Special instruction for STEM OPT applicants

Last updated: April 2, 2020

This document provides answers to frequently asked questions for students who are currently on the 12-month post-completion OPT and wish to apply for the 24-month STEM OPT extension.

Due to the fluid nature of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) situation, the answers in this document may be subject to change.

Steps to apply for STEM OPT extension:

Note: Office of International Programs (OIP) will accept requests over email. We do not require any documents that include your personal sensitive data (for example, Form I-765 and passport copy).

Step 1: Submit Documents to OIP

- Email f1@sfsu.edu the following items:
  - TYPED, completed and signed STEM OPT Request Form (we will accept digital signatures)
  - TYPED, completed and signed Form I-983
  - Most recent I-94: printout from www.cbp.gov/i94
  - Photocopies of your current EAD
  - Please also email the expiration date of your passport, you do not need to email us a copy of your passport)

Please click on the link for the STEM OPT information for the required documents to fill out: http://oip.sfsu.edu/stemopt

Step 2: Receive documents from OIP via email

- OIP will email you a digital copy of your I-20 with STEM OPT recommendation. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, SEVP is officially authorizing OIP to email this document to you
as a one-time exception. Please print out this I-20, sign it with BLUE ink, and follow the instruction to mail the I-20 with STEM OPT supporting documents to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) as soon as possible.

- OIP will keep the original documents and have it available to you when the university re-opens. Please note that this is not a typical procedure, but we are emailing your I-20 as an exception to the current circumstances.
- Once OIP resumes regular operation hours, email f1@sfsu.edu with your full name, ID, and mailing address you would like us to mail your I-20. At this point, you may choose to purchase E-ship. Note that we cannot process E-ship requests until the OIP resumes regular operation, so please do not submit a request until you receive an email from OIP that we have resumed our normal hours of operation.

Step 3: Mail documents to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

- Make sure to mail your application to USCIS as soon as possible using the “Mail your application to USCIS” instructions on OIP's STEM OPT website: http://oip.sfsu.edu/stemopt

- It is your responsibility to mail your application to USCIS as soon as possible. Your application must be received by USCIS within 60 days of the I-20 issuance date and before your current OPT end date. Fail to send your OPT application in timely manner may result in denial. If you change your mind and decide not to proceed with your extension application, you must inform OIP.