Optional Practical Training workshop

Workshop agenda

Introduction to OPT

Application process

Maintaining status on OPT

Travel information

After initial OPT

What is OPT?

Benefit of F-1 status at each higher-level degree

Eligible one time after bachelor's, master's and Ph.D. level

Work authorization for 12 months

Permission from U.S. government to work in the U.S. after graduation

Employment related to field of study

Job must be related to major, not minor

You are eligible for OPT if you…

1 Have been in F-1 status for one academic year

6 Have a passport valid six months into the future

364 Accumulated no more than 364 days of full time CPT
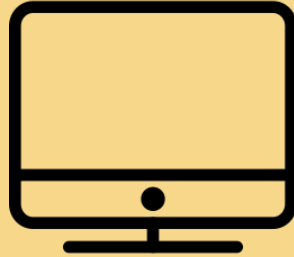
Thesis/dissertation students

- Post-completion OPT can start before you graduate

- Program end date will be shortened to facilitate the start of your OPT period
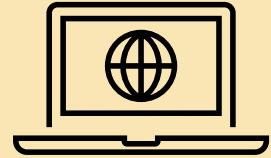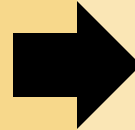
Application process

Application: 3 step process

Step 1: Gather and complete required documents

Step 2: Submit online request through myStatus

Step 3: File USCIS application online and wait

-OR-

Step 3: Mail application to USCIS and wait

Step 1: Gather and complete paperwork

- I-765

- Copies of previous I-20s with CPT/OPT authorization

- Copies of passport, visa, I-94 and any previous EAD cards

- $75 OPT processing fee

  > Credit/debit payable in myStatus

I-765 Online

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Sign In

Email

Password

Forgot your Password?   Show Password

Sign In

One account for all of your USCIS needs.
Create an account.

Didn't receive confirmation instructions?

Legal

- Department of Homeland Security Consent
- DHS Privacy Notice
- Paper Reduction Act Burden Disclosure Notice
- Terms of Use

Welcome to your USCIS Account

Select what you want to do

Edit My Profile — Editing your profile includes email, password, phone number, security questions, two-step verification and backup code.

Login to a USCIS Service

myUSCIS — Apply for immigration benefits, find tools and resources to assist in preparation for naturalization, and search for doctors in your local community.

FIRST — Submit, manage and receive Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

myE-Verify — Confirm your records for employment eligibility, track E-Verify or Self-Check case status, and protect your identity by locking your Social Security Number (SSN).

Not sure what service you need? Start at USCIS.gov

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services   My Account

Welcome To Your USCIS

Select What You Want To

Add a paper-filed case — View your case status and case history by adding your case to your account

File a form online — Start a new form, upload evidence, and pay and submit online

Enter a rep... pass...
Review and prepared for attorney or r...

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

I-765 Online

File a Form

Once you start your form, we will automatically save your information for 30 days, or from the last time you worked on the form.

Select the form you want to file online.

○ Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card (I-90)

○ Request for a Hearing on a Decision in Naturalization Proceedings (N-336)

○ Application for Naturalization (N-400)

○ Application for Replacement Naturalization/Citizenship Document (N-565)

○ Application for Certificate of Citizenship (N-600)

○ Application for Citizenship and Issuance of Certificate Under Section 322 (N-600K)

● Application for Employment Authorization (I-765)

Only certain F-1 students seeking optional practical training (OPT) may file Form I-765 online. This includes:

- Pre-completion OPT - (c)(3)(A) eligibility category;
- Post-completion OPT - (c)(3)(B) eligibility category; or
- a 24-month extension for STEM students (students holding a degree in science technology, engineering, or mathematics) - (c)(3)(C) eligibility category.

For all other eligibility categories, you must submit a paper Form I-765.

○ Petition for Alien Relative (I-130)

○ Application To Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status (I-539)

Start form

Cancel

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started ⌃

Basis of eligibility

Reason for applying

Preparer and interpreter Information

About You ⌄

Evidence ⌄

Additional Information ⌄

Review and Submit ⌄

What is your eligibility category?

⚠ You can file your request online only for certain eligibility categories

If your eligibility category does not appear on the drop-down list, you must file a paper Form I-765. If you submit online and are not eligible for one of the listed categories, your application may be denied.

A(12) Temporary Protected Status Granted

c(3)(A) Student Pre-Completion OPT

c(3)(B) Student Post-Completion OPT

c(3)(C) STEM Extension

Eligibility code: (C) (3) (B)

I-765 Online

What is your current U.S. mailing address?

