



# STEM OPT for MBA Employers

Information provided by  
Berkeley International Office

# Employment After Graduation

## Optional Practical Training (OPT) for F-1 students

# OPT for F-1 Students

### WHAT IS IT?

- Employment authorization for F-1 students who have completed all coursework for their academic program
- Employment must be related to student's major field of study and can be paid or unpaid
- Recommended by BIO and authorized by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) based on student's petition for benefits

### DURATION OF EMPLOYMENT

- Typically, 12 months of employment are granted
- Designated STEM majors working for eligible employers may extend (see next page)
- Full-time employment is allowed

### PROCESSING TIME

- Typical time from submission to approval by USCIS is 90 days
- Students may apply up to 90 days prior to and up to 60 days after program completion

### STUDENT'S ROLE

- Verify eligibility for OPT
- Submit complete and timely OPT application to USCIS in order to obtain approval prior to beginning employment
- Report employment to BIO at [ssu.berkeley.edu](https://ssu.berkeley.edu)
- Ensure work is related to field of study

### PROOF OF AUTHORIZATION

- Employment Authorization Document (EAD card/Form I-766) indicating start and end dates of work authorization
- Student must have EAD card in order to begin work

### EMPLOYER'S ROLE

- Request a copy of the EAD from the student for I-9 purposes
- There is no cost to the employer and the OPT application is entirely the responsibility of the student
- Student can be approved for OPT without an offer of employment

# Employment After Graduation STEM Extension Optional Practical Training(OPT)

# STEM OPT for F-1 Students

## WHAT IS IT?

- An extension of a student's 12-month OPT
- Student must be a recipient of a STEM designated degree and working for an E-Verify employer
- Employment must be related to student's STEM major field of study
- Volunteer, unpaid, and self-employment are not allowed.
- May be based on a previously earned STEM Degree
- Recommended by BIO and authorized by USCIS based on student's petition for benefits

## DURATION OF EMPLOYMENT

- An additional 24-month extension of the 12-month OPT for a total of 36 months of OPT work authorization
- Allows total of 2 lifetime STEM Extensions, the 2nd after earning a new STEM-eligible degree at a higher level and obtaining a new, higher level of 12-Month OPT

## PROCESSING TIME

- Typical time from submission to approval by USCIS is 90 days
- Students may apply up to 90 days prior to the end date of their 12-month OPT, but no later than their OPT end date

## STUDENT'S ROLE

- Verify eligibility for STEM Extension
- Submit complete STEM OPT application to USCIS prior to the end date of their 12-month OPT
- Report employment and any changes to employment to BIO.

## PROOF OF AUTHORIZATION

- A new Employment Authorization Document (EAD Card/ Form I-766) indicating start and end dates of extended work authorization
- If a timely STEM OPT application has been filed with USCIS, the student may work for up to 180 days after the end date of their 12-month EAD card

## EMPLOYER'S ROLE

- Student must be employed or have offer of employment from a company
- Must be participating in E-Verify and provide student with E-verify & EIN number
- Must complete I-983 Training Plan and attest that wages and compensation are commensurate with "similarly situated U.S. workers"
- There is no cost to the employer
- See additional STEM OPT Reporting Requirements



# Resources

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

<http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/index.cfm>

U.S. Department of Labor Fact Sheet on Internships

<http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.pdf>

U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS)

<http://www.uscis.gov/>

U.S. Department of State

<http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/employment.html>

E-Verify

<http://www.uscis.gov/e-verify>

American Immigration Lawyers Association

<http://www.aila.org>

UC Berkeley International Student Enrollment Reports

[http://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/current/enrollment\\_data](http://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/current/enrollment_data)

