



What is a STEM OPT extension and who is eligible?

A STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) OPT extension is a 24-month extension of your 12-month POST Completion OPT. Very specific criteria must be met by you and your employer (see below). You are still considered an F-1 student while using the OPT extension.

Who is eligible?

- ✓ You are currently authorized for Post-Completion OPT.
- ✓ You graduated with a degree that qualifies as STEM eligible according to the [Department of Homeland Security Degree Program List](#). This degree code is listed on your I-20 form. Check with the OISS for details.
- ✓ The qualifying degree must either be:
 - Your BC STEM designated major.
 - OR**
 - A previously obtained Bachelor's, Master's or doctoral STEM degree from a U.S. University earned within the last 10 years that is accredited and SEVP certified.
- ✓ You have a job or job offer from an employer with a Federal Employer Identification Number AND is enrolled in the E-verify program: www.uscis.gov/e-verify
- ✓ The job is DIRECTLY related to your STEM degree and is a paid position for at least 20 hours per week.
- ✓ You have not used more than two periods of STEM OPT. Two STEM authorizations are allowed in a lifetime as long as the second OPT extension is for a higher degree level and after a standard period of Post-OPT.
- ✓ Your employer must be willing to complete Training Plan Form [I-983](#) and agree to all of the terms and conditions outlined on the form.

How do I apply?

- **Step 1:** Submit the following documents to the OISS by email to bcis@bc.edu or in person **no sooner than approximately 3 ½ months prior to your EAD expiration date and no later than 2 weeks prior to the expiration of your EAD card:**
 - ✓ The attached OISS STEM OPT REQUEST FORM
 - ✓ Completed [I-983](#) Training Plan Form signed by your employer (copy is acceptable).
 - ✓ Draft of the [I-765](#) form to be reviewed by the OISS (copy WITHOUT signature is acceptable for OISS purposes). See attached I-765 sample and I-983 instructions for your reference.
 - ✓ Pay the \$200 BC STEM OPT fee at www.bc.edu/payoiss
- **Step 2:** Wait approximately 1-2 weeks for the OISS to issue your new STEM OPT I-20 and review your I-765 form and I-983 Training plan.
- **Step 3:** The OISS will send you a mailing checklist, the copy of your reviewed I-765 form and your new STEM OPT I-20 as you indicated on the application. The I-983 will be retained by the OISS and you as part of your immigration record and is not sent to the government. **Pay careful attention to the required mailing dates at the top of the checklist and on your envelope.** Failure to ensure the application arrives between these dates will result in DENIAL of your application!
- **Step 4:** Wait approximately 2-3 weeks to receive your I-797 receipt and up to 3-4 months to receive your **Employment Authorization Document (EAD)**. If you have not received a receipt within 3 weeks please contact the OISS. Once your OPT is approved, you will receive an approval notice and the EAD card separately. **You ARE allowed to work for up to 180 days after your EAD card expires while waiting for the OPT extension to be approved.** The OISS can provide a letter for your employer explaining the regulation if necessary.

What are my responsibilities while on a STEM extension?

- Students on post-completion OPT **may NOT accrue more than 150 days of unemployment during the entire 36 month period of Post OPT and the STEM extension.** The 150 days includes weekends and holidays.
- You **MUST** report any changes in residential address, employer name or address and/or loss of employment to the OISS within 10 days of the change. This includes any changes to the I-983 Training Plan.
- You must respond to the OISS 6 month validation requests by email in a timely manner and send your yearly employer I-983 evaluation reports to the OISS. Failure to do so will result in termination of your status.

Can I travel when I'm on OPT?

Yes! You will need the following to re-enter the U.S. with AFTER your completion date on your I-20.*

- **Valid F-1 visa stamp in your passport.** (This does not apply for travel to Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean islands if you go for less than 30 days). You are still in F-1 status while on OPT! **NEVER enter the U.S. on any visa status other than F-1 – it will cancel your OPT!!**
- **I-20 form with a travel signature on page 2 from the OISS, dated within the last 6 months.**
- **EAD Card:** If your current EAD Card has expired you may be able to travel with your I-797 OPT receipt. Please contact the OISS for advice on travel.
- **Job offer letter:** Upon entry into the U.S. (and at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate if you have to renew your F-1 visa) you could be asked for a job offer letter.



- Instructions:
1. Read the attached instructions carefully to determine your eligibility for the STEM OPT Extension.
 2. Submit this completed form AND the completed I-983 Training Plan Form to bcis@bc.edu
 3. Pay the \$200 BC STEM OPT fee at www.bc.edu/payois

Part 1: Student Information

Last/Family name: _____ First/Given Name: _____
 Email: _____ Phone number: _____

Part 2: Employment information

Employer Name: _____ Company E-Verify Number: _____
 Job title: _____
 Start and End date: _____ to _____ EAD card Dates: _____ to _____
 Supervisor info: First name: _____ Last Name: _____
 Phone: _____ Email: _____

Explain how the employment is related to your STEM qualified major: _____

Part 3: Information for the I-765 Immigration Application

1. Mailing Address information: Please confirm the address where you would like your Employment Authorization Document (EAD card) to be mailed. **You MUST provide an address in the U.S. where you can SAFELY receive mail for the next 3-4 months.** Your name MUST clearly appear on the mailbox in order for government mail to be delivered.

Please use the OISS address. I understand the OISS will email me when the documentation arrives

Please use the following address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

2. Place of Birth: _____
 Town or City Province (if available) Country

3. Gender: Male Female **4. Marital Status:** Single Married Divorced Widowed

5. I-94 Information. I-94 number: _____ Date of Entry: _____

Class of Entry: (ex. F-1) _____ Place of entry: _____ (Electronic I-94: Click on Travel History)

Part 3: Mailing new STEM OPT I-20

Please send it to me regular mail. I understand the application must arrive to USCIS BEFORE my EAD expiration date and within 60 days of the date my OPT is processed.

Please send it to me express mail. I have paid for my shipment: <https://www.bc.edu/offices/oiss/eshipglobal.html>

Part 4: Statement of Understanding

- I understand I MUST report any changes in residential address, employer name or address and/or loss of employment to the OISS within 10 days of the change.
- I understand that I must submit the signed annual and final evaluation found on page 6 and 7 of the I-983 to the OISS with 10 days of the 12 month anniversary of my employment and the final evaluation within 10 days after my last day of employment.
- I will check the email provided above regularly and understand the OISS will be using this email to contact me to validate my address and employer information every 6 months.
- I have read the Section 2 "Student Certification" on the I-983 training plan carefully and will comply with the requirements. If there are ANY changes to the I-983 training plan it is my responsibility to submit a revised I-983 training plan with your employer to the OISS or risk termination of my F-1 status.
- I understand that I am eligible to work during the dates on my EAD with the employer indicated on my I-20 and I-983 training plan.

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____