We will use your current mailing address to contact you throughout the application process. We may not be able to contact you if you do not provide a complete and valid address. Please provide a U.S. address only.

In care of name (if any)

Address line 1

N52 MEMORIAL UN

Street number and name

Address line 2

Apartment, suite, unit, or floor

City or town   **State**   **ZIP code**

COLUMBIA   MISSOURI ▼   65211-7030

Provide a 5 or 9-digit ZIP code.

Is your current U.S. mailing address the same as your U.S. physical address?

○ Yes
● No

Optional:
You can use the International Center's mailing address.

N52 Memorial Union
Columbia, MO 65211

I-765 Online

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started ⌄
About You ⌄
Evidence ⌄
Additional Information ⌄

Review and Submit ⌃
Review your application
Your application summary
Your statement

Review the I-765 form information   🖶 Print

Here is a summary of all the information you provided in your application.

Make sure you have provided responses for everything that applies to you before you submit your application. You can edit your responses by going to each application section using the site navigation.

We also prepared a draft case snapshot with your responses, which you can download below.

📄 View draft snapshot

Getting Started

Basis of eligibility

What is your eligibility category?   c(3)(B) Student Post-Completion OPT

View draft snapshot (PDF)

STOP After completing the questions, **DO NOT** submit to USCIS. Download the draft snapshot and submit to ISSS for review.

I-765 Online

- Filing the I-765 electronically

  > Complete form at uscis.gov/i-765

  > Select 'view draft snapshot'

  > Upload draft I-765 to myStatus for international student adviser review

STOP After completing the questions, **DO NOT** submit to USCIS. Download the draft snapshot and submit to ISSS for review.

Step 2: Submit OPT request to ISSS

- Submit request in myStatus
  - > Read OPT acknowledgements
  - > Read OPT fee information
  - > Complete OPT employment questionnaire
  - > Send approval verification to academic adviser
- Submit documents from step 1 in-person or upload to myStatus
  - > Pay $75 OPT processing fee in myStatus
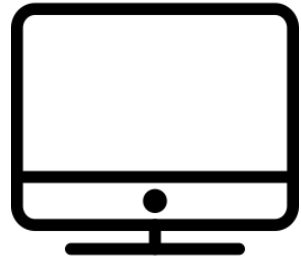
Step 2: Receive documents from ISSS

- Processing time for International Student and Scholar Services takes up to **five business days** after all required documents are submitted

- Documents provided by ISSS :

  > New I-20 with OPT recommendation (sent via email, unless applying by mail)

  > Pre-paid FedEx express mailing envelope (if submitting application to USCIS by mail)

  > Any documents submitted in-person

  Before submitting your application to USCIS, please let your international student adviser know if you need to make any changes.

New I-20

- OPT starts and ends **after** the end date on your I-20

- Program end date will be adjusted to the end of the semester of your graduation

PROGRAM OF STUDY

EDUCATION LEVEL	**MAJOR 1**	**MAJOR 2**
DOCTORATE	Economics, General 45.0601	None 00.0000
NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH	**PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**	**ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES**
72 Months	Required	Student is proficient
PROGRAM START DATE	**PROGRAM END DATE**	
01 SEPTEMBER 2015	31 MAY 2021	

New I-20

Post-completion OPT Status "Requested"

Step 3: Submit application to USCIS electronically

- Payment for $410 ($470 starting April 1, 2024)

- Passport-style photograph (taken recently)

- I-765 questionnaire

- Copy of new OPT I-20

- Copies of previous I-20s with CPT/OPT authorization

- Copies of I-94, visa, passport, any previous EADs
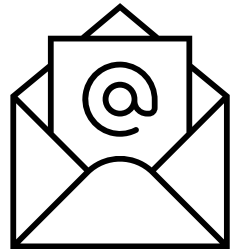
Step 3: If applying by mail …

- Instructions are slightly different when filing a paper application by mail. If you choose this option, contact our office for instructions.

I-765 Online

I-20, Certificate Of Eligibility For Nonimmigrant Student Status

Upload a copy of the Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status endorsed by the Designated School Official (DSO). For the (c)(3)(B) eligibility category, your DSO must have entered the recommendation for OPT into your SEVIS record within 30 days of you submitting Form I-765. If you fail to do so, we will deny your OPT request. For the (c)(3)(C) eligibility category, the Form I-20 must have been endorsed by the DSO within 60 days of submitting Form I-765.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Accepted characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 6MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload

Next

Upload OPT Recommendation I-20

Pay for and submit your application

The final step to submit your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, is to pay the required fee.

