ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
International Student Services

STEM Extension OPT Checklist

OPT Timeline: Review the rules and regulations about when to start OPT on the A-State International Student Services website: http://www.astate.edu/a/international/immigration-regulations/opt/

Have you already been approved for Post Completion OPT?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

End Date of Post Completion OPT_____

Completed

Read all rules and regulations on the A-State International Student   ☐

Services website

Sign and date Acknowledgment of OPT Rules form   ☐

Complete the A-State OPT Request Form   ☐

Complete Form I-765 (www.uscis.gov, click on "Forms")   ☐

Complete Form G-1145 (www.uscis.gov, click on "Forms")   ☐

Complete Form I-983 Training plan (www.ice.gov, search on site search bar)   ☐

Write check or money order to Department of Homeland Security in the amount of $410   ☐

or fill out the G-1450 credit card form.

Make copy of diploma (shows degree of STEM eligible major)   ☐

Email Student Immigration Specialist to make an appointment   ☐

(if applicable) Appointment date and time_____

Updated 01/2019

STEM Extension OPT Rules and Regulations

1. **What is a STEM extension?**

   Students on Post Completion OPT in select science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields are eligible for a one-time 24 month extension of their OPT. This would put the total amount of OPT at 36 months.

2. **How do I know if I am eligible for a STEM extension?**

   The major indicated on your I-20 must coincide with the majors listed on the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement website: http://www.ice.gov/sevis/stemlist.htm. Majors are given numerical codes called CIP codes. Eligibility for a STEM extension is based on the CIP code assigned to your major by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB). Check with the Designated School Official (DSO) if you would like to know the CIP code given to your major.

3. **Do I have to have a job before applying?**

   Yes. A student must have received an offer letter from an employer before applying for the extension. The employer must be enrolled in the federal E-verify program.

4. **When do I apply?**

   STEM extensions must be completed and received by USCIS before the end date of Post-Completion OPT. Students should contact the DSO at A-State at least 60 days before the OPT end date to ensure timely processing. An application for Post Completion OPT cannot be made at the same time as the application for the STEM extension.

5. **How do I apply?**

   Students should complete the OPT checklist located on the A-State International Student Services website. Once all steps are completed the student should make an appointment with the Student Immigration Specialist to request OPT. All documents should be brought to the meeting. Incomplete applications or missing documents will require the student to reschedule the meeting until they have completed the application packet.

6. **What happens if my OPT expires but I haven't been approved yet for the extension?**

   A student can continue to work 180 days after the end date of OPT while the STEM Extension application is pending. However, the student can continue to work during this time only if the student is eligible for the STEM extension and is working with an employer approved for the STEM conditions (that is, the employer must be in the E-verify program).
   Students should be aware that if their OPT has expired and they are waiting for the STEM application approval, they cannot renew their driver's license or travel outside the US

7. **What are the reporting requirements for students on a STEM extension?**

   Students and employers must provide continuous updates to the DSO which includes start dates and termination dates and if the student leaves the company. This must be reported within 10 days of the event. Students should also report the contact information of the university to the employer. In addition, students must report employment and living address to the DSO every six months (even if the information is unchanged). The STEM Extension Reporting Form should be completed and submitted to the DSO at least 10 days before the 6th month reporting date.

8. **Are there any rules regarding days of unemployment?**

   Yes. Students cannot have an aggregate of 120 days of unemployment.

9. **Do I have to stay with the same employer?**

   No. Students are eligible to change employers as long as all employment is through companies registered in the E-verify program.

Updated 01/2019

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Request for Optional Practical Training Recommendation Form

Optional Practical Training (OPT) for F-1 students is intended to provide hands-on practical work experience complimentary to the academic program. An F-1 student (excluding ESL) is eligible for a maximum of 12 months of OPT. This benefit is available to students who have been lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis for one academic year. The practical training sought by the student must be directly related to his or her current field of study and commensurate with his or her current education level.

