do not submit your application through the PDF filing option at this time. **If you file Form I-765 for the (c)(9) category, you will be required to pay a fee or submit a fee waiver request.** If you are fee-exempt and proceed with paying the fee and submitting your application through the PDF filing option, **USCIS will not issue you a refund.** If you are filing under a fee exempt category, you should mail a paper Form I-765 to the address on the [Direct Filing Addresses for Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization](#) website to receive the fee exemption.



Submit the I-765 Online

If you do not yet have an account, select **"Create an Account"** on the **Sign In** page and follow the steps to create a USCIS account.

At the welcome screen, select **"My USCIS"** and select **"I am an applicant, petitioner, or requestor"** as your account type. Finally, select **"File a form online"** and use the drop-down menu to select the I-765 as the form; click **"Start form."**

The image shows three screenshots of the USCIS online portal. The first screenshot, titled "Welcome to your USCIS Account", shows the "Login to a USCIS Service" section with three options: "Edit My Account Profile", "FIRST" (highlighted with a red oval), and "myE-Verify". A blue arrow points from the "FIRST" option to the second screenshot. The second screenshot, titled "Account Type", shows the "Select an account type:" section with three radio button options: "I am an applicant, petitioner, or requestor." (highlighted with a red oval), "I am a Legal Representative", and "I am an H-1B registrant." A blue arrow points from the first option to the third screenshot. The third screenshot shows the "File a form online" button, which is highlighted with a red oval. Below the button, it says "Start a new form, upload evidence, and pay and submit online".

Welcome to your USCIS Account

Select what you want to do

Edit My Account Profile Editing your profile includes making changes to your email, password, phone number, security questions, or the two-step verification method and backup code.

USCIS Apply for immigration benefits, find tools and resources to assist in preparation for naturalization, and search for doctors in your local community.

FIRST Submit, manage, and receive Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

myE-Verify Confirm your records for employment eligibility, track E-Verify or Self-Check case status, and protect your identity by locking your Social Security Number (SSN).

Not sure what service you need? Start at [USCIS.gov](https://uscis.gov)

Account Type

Select an account type:

☒ **I am an applicant, petitioner, or requestor.**

- USCIS only offers certain benefit types for online filing. Please refer to uscis.gov for further guidance.
- You may use this account type to file an online Form I-134A as an individual agreeing to financially support a beneficiary. You may also use this account type if you are a beneficiary of a confirmed online Form I-134 or I-134A.
- You cannot file an H-1B Registration with this account type.

☐ **I am a Legal Representative.**

- I am an attorney eligible to practice law in the United States.
- I am an accredited representative of a qualified organization that is recognized by the Department of Justice in accordance with 8 CFR part 1292.

☐ **I am an H-1B registrant.**

- I am an authorized signatory submitting an H-1B Registration or signing an H-1B Registration to be submitted by a legal representative.
- A registrant account can be used only to submit H-1B Registrations.
- If you are an attorney or accredited representative that requires the submission of a Form G-28 and are submitting H-1B Registrations on behalf of an H-1B employer or agent, you must use a Legal Representative account.

Submit

File a form online

Start a new form, upload evidence, and pay and submit online

Apply for STEM Extension: *Submit the I-765 Online*

Start the form: Select the I-765 form and Eligibility category **(c)(3)(C) STEM Extension**

Select the form you want to file online.

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

What is your eligibility category?

If your eligibility category is not listed in the drop down menu, you can submit a paper form by mail.


(c)(3)(C) STEM Extension

Select Start Form to open the I-765.

Getting Started Section

Select **(c)(3)(C) STEM Extension** as the basis of eligibility.

What is your eligibility category? *



You can file your request online only for certain eligibility categories

If your eligibility category does not appear on the drop-down list, you must file a paper [Form I-765](#). If you submit online and are not eligible for one of the listed categories, your application may be denied.

(c)(3)(C) STEM Extension

What is your degree: List your STEM-qualifying program and CIP code shown on page 1 of your I-20 under Major 1.

What is your employer's name as listed in E-Verify: Ask your employer for the exact organization name associated with their E-Verify number.