Your application fee is: **$410**.

Refund Policy: By continuing this transaction, you agree that you are paying for a government service and that the filing fee, biometric services fee and all related financial transactions are final and not refundable, regardless of any action USCIS takes on an application, petition or request, or how long USCIS takes to reach a decision. You must submit all fees in the exact amounts.

- Getting Started
- About You
- Evidence
- Additional Information
- **Review and Submit**
  - Review your application
  - Your application summary
  - Your statement
  - Your signature
  - **Pay and submit**

We will send you to Pay.gov — our safe and secure payment website — to pay your fees and submit your form online.

Here are the steps in the payment and submission process:

1. Provide your billing information on Pay.gov
2. Provide your credit card or U.S. bank account information
3. Submit your payment

When you have paid your fee, your form will be submitted.

Pay.gov will redirect you to a uscis.gov confirmation screen, which will include your receipt number. Please keep a copy of your receipt number for your records. You can track the status of your application through your USCIS online account.

Pay and submit

$410 application fee paid through Pay.gov (or $470 starting April 1, 2024)

What are the three steps to apply for OPT?

A.
1. Gather documents
2. Submit to USCIS
3. Start working

B.
1. Gather documents
2. Submit myStatus request
3. Mail/submit electronically to USCIS

C.
1. Apply to International Center
2. Get OPT approval from International Center
3. Start working

D.
1. Apply to International Center
2. get new I-20
3. start working

What are the three steps to apply for OPT?

A.
1. Gather documents
2. Submit to USCIS
3. Start working

B.
1. Gather documents
2. Submit myStatus request
3. Mail/submit electronically to USCIS

C.
1. Apply to International Center
2. Get OPT approval from International Center
3. Start working

D.
1. Apply to International Center
2. get new I-20
3. start working

OPT timeline

Application period

I-20 program end date

90 days	60 days

Choose OPT employment start date

Employment period

12 months

Work authorization for maximum of 12 months from OPT start date

Grace period

60 days

Time to transfer, start a new program, change status or exit the U.S.

Important dates

Program end date:
May 10, 2024
July 26, 2024
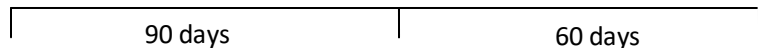Dec. 13, 2024

Earliest application date
Feb. 10, 2024
April 27, 2024
Sept. 14, 2024

Application deadline
July 9, 2024
Sept. 24, 2024
Feb. 11, 2025

Employment period
12 months

Grace period
60 days

90 days

60 days

Choose OPT employment start date between:

May 11, 2024 and July 9, 2024
July 27, 2024 and Sept. 24, 2024
Dec. 14, 2024 and Feb. 11, 2025

OPT end date between:

May 10, 2025 and July 8, 2025
July 26, 2025 and Sept. 23, 2025
Dec. 13, 2025 and Feb. 10, 2026

(depending on start date)

Application window

I-20 program end date	Earliest application date	Application deadline
May 10, 2024	Feb. 10, 2024	July 9, 2024
July 26, 2024	April 27, 2024	Sept. 24, 2024
December 13, 2024	Sept. 14, 2024	Feb. 11, 2025

OPT employment start date range

I-20 program end date	Earliest start date	Latest start date
May 10, 2024	May 11, 2024	July 9, 2024
July 26, 2024	July 27, 2024	Sept. 24, 2024
December 13, 2024	December 14, 2024	Feb. 11, 2025

After you apply

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

Form I-797C, Notice of Action

THIS NOTICE DOES NOT GRANT ANY IMMIGRATION STATUS OR BENEFIT.

NOTICE TYPE: Receipt

NOTICE DATE: February 26, 2018

CASE TYPE: I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

USCIS ALIEN NUMBER

RECEIPT NUMBER

RECEIVED DATE: February 20, 2018

PAGE: 1 of 1

DATE OF BIRTH

N52 MEMORIAL UNION
COLUMBIA, MO 65211

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

Application/Petition Fee: $410.00
Biometrics Fee: $0.00
Total Amount Received: $410.00
Total Balance Due: $0.00

NAME AND MAILING ADDRESS

Eligibility Category: C03B

The above case has been received by our office and is in process. Please verify your personal information listed above and immediately notify the USCIS National Customer Service Center at the phone number listed below if there are any changes.

Please note that if a priority date is printed on this notice, the priority does not reflect earlier retained priority dates.