Name_____   A-State ID #_____

Current address_____

Phone number_____

Level of study   ☐ Bachelor's   ☐ Master's   ☐ Doctorate

Major as indicated on I-20 _____

Expected Date of Graduation (completion of course of study)_____

Applying for:

☐ Pre-completion OPT   ☐ STEM Extension
☐ Post-completion OPT   ☐ Cap Gap Extension

Are you Required to do Thesis or Dissertation Work (for relevant majors)_____

Proposed OPT Start Date_____End Date_____Full Time/Part Time_____
*See checklist on how to calculate start date

List all periods of previously authorized employment for practical training (if applicable)

Curricular Practical Training   **Optional Practical Training**
Example: Full Time, Jan/1/2009-Jan/1/2010   Example: Part Time, Jan/1/2008-May/1/2008

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

Signature of Student_____   Date_____
Updated 01/2019

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Acknowledgement of STEM Extension Rules

I,_____acknowledge that as an F-1 student on STEM Extension OPT I agree to abide by the following rules and regulations:

- Report any changes in personal information such as name, address or immigration status to the OIP within 10 days of the change occurring.
- Report employer's information including company name, address, position title and dates of employment.
- Engage only in employment with companies that are registered in E-verify
- Report living address and employer information every 6 months even if the information is unchanged
- Understand that driver's license renewal and travel outside the US will not be allowed when Post Completion OPT expires and before the STEM extension is approved
- Unemployment cannot exceed 120 days total for the duration of the STEM Extension
- At the completion of OPT, a 60 day grace period is allowed in which to start a new program, transfer schools or depart the US.

I understand that this is not an exhaustive list of rules and regulations related to my immigration status. By signing below, I agree that I have read the rules and regulations related to STEM Extension OPT and understand the laws that will affect me. I understand that while on the STEM Extension I am still considered an F-1 student and must comply with immigration regulations related to F-1 status.

_____   _____

Signature   Date

Updated 01/2019

International Student Services

PO Box 2230, State University AR 72467
Phone: 870-972-2329
www.astate.edu/international

Optional Practical Training I-765 Form Instructions

Revised: January 2019

Students can find the most current I-765 form at www.uscis.gov Click on "Forms", scroll down to form and select I-765 "Application of Employment Authorization". Below are the most common questions students have while filling out the form.

Instructions to Complete the I-765 Form (numbers on this sheet correspond with the numbers on the I-765 form)

3. Provide the address you would like your EAD card to be mailed or relevant issues regarding your OPT application. Please note that #3 has two spaces. The first space is for street address and apartment #, the second space is for the town or city, the state and country, and the zip code. This must be an address you can receive mail after you graduate so make sure you put an address that will work once you graduate.

       Example: 2222 Johnson Avenue, Apt #D7

                  Jonesboro AR   72401

8. This is found on your printed I-94 record. It is the 11 digit number found on top of it.

10. You will leave this blank unless you have an on-line account with USCIS already.

ARKANSAS STATE
U N I V E R S I T Y

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13. USCIS and the Social Security Administration now work together to issue Social Security cards at time of applying for EAD card. If you already have one, skip this question. If not, fill out the corresponding information.

17. Place of your Last Arrival or Entry into U.S.-

You will need to put the airport abbreviation of your last port of entry into the United States. Ex. NYC, LAX, HOU, DAL

20. Eligibility Category-

   If you are applying for:
   - Pre-Completion OPT your code is (C) (3) (A)
   - -Completion OPT your code is (C) (3) (B)
   - For STEM Extension your code is (C) (3) (C)

Link to Form on www.uscis.gov:

https://www.uscis.gov/i-765

Updated 01/2019

Optional Practical Training

G-1145 Form

Revised: January 2019

G-1145:

E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance

Link to form on www.uscis.gov:

https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145

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G-1450

The G-1450 is a form for students to pay fees for any USCIS form through a USCIS Lockbox. There is no additional fee to use it and the information is destroyed after the amount is deducted from the credit card.

Instructions on how to use it and link to the form through www.uscis.gov :

https://www.uscis.gov/g-1450

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I-983 Training Plan

This must be filled out by you and your supervisor at your job. Your employer must be e-verified. This form will not be sent to USCIS in your package but kept by the school for SEVIS.

On Page one, you fill out your information and information regarding A-State:

For example:

Designation School Official: please put the name, phone number and email of the advisor helping you file.

SEVIS School Code for A-State is NOL214F10308000.

(CIP) Code is found next to major on your I-20.

Based on Prior Degree? You will select no because it will most likely be based on your most recently obtained degree.

Link: https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/i983.pdf

The last page of the form is an annual evaluation due to the Immigration Advisor at the end of each year you are on STEM. This is a mandatory reporting requirement, failure to do so causes your STEM to be cancelled.