E-Verify company identification number: Ask your employer for their 4 to 7-digit E-Verify number.

If you are sure you want premium processing, you can select it. If you are unsure what premium processing is or whether you want to do it, discuss it with your ISS Advisor first.

How to Apply for OPT: *Submit the I-765 Online*

Reason for applying: Select “Renewal of permission to accept employment.”

Answer “Yes” for having previously filed Form I-765.

Answer “No” for Preparer and Interpreter Information.

What is your reason for applying? *

- ☐ Initial permission to accept employment
- ☐ Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document or correction of my employment authorization document NOT DUE to US Citizenship and Immigration Services error
- ☒ Renewal of permission to accept employment

Have you previously filed Form I-765?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Is someone assisting you with completing this application?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

About You Section

Your Name: Please list your full legal name as it appears on your passport (the spelling and order should match). It’s best to list your family (last) name in ALL CAPS. If you have several given names and do not have space to list all of them, that is okay.

Other Names Used: You only need to complete this item if you have had a legal name change while studying in the U.S.

How to Apply for OPT: *Submit the I-765 Online*

Your Contact Information

Phone Number and Email: Enter a U.S. phone number and email address that you check often. If the email you use here is different from the email(s) listed in Campus Connect, please add it to your Campus Connect profile.

Mailing address: where your new EAD card will be mailed. This address must be valid for at least the next 3 months. If you will move in the months after you submit the I-765, use a reliable friend or family member's address to receive your EAD. You may also rent and use a P.O. Box (see usps.com for more information). Do not use the ISS address. If you are using an address other than your own, use "c/o" to indicate that your mail is being delivered "in care of" the resident of that address. For example, c/o Friend's Street Name, Apt #, Chicago, IL, 60604. Otherwise, USCIS will think that is your new address, and it will conflict with the address showing in SEVIS (database).

USCIS does not forward mail when applicants move. USPS will return your mail to USCIS as undeliverable. If your name does not appear on the c/o address you list, USPS may also return your mail to USCIS as undeliverable. USCIS destroys EAD cards returned by USPS after 60 business days if USCIS is not contacted by the document's intended recipient to provide the correct address.

U.S. Physical Address: If your mailing address is different from your physical address (the address where you currently reside/sleep), select "no" and list your physical address. This address should also match your U.S. home address in Campus Connect (so ISS can link it to your SEVIS record). If the U.S. mailing address you listed is the same as your U.S. physical address, then answer "yes."

In the "Describe Yourself" and "When and where you were born" sections, answer to the best of your ability based on your understanding.

How to Apply for OPT: *Submit the I-765 Online*

Your Immigration Information

Provide the country or countries you are a citizen of:

What is your country of citizenship or nationality?

List all countries where you are currently a citizen or national.

Look up your I-94
(<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/search/recent-search>). The
“Admission (I-94) Record
Number” on your most
recent I-94 should be
provided on the I-765:

What is your Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record
Number (if any)?

Provide an 11 character I-94 Number.

Provide the information for your last arrival in the United States:

When did you last arrive in the United States?

List your arrival date, place of arrival, and status at arrival.

Date of arrival (on or about)

MM/DD/YYYY

Place of arrival

Status at last arrival

How to Apply for OPT: *Submit the I-765 Online*

Your Immigration Information

Provide your current, valid passport information. If you recently renewed your passport, do not provide the old passport information.

What is the passport number of your most recently issued passport?

Skip the travel document question:

Provide the expiration date on your current, valid passport:

What is your travel document number (if any)?

What is the expiration date of your passport or travel document?

MM/DD/YYYY

List F-1 as your current immigration status or category. **If you do not have F-1 status, ask your ISS advisor for assistance.**

List the SEVIS ID number at the top of your I-20.

What is your current immigration status or category?

F1 - Student, Academic Or Language Program. ▼

What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)?

Use the "Additional Information" section to include all previously used SEVIS numbers.

N-

Provide a 10, 11, or 12-digit SEVIS number.

How to Apply for OPT: *Submit the I-765 Online*

Other Information

Your A-number is the USCIS number on the front of your EAD for post-completion OPT; provide it for the A-Number question.

