



## How to apply:

1. Print and read this packet
2. Email OIE and obtain OPT STEM request I-20
3. Mail all documents to USCIS Service Center

You cannot apply for OPT without meeting with your International Student Advisor to issue a new OPT Request I-20. Call the OIE front desk to make an appointment.

If you are outside of Indiana and unable to make an appointment, scan & email or mail all documents to:

**Office of International Education:  
OPT Application  
920 Grant Street  
B-25 Delaney Hall,  
Indiana, PA 15705**

**Email:**

[intl-education@iup.edu](mailto:intl-education@iup.edu)

NOTE: If your Driver's License is expiring soon, note that your new OPT I-20 extends your status for two years. This is a good time to renew your license. Note that in Pennsylvania and some other states, you must have at least 6 months or more remaining on your I-20 to be issued a driver's license.

## Optional Practical Training Extension for STEM degrees only

**ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR OPT 24-month EXTENSION?** IUP degrees that qualify include: Applied Mathematics, Biochemistry, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Geological and Earth Sciences, Geology, Mathematics, Physics, Safety Science, Sports Science, and a few other Science degrees. All Business, Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Fine Arts degrees do not qualify. The OIE will assist those who are eligible for the 24-month extension. To qualify the student:

- Must have successfully completed a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in a field on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List, from a SEVIS-certified college or university.
- Must be currently participating in a 12-month period of OPT, working for a U.S. employer in a job directly related to the student's major area of study. (Volunteer or paid)
- Must have a job offer from an employer registered with the E-Verify (see [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) – search E-verify – for more information) employment verification system.
- A completed Form I-983: Training Plan for STEM OPT. This form is to be completed by student and their employer before it is submitted to the International Student Advisor.
- The student must apply before the 12 month OPT is completed – contact the OIE for application information. More information can be found at [studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub](http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub)

**HOW TO APPLY:** Bring all documents listed below to appointment with International Student Advisor. If not in Indiana, PA—scan & email docs or mail—see address to left. All documents are required to issue new OPT I-20.

### Required for DSO to issue OPT I-20:

- Complete IUP Office of International Education OPT Request Form
- Letter from Company—proof of E-verification
- Copy of current EAD card
- Proof of completion of degree (diploma and/or transcript; both needed if STEM degree was completed at a previous education level at a university other than IUP)
- Completed Form I-983: Training Plan for STEM OPT

### Required for USCIS—mail in this order:

- Money order or personal check for \$410 (as of 12/2016) made payable to **Department of Homeland Security**. (If you use a personal check, it could take an extra 2 weeks to clear the check).
- Two color passport photographs (U.S. style passport photo— 2 inches x 2 inches) – (Rite Aid, CVS, and Walmart are recommended in Indiana) Write last name in CAPS and SEVIS number on back of both photos. Put in envelope to mail.
- Complete I-765 (see example-page 4) use fillable online form online—[www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)—click on 'Forms' & scroll down to I-765 see instructions & fillable form. For #16 use (c)(3)(C) for STEM extension.
- Photocopies of ALL I-20s ever issued (every degree/program ever studied in U.S.)
- Photocopy of current passport, visa, and I-94 (printed from <http://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>)
- Copy of front & back of EAD card

**PROCESSING TIMES:** US Citizenship & Immigration Service Centers process all OPT applications. It currently takes 60-90 days from the time they receive your document to process OPT. Students applying for the 24-Month OPT STEM Extension can apply 90 days prior to completing their OPT or as late as the final day of OPT as listed on the EAD card.

# HOW TO MAINTAIN YOUR F-1 STATUS ON OPT

You are still in F-1 status while waiting for your approval. You are legal while waiting and do not need to do anything extra to maintain your status after filing for your OPT card.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES TO MAINTAIN F-1 STATUS DURING OPT:**

- **REPORT APPROVAL OF EAD CARD TO OIE**

Scan a copy of your EAD card or approval notice & email it to [intl-education@iup.edu](mailto:intl-education@iup.edu). SEVIS is not always accurate, if your approval is not noted in SEVIS by USCIS, your I-20 could be accidentally automatically cancelled.

- **REPORT ALL CHANGES OF U.S. ADDRESS, EMPLOYER & EMPLOYER'S ADDRESS to OIE and check in with OIE every 6 months**

Email [intl-education@iup.edu](mailto:intl-education@iup.edu) with changes or by using our online form at <http://www.iup.edu/international/students/current/forms/reporting-opt-employment-for-sevis-record/>

- **CAN I KEEP WORKING—DO I HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE NEW OPT CARD TO WORK?**

Students who timely file an application for the 24-month OPT extension will be able to continue employment while the extension application is pending, until a final decision on the I-765 or for 180 days, whichever comes first. The employer must agree to report the termination or departure of the student to the DSO or through "any other means or process identified by DHS." An employer must consider a worker to have departed when the employer knows the student has left employment, or if the student has not reported for work for a period of five consecutive business days without the employer's consent. Students cannot remain unemployed for more than a total of 150 days for the entire 36-month period & must update the DSO (OIE) with any changes in address and employment within 10 days & update I-20 signature every six months.