If you have questions about possible immigration benefits and services, filing information, or USCIS forms, please call the USCIS National Customer Service Center (NCSC) at 1-800-375-5283. If you are hearing impaired, please call the NCSC TDD at 1-800-767-1833. Please also refer to the USCIS website: www.uscis.gov.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this notice or the status of your case, please contact our customer service number.

You will be notified separately about any other case you may have filed.

- If applying by mail: You will receive a receipt in the mail two to three weeks after your application is received by USCIS

- If applying online: Receipt number issued immediately

- Check the status of your application through the USCIS website

- International student adviser cannot contact USCIS on your behalf

After USCIS receives your application

- After you apply, changing dates or withdrawing your application is **difficult** and not guaranteed

  > Be sure about your OPT plans

  > Talk to your international student adviser if you decide to withdraw

- You cannot cancel your OPT after your application has been approved

USCIS decisions

Approved	Rejection/denial	Request for evidence

Yay! Congratulations!	▪ **Application**
	  > Received more than 90 days before program end date
	  > Received more than 30 days after OPT recommendation
	  > I-765 not signed/box not checked
	  > Filing online without the OPT I-20
	▪ **Old or previously used photos**
	▪ **Check**
	  > Wrong date, filled incorrectly, not signed, not in your name
		RFE
		
		More information needed to make a decision

Timing tips

- Application must be received by USCIS **before** grace period ends (60-day)

- Mail/submit application within a timely manner

- Apply as early as possible, even if you don't have a job yet

- If you have a job offer, make sure you are applying at least 90 days in advance of your start date.

Timing tips

- On-campus work authorization ends on program end date

- There may be a gap in employment between program end date on I-20 and date OPT begins

- If driver's license is expiring, renew before submitting your OPT documents to International Student and Scholar Services

Premium processing

$1,500 fee guarantees processing time within 30 days (from April 1, 2024, will be 30 **business** days)

- I-907 can be filed together with I-765 or after I-765

Maintaining status on OPT

International Student & Scholar Services
University of Missouri

Maintaining F-1 status on OPT

- You are still in **F-1 student status** with the University of Missouri and using a benefit of that status

- F-1 status is maintained through employment (not through enrollment)

- Your I-20 is still valid — the second page shows OPT dates even though the first page program end date has passed

- You can sign up for insurance through Anthem while on OPT, but it is not automatically applied unless you are enrolled in MU courses

  > Online enrollment at student.anthem.com/student/schools/mizzou

Maintaining F-1 status on OPT

- Employment can be paid or unpaid
- Must work **21 hours** or more each week
- Can switch employers
- Can work for multiple employers
- Can take part-time incidental courses, but cannot start another academic program
- Allowed 90 days of unemployment

Maintaining F-1 status on OPT

- Update myStatus within 10 days of:

    > Moving to a new address

    > Finding employment or switching employers

    > Ending employment

- If employment is not reported within 90 days from OPT start date, your SEVIS record will be automatically terminated

Maintaining F-1 status on OPT

- SEVP Portal updates:

  > You may update the SEVP Portal with employment information

    - You must still let us know so we can issue new I-20

  > You may update myStatus with employment

    - We will update SEVP information to issue new I-20

Maintaining F-1 status on OPT

- You can only begin working on the approved start date and once your EAD card arrives

  > If your EAD card is approved after your requested start date, the start and end dates will be adjusted to give you the full benefit of your authorized period of employment

- You can stay in the U.S. while your OPT application is pending

What is your status while on OPT?

A. OPT

B. H-1B

C. F-1

D. J-1

What is your status while on OPT?

A. OPT

B. H-1B

C. F-1

D. J-1

Travel information

International Student & Scholar Services
University of Missouri

Travel with pending application

Pending OPT app **+** **Before graduation** **=** Passport, visa, I-20 w/ travel signature, letter from department