If you have record of your USCIS Online Account Number from when you completed the I-765 for post-completion OPT, provide it; if you cannot find it or do not know it, select “I do not have or know my USCIS Online Account Number.”

Answer the Social Security questions based on whether you need a social security number. If you already have one (you probably do from post completion OPT), do not request another one.

What is your A-Number?

☐ I do not have or know my A-Number.

A-

Provide a 7, 8, or 9-digit number. If the A-Number is fewer than 9 digits, the system will automatically add zero(s) after the "A" and before the first digit so there is a total of 9 digits, for example: A-001234567.



What is your USCIS Online Account Number?

Providing your unique USCIS Online Account Number (OAN) helps us manage your account. You may already have an OAN if you previously filed certain paper forms and received an Account Access Notice in the mail. You can find the OAN at the top of the notice; it is not the same as an A-Number.

☐ I do not have or know my USCIS Online Account Number.

Provide a 12-digit Online Account Number.

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

☐ Yes

☐ No

Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card?

☐ Yes

☐ No

How to Apply for OPT: *Submit the I-765 Online*

Evidence

2 x 2 photo of you: Carefully read the detailed instructions provided on this page before uploading your photo. Be sure to follow the link provided to the Department of State's photo composition tools if you need to edit the photo in any way (i.e. cropping, rotating, resizing, etc.). **Do not skip this section.**

Form I-94 or Passport: Carefully follow the detailed instructions provided on this page. If there is an error on your I-94 or passport you are concerned about, ask your ISS advisor what action they recommend.

Employment Authorization Document and Government ID: Upload a copy of your EAD for post-completion OPT **AND** your passport on this page. As stated on this page, your picture, name, and date of birth must be clearly visible.

Form I-20: Carefully follow the detailed instructions on this page to properly upload your STEM OPT Recommendation I-20. **The I-20 MUST be signed by you and your ISS advisor on the first page, have a STEM endorsement on the second page, and be less than 60 days old.** If you are missing one of these components on your I-20, contact your ISS advisor immediately.

College Degree: Upload a copy of your official transcript for your STEM-qualifying degree.

Institution Accreditation: Skip this section **UNLESS** you are applying for STEM based on a degree you completed prior to the program your current post-completion OPT is based on. If you are applying based on a prior degree, ask your ISS advisor for additional assistance; you will need to provide proof of institution accreditation and SEVP certification at the school where the STEM degree was earned.

Additional Information

You only need to complete this section if there is a discrepancy in your documents that you know of ahead of time or you have had other SEVIS ID numbers before. If this applies to you, click "add a response" and select the drop-down options.

How to Apply for OPT: *Submit the I-765 Online*

REMINDERS

Application must be **received** by USCIS by **12:00 pm Coordinated Universal Time (around 6 hours ahead of Chicago Time)** on last day of post-completion OPT.

If you receive a “Request for Evidence” (RFE), **contact your ISS advisor immediately to assist you. Do not respond to the RFE without assistance from your ISS advisor.**

Do not travel during your STEM process. If you plan to travel during any point of the process, discuss it with your ISS advisor prior to finalizing your travel plan or applying for STEM extension.

How to Maintain F-1 Status on STEM Extension

During an approved period of STEM extension, F-1 visa holders are required to do the following:

1. Do not work without authorization. Pay attention to STEM status and dates.
2. Maintain valid employment. Do not exceed unemployment day limits.
3. Report employment changes to your ISS advisor within 10 days of each change.
4. Submit STEM Reporting at the 6, 12, 18, and 24-month periods of your STEM extension.
5. Report personal information changes on the SEVP Portal and Campus Connect within 10 days of each change.
6. Stay in contact with your ISS advisor regarding changes in your status, such as switching to another legal status other than F-1, starting a new academic program, or leaving the United States long term.

Do Not Work without Authorization

The STEM extension lasts for 24 months after the initial post-completion OPT period.