- **TRAVEL WITH PROPER DOCUMENTS**

DHS officials have said you can travel out of the U.S. after graduation and before your OPT dates begin—take your OPT receipt, I-20, visa and passport to reenter. However, during OPT period - students must be employed to reenter—you will need a letter from your employer in addition to OPT card, I-20, visa and passport. Renewing a visa while on OPT is not prohibited, but not guaranteed. For updated travel info see: [http://www.ice.gov/sevis/travel/faq\\_f.htm](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/travel/faq_f.htm)

- **EAD CARD INFO**

**You will receive a second EAD card with new dates.** Like the first 12 months of OPT—you can check the status of your case online at <http://www.uscis.gov> —click on 'Check Case Status' or call 1-800-375-5283 with questions.

- **TAKING CLASSES –ENROLLING IN A NEW DEGREE PROGRAM**

If you choose to begin a new degree program at another university while you have OPT time left, you will lose the rest of OPT. Once a new I-20 is issued for a new program of study—OPT ends. You can, however, take 1-2 classes during OPT to help you in your job, prerequisites for a different degree.

- **TAXES**

Students who have been in the US for less than 5 calendar years are exempt from Social security and Medicare taxes. Let your employer know this. Be sure to file taxes the year after you work, even if you depart the US.

**HIB CAP-GAP :** For basic information on filing for an HIB visa—see: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2015/05/the-h-1b-visa-and-the-cap-gap-extension> Your employer must file an HIB application for you. HIBs can be renewed for up to 6 years.

Cap-Gap Work Permission: On April 8, 2008, DHS published an interim final rule that is effective April 8, 2008, changes several key aspects of F-1 optional practical training (OPT). <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2015/05/the-h-1b-visa-and-the-cap-gap-extension> This new ruling allows all students who have timely filed an H-1B petition requesting an October 1 start date – automatically can remain in the US with work authorization and duration of F1 status. No extra application is necessary. This would apply to all students on OPT, not just STEM students. This does NOT apply to those who filed for H-1B with a start date other than October 1. The extension of duration of status and work authorization would automatically terminate upon the rejection, denial, or revocation of the H-1B petition filed on the student's behalf. Students have a grace period of 60-days after the notification of H-1B rejection to change status, change educational levels or leave the U.S. Those who are approved for the H-1B can continue working at their place of employment until the H-1B starts in October of the year of filing.

# Sample I-765 Form for OPT applications

Use this sample to help guide you when you fill out the I-765. The IO advisor will go over the form with you when you apply for OPT.

**Always download and use the most recent I-765 directly from [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).**

Using an outdated form will result in your OPT application being returned or rejected.

OMB No. 1615-0040; Expires 02/28/2018

Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

## I-765, Application For Employment Authorization

<b>For USCIS Use Only</b>	Fee Stamp	Action Block	Initial Receipt	Resubmitted	
				Relocated	
				Received	Sent
				Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> Application Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Authorization/Extension Valid From _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Authorization/Extension Valid To _____ Subject to the following conditions: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Application Denied - Failed to establish: <input type="checkbox"/> Eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 (a) or (c) <input type="checkbox"/> Economic necessity under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(14), (18) and 8 CFR 214.2(f)		Approved Denied A# _____	

I am applying for  Permission to accept employment.     Replacement (of lost employment authorization document).  
 Renewal of my permission to accept employment (attach a copy of your previous employment authorization document).

- Full Name (Family Name) (First Name) (Middle Name)  
WILDCAT Willie
- Other Names Used (include Maiden Name)  
In c/o the International Office
- U.S. Mailing Address (Street Number and Name) (Apt. Number)  
630 Dartmouth Place  
(Town or City) (State) (ZIP Code)  
Evanston IL 60208
- Country of Citizenship or Nationality  
China
- Place of Birth (Town or City) (State/Province) (Country)  
Beijing China
- Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy) 11/14/1924
- Gender  Male  Female
- Marital Status  
 Married  Single  Divorced  Widowed
- Social Security Number (Include all numbers you have ever used, if any)  
000-00-0000
- Alien Registration Number (A-Number) or Form I-94 Number (if any)  
1234567891
- Have you ever before applied for employment authorization from USCIS?  
 Yes (Complete the following questions.)  
Which USCIS Office? \_\_\_\_\_ Dates \_\_\_\_\_  
[Refer to EAD Card] [OPT Dates]  
Results (Granted or Denied - attach all documentation) \_\_\_\_\_  
 No (Proceed to Question 12.)
- Date of Last Entry into the U.S., on or about (mm/dd/yyyy)  
09/01/2015
- Place of Last Entry into the U.S.  
Chicago
- Status at Last Entry (B-2 Visitor, F-1 Student, No Lawful Status, etc.)  
F-1 Student
- Current Immigration Status (Visitor, Student, etc.)  
F-1 Student
- Eligibility Category. Go to the "Who May File Form I-765?" section of the Instructions. In the space below, place the letter and number of the eligibility category you selected from the instructions. For example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii), etc.  
( C ) ( 3 ) ( B )
- (c)(3)(C) Eligibility Category. If you entered the eligibility category (c)(3)(C) in Question 16 above, list your degree, your employer's name as listed in E-Verify, and your employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number in the space below.  
Degree \_\_\_\_\_ Employer's Name as listed in E-Verify \_\_\_\_\_  
Employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a Valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number \_\_\_\_\_
- (c)(26) Eligibility Category. If you entered the eligibility category (c)(26) in Question 16 above, please provide the receipt number of your H-1B principal spouse's most recent Form I-797 Notice of Approval for Form I-129.

