# STEM Extension Optional Practical Training (OPT)

## Eligibility

* STEM OPT Extension grants up to 24 additional months of OPT
* You should have earned a STEM eligible degree, as defined by this list: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub/eligible-cip-codes-for-the-stem-opt-extension>
* You must hold a job in your degree field and
* You must work at least 20 hours per week.
* Your employer must be enrolled in E-verify and have an EIN (tax identification number).
* You may not be self-employed.
* You and your employer must complete a form I-983 Training Plan and submit it to the ISSS office.
* USCIS must receive your application before your current post-completion OPT ends, and no more than 60 days after the ISSS office issues your STEM OPT recommendation I-20.

## Documents needed to apply (Email these documents to ISSS@geneseo.edu)

* Completed OPT Information Form
* Form I-983 Training Plan, completed and signed by you and your employer
* Completed form I-765 (check for most up to date version: [www.uscis.gov/forms](http://www.uscis.gov/forms)). **#27 Eligibility Category should read (c)(3)(C)**
* Completed form G-1145
* Two passport-sized color photos (2 inches x 2 inches)
* A check or money order for $410, or form G-1450 if paying by credit card. **NOTE:** The fee will increase to $550 in the near future. There is a temporary injunction by the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California placing this fee increase on hold. Check with the ISSS office prior to filing your application. Checks should be made out to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security”.
* Photocopy of your diploma or your final transcript with your **degree name**.
* Photocopy of your current I-20, and previous I-20s if available.
* Photocopy of your updated I-20 with OPT endorsement from ISSS. **You will receive this after meeting with an ISSS adviser (see Part 1).**
* Photocopy of previous EAD Cards (if applicable)
* Photocopy of the **ID page of your passport** and your **F1 Visa**
* Photocopy of your current I-94

## Part 1: Submit your application materials to ISSS for OPT Recommendation

1. **Submit your I-983, I-765, and OPT Information Form to ISSS**: Email your application documents to the ISSS office (isss@geneseo.edu). We will review them and notify you if any changes. You do not need to submit your fee payment or photos to ISSS, although we are happy to help you with a final review before your application packet to USCIS.
2. **Receive your I-20 with STEM OPT Recommendation from ISSS:** Once we have reviewed your documents, we will recommend you for STEM OPT Extension in SEVIS and will issue an update I-20. You will receive a copy by email and a hard copy in the mail a few days later.
3. **Mail your documents to USCIS:** Submit your application to USCIS for adjudication. The following documents should be mailed to USCIS:
   1. Your I-765
   2. Filing Fee
   3. Copy of I-20 with STEM OPT recommendation
   4. Copy of diploma or transcript with Degree Name and Confer Date
   5. Copy of your current EAD, passport ID page, visa page, and current I-94
   6. 2 passport size photos

## Part 2: Mail your OPT Application to USCIS

You are responsible for mailing your OPT Application Materials to USCIS. All documents should be mailed together in one envelope. The application packet can be mailed by USPS or by courier service (FedEx, UPS, DHL, etc.) Courier is strongly recommended.

Your OPT Application Documents must be received by USCIS no more than 60 days after the OPT recommendation is added to your I-20 by ISSS (for reference, this date will be the date the I-20 is issued and dated).

### USCIS Lockbox Mailing Addresses

USCIS Chicago Lockbox

**U.S. Postal Service (USPS):**

USCIS  
PO Box 805373  
Chicago, IL 60680

**FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries:**

USCIS  
Attn: I-765 C03  
131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor  
Chicago, IL 60603-5517

# OPT Information Form

This form is for ISSS instruction only. It will not be sent to USCIS.

## Personal Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ G#:

Major(s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Graduation:

Dates of OPT authorization:

Current Employer:

Name of Supervisor: Supervisor Email:

Employer address: Street address:

City: State: Zip Code:

Employer EIN: Employer E-Verify #:

## Contact Information

Street address:

City: State: Zip Code:

Geneseo Email Address: @geneseo.edu

Non-Geneseo Email Address (required):

Phone Number:

## OPT Card Instructions

* I would like my STEM OPT card to be mailed to ISSS and for ISSS to contact me when my card arrives

**\*\*\*\*\*\*OR\*\*\*\*\*\***

* I prefer that my OPT card be mailed to me directly

## Acknowledgement

Signature Date

# Reporting Requirements

## Basic Reporting

During the 24-month STEM OPT extension, the student must report within 10 days of any change of the following:

1. legal name
2. residential or mailing address
3. employer name
4. employer address, and/or
5. loss of employment

You can use your SEVIS Portal Account to update your information. If you have difficulty accessing your Portal Account, contact the ISSS Office.

## 6 Month Validation Requirement

During the 24-month STEM OPT Extension, you must complete the 6 Month Validation every 6 months during your OPT period. An employment validation form is attached for this purpose. You should complete the validation form and email it to the ISSS Office ([isss@geneseo.edu](mailto:isss@geneseo.edu)). The ISSS Office most receive this validation report within 10 days of your 6 month validation due date.

We will do our best to remind you when a 6-month validation is required; however, **it is your responsibility to track and submit validations on time.**

## Required Self Evaluations

A student must complete self-evaluations of his or her progress during the course of each "STEM practical training opportunity" his or her STEM OPT period:

1. An initial evaluation within 12 months of the STEM OPT start recorded on Form I-983; and
2. A final evaluation "no later than 10 days following the conclusion of the reporting period or conclusion of his or her practical training opportunity."
3. The SEVIS Help Hub also indicates that a student should submit self-evaluations "at the end of any employment," in addition to "the 12 and 24 month marks from the start date of the STEM extension."

To complete these self-evaluations, the student needs to specify the evaluation date range (i.e., the timeline considered during the evaluation) and:

1. Assess their overall performance using the measures identified in the agreed upon training plan.
2. Evaluate their success in applying and acquiring the new knowledge, skills and competencies that were previously identified in the plan.
3. Discuss accomplishments, successful projects, overall contributions, etc., that occurred during the specified review period.
4. Address whether there are any modifications to the objectives and goals for projects or new areas for skill and competency development.

Once the evaluations are complete, the student must collect signatures from their employer and return the form to the ISSS Office who will also sign the report and will keep a copy on file.

## A modified Form I-983

When there has been a material change to the training plan described on the Form I-983 on file with the DSO, a modified form I-983 should be submitted to the ISSS office "at the earliest available opportunity".

Please contact the ISSS Office if you believe a modified I-983 is required.

## Mandatory Employer Reporting

The employer must report to the DSO (ISSS Office):

1. When a student is terminated or leaves employment, within 5 business days of the termination or departure.
2. A shared obligation with the student to submit a modified Form I-983 when there has been a material change to the training plan described on the Form I-983 on file with the DSO, by submitting a modified Form I-983 to the DSO, "at the earliest available opportunity"

## Maximum Period of Unemployment

During the 24-month STEM OPT Extension, the limit on unemployment is raised from 90 days (during the initial 12 month OPT period) to an aggregate of no more than 150 days, applied to the entire period of standard post-completion and STEM OPT.

This means that you are allowed a maximum of 90 days of unemployment during your initial 12 months of OPT, and an additional maximum of 60 days during the 24-month STEM OPT Extension period for a total of 150 days over 36 months.