- During the STEM period, **ALL employment must be STEM-eligible**; any other work is considered unauthorized.
- Unreported employment is unauthorized.
- Employment occurring after the approved STEM period end date is unauthorized unless new work authorization is accompanying it.
- **Work authorization ends when a SEVIS record is released to another school.** If you choose to transfer your SEVIS record to a new school, ask your ISS advisor ahead of time when your STEM work authorization will end relative to your transfer process. If you work after your SEVIS record is released, the work will be considered unauthorized.
- If your STEM I-765 application is **denied** by USCIS **OR** USCIS takes more than 180 days after your initial post-completion OPT end date to adjudicate your I-765 and it is past your post-completion OPT end date, you must stop working immediately and contact your ISS advisor for assistance determining your options for legal status in the U.S.

Maintaining Valid Employment

During the approved period of STEM extension, F-1 visa holders must maintain employment.

- In addition to the **90 days** of unemployment from your initial period of post-completion OPT authorization, if USCIS approves your 24-month OPT STEM extension application, **60 more days** of unemployment are added for the duration of your 24-month OPT STEM extension authorization (for a total of 150 days of unemployment). **All gaps in employment cannot exceed a total of 150 days over the course of your initial OPT AND your STEM period, combined.**
- All employment during the STEM period must be **related to the STEM degree, paid, with an E-Verified company, at least 20 hours per week.**
 - During initial post-completion OPT, multiple jobs can be combined to meet the 20-hour minimum. However, on STEM, **EACH** job must be a minimum of 20 hours per week.
- If the student cannot find employment within the allotted unemployment days, USCIS has the discretion to terminate their status at any time.
- During the STEM period, unemployment days are paused during the days of active employment the student reports to their ISS advisor.

Maintaining Valid Employment

What kinds of employment scenarios are allowed on STEM?

- **Full-time, salaried positions and part-time, hourly positions are allowed. Other types of employment are:**

- Short-term multiple employers (performing artists): multiple full-time employers (gigs). The student should maintain a list of all gigs, the dates and duration.
- Work for hire (aka 1099 employment): performing a service based on a contract. If requested by DHS, the student must provide evidence showing the duration of the contract period and the name and address of the contracting company.
 - HOWEVER, students cannot qualify for STEM OPT extensions unless they will be **bona fide employees** of the employer signing the Training Plan, and the employer that signs the Training Plan must be the same entity that employs the student and provides the practical training experience.
- Employment through an agency or consulting firm: if working through an agency, a student must maintain evidence showing they worked an average of at least 20 hours per week while employed by the agency.

- **Self employment is not permitted on STEM.**

- If you are self-employed during your initial period of post-completion OPT, **you must find employment with a distinct employer-employee relationship** prior to applying for STEM extension.

- **Multiple jobs are allowed simultaneously if the **number of hours worked per week for each job is at least 20 hours per week** AND STEM-eligible (paid, with an E-Verify company, related to the STEM degree, not self-employment).**

- This means multiple part time jobs (each at least 20 hours per week) are allowed, multiple full-time jobs are allowed, and a combination of multiple part time and full-time jobs are allowed.
- EACH employer must complete a Form I-983.
- During the STEM extension period, **employment must be paid**. If a student does unpaid work during post-completion OPT and is eligible for STEM extension, they should prepare to find a paying employer that is enrolled in the E-Verify Program prior to filing for their STEM extension.

Reporting Employment Changes on STEM

During the STEM period, all employment changes must be reported to your ISS advisor/DSO.

- It is NOT possible to update STEM employment on the SEVP Portal.
- All employment changes must be reported within 10 days of the change occurring.
 - It is recommended that you notify your advisor a few weeks in advance of a change so that your ISS advisor has time to discuss any problems with you and process the change in SEVIS.
- To end employment, complete and sign the Final Evaluation section of the I-983 for the employment that is ending and send it to your ISS advisor.
- To start new employment, complete a new I-983 and send it to your ISS advisor along with the E-Verify number for your new employer.
- If you are not starting or ending a STEM employer but a **material change** to your current I-983 occurs, **making part or all of the information on the I-983 inaccurate**, update the I-983 and send it to your ISS advisor.