**Certification**  
I certify, under penalty of perjury, that the foregoing is true and correct. Furthermore, I authorize the release of any information that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services needs to determine eligibility for the benefit I am seeking. I have read the "Who May File Form I-765?" section of the instructions and have identified the appropriate eligibility category in Question 16.

Applicant's Signature Sign here! Very important!  
Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy) 07/01/2015  
Telephone Number 555-123-7894

Signature of Person Preparing Form, If Other Than Applicant  
I declare that this document was prepared by me at the request of the applicant and is based on all information of which I have any knowledge.  
Preparer's Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Form I-765 02/13/15 Y

Mark Post Completion

Mark STEM

1. Family name must be in CAPS

3. This is the address where your EAD card will be sent. If you will be moving or traveling, we highly recommend you use the IO address

10. I-94 number. Retrieve from [cbp.gov/i94](http://cbp.gov/i94)

11. Only check "yes" if you have applied for OPT before.

16. Post-completion: (C)(3)(B)

STEM: (C)(3)(C)

Pre-Completion: (C)(3)(A)

For STEM Applications: i.e, BA, MS, PhD

# INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

## OIE OPT STEM Request Form

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**NON-IUP E-MAIL** \_\_\_\_\_ **BANNER ID @** \_\_\_\_\_

CURRENT ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE # \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

**OPT REQUEST:**

- Employer—E-Verify # \_\_\_\_\_
- Employer Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Degree from IUP : \_\_\_\_\_
- STEM Degree from previous university (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_
- Previous university where STEM degree completed (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_
- Contact phone number for previous university: \_\_\_\_\_
- Current OPT Dates: \_\_\_\_\_
- EAD#: \_\_\_\_\_

**CHECKLIST: Bring all documents with you to your appointment**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed I-765
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed Form I-983: Training Plan for STEM Students
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed OIE OPT Request
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of EAD card front & back
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2 passport photos (name and SEVIS ID written on back)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Money Order \$410 made payable to Dept. of Homeland Security
- \_\_\_\_\_ Photocopies of all I-20s, passport, visa and I-94
- \_\_\_\_\_ Letter from Employer (dates of employment, E-Verified, agree to contact IUP—OIE if employment changes)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of diploma / degree certification (if STEM degree is from a previous school and lower education level, we need a copy of the actual degree and your transcript from that school)

**MAILING INSTRUCTIONS—** Make sure to have a copy of all documents before mailing. **DO NOT MAIL YOUR ORIGINAL OPT I-20.** See boxes below to see which USCIS center to mail to. OPT cards can take 60-90 days to be processed.

**E-Notification:** If you want to receive an e-mail and/or a text message that your Form I-765 has been accepted at a USCIS Lockbox facility, complete Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance and clip it to the first page of your application.

If you live in:	Mail your application to:	If you live in:	Mail your application to:
Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Guam, or the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.	<b>USCIS Phoenix Lockbox</b> For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries:  USCIS PO Box 21281 Phoenix, AZ 85036  For Express mail and courier deliveries:  USCIS Attn: I-765 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S Suite 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034	Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia	<b>USCIS Dallas Lockbox</b> For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:  USCIS PO Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266  For Express mail and courier deliveries:  USCIS Attn: I-765 2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business Suite 400 Lewisville, TX 75067

# Sample Department Letter

## USE IUP LETTERHEAD

Date

To whom it may concern:

This is to verify that Ms. Ann Winslow, an undergraduate student in the Department of Marketing, will complete her degree in May 2016.

As an international student it would be beneficial for Ann to acquire practical experience in her field as a complement to her theoretical knowledge. Participation in the one year Optional Practical Training (OPT) would serve her well.

If you require any additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dr. Eric Jones  
Chair