Pending OPT app **+** **After graduation** **=** Passport, visa, I-20 w/ travel signature, OPT receipt notice
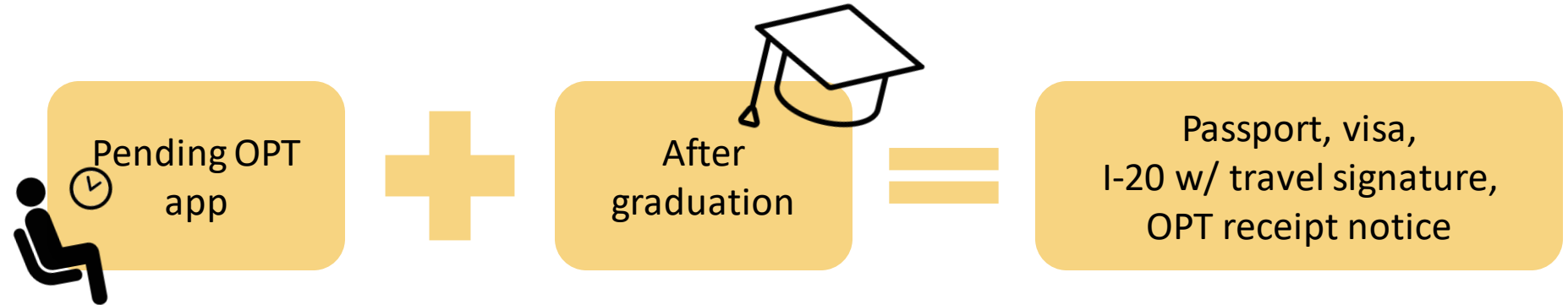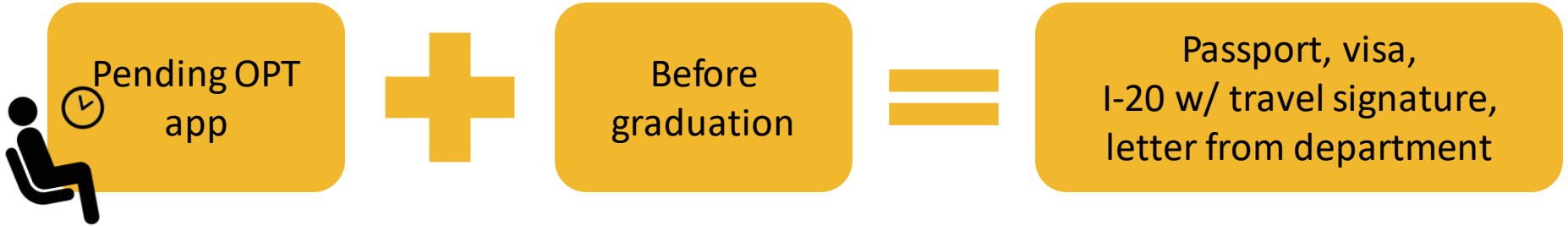
Travel with approved application

Approved OPT application

+

After graduation

=

Passport, visa, I-20 w/ travel signature, proof of employment, EAD card*
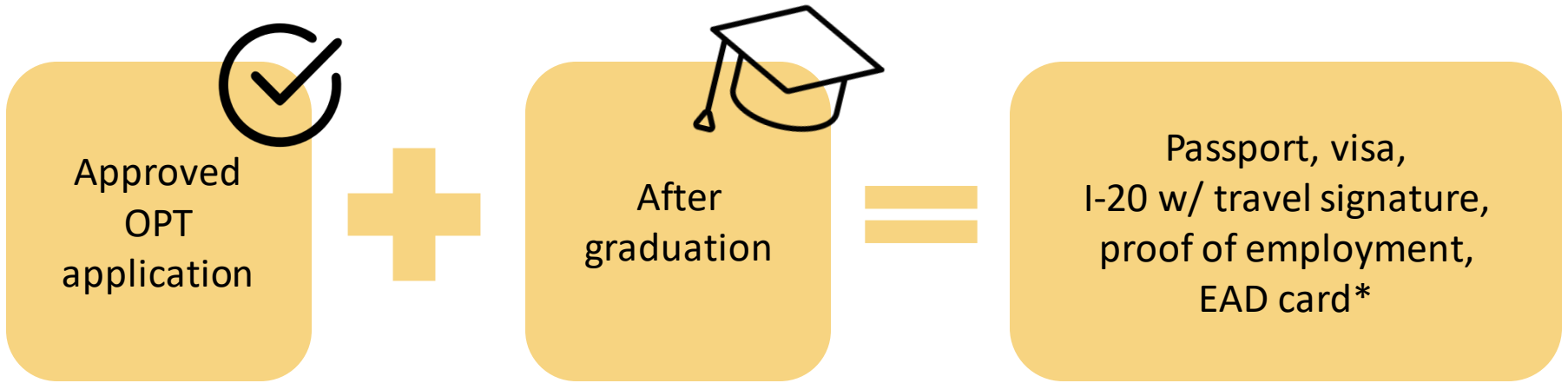
*EAD card is not valid for re-entry by itself. After approval, you must have a job in order to re-enter the U.S.

Who should you tell when you get a new job?

A. USCIS

B. Your best friend

C. MU International Student and Scholar Services

D