How to Complete STEM Data Reporting/Validation

F-1 students on STEM extension must complete STEM reporting/validation at the 6-month, 12-month, 18-month, and 24-month points in the STEM extension period. **This process is mandatory for maintaining F-1 status, regardless of whether any personal or employment information has changed.**

To properly complete STEM reporting, please go to the ISS Portal [HERE](#) and after logging in, complete the Validation of Approved STEM Reporting request under Student Requests. Your ISS advisor will review your request and tell you whether further changes are needed or if it is approved.

- At the **6-month** and **18-month** reporting periods, you do not need to upload your I-983 in the form unless there are material changes to your employment.
- At the **12-month** reporting period, you must complete and sign the “Evaluation on Student Progress” at the top of page 5 on your I-983, then upload the entire I-983 into the request, in addition to confirming address information.
- At the **24-month** reporting period, you must complete and sign the “Final Evaluation on Student Progress” at the top of page 5 on your I-983, then upload the entire I-983 into the request, in addition to confirming address information.

*see the Completing the Form I-983 section of this tutorial for more information about the evaluations and how to complete them.

Reporting Personal Information Changes on STEM

If your personal address changes, report it within 10 days by:

1. Updating your personal address on Campus Connect.
2. Updating your personal address on the SEVP Portal.
3. (If you are working remotely and have your personal address listed for your employment in the SEVP Portal) update your employer address.

If any of your biographical information changes, contact your ISS advisor to ensure it is updated properly in the DePaul University and SEVIS systems.

Getting Help with Status Changes

If you anticipate a status change while on STEM, contact your ISS advisor well ahead of time to ensure any necessary steps are completed on time.

Examples of common status changes on OPT include:

- Switching to another legal status other than F-1
- Starting a new academic program
- Leaving the United States long term

International Travel on STEM Extension

Always stay in contact with your ISS advisor regarding international travel plans.

On STEM, the following documentation is required upon re-entry to the United States:

- Valid passport
- Valid visa
- Travel-signed I-20 no more than 6 months old
- Employment Authorization Document (EAD card) for STEM
- *Optional: proof of employment (i.e., paystubs, offer letters, etc.)*

STEM students should prepare to be asked questions at the border about their employment and how they are maintaining status. If traveling on approved STEM using unemployment days, the student should prepare to explain how they are maintaining their status despite being unemployed.

Frequently Asked Questions

✓ Do I need a job offer to apply for STEM extension?

Yes. You must have an offer of employment in order to apply for STEM extension. If you are actively using unemployment days for post-completion OPT but do not have a job offer, you cannot apply for extension until you have a STEM-eligible job offer.

✓ I successfully completed a STEM degree program in my home country. Does that qualify me for STEM extension?

*No. Only federally-designated STEM bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees **from an accredited, SEVIS-certified U.S. educational institution** are eligible.*

✓ The degree program I completed at DePaul was closely related to science, technology, engineering, or mathematics. Does that qualify me for STEM extension?

It depends on the CIP code for the program you completed. The Department of Homeland Security maintains a list of CIP codes that are eligible for STEM. Confirm with your ISS advisor whether your CIP code is STEM-eligible.

✓ I heard that my DePaul degree program is a STEM program, so I get 3 years of OPT. Is that correct?

Yes and no. Eligible STEM students can apply for a 2-year extension of their post completion OPT AFTER their post-completion OPT is approved and it is within 90 days of the OPT end date. The 3 years of OPT are not granted in a single application, nor is the 2-year STEM extension automatic.

✓ If my passport has been renewed, do I upload my old passport on the I-765, or the new one?

Upload your new, valid passport in the I-765 application. If you would like, you can explain in the Additional Information section that you recently got your passport renewed, providing your old (expired) passport number.

✓ I'm considering traveling around the same time as my STEM application process, is that okay?

*Contact your ISS Advisor to discuss your STEM and travel plans **prior to finalizing your travel plan or applying for STEM extension.***

✓ Should I do premium processing?

If you want to and feel comfortable with the cost. If you are considering premium processing, discuss the pros and cons of doing so with your ISS advisor. While your ISS advisor cannot decide for you, they can help you develop a strategy for when to utilize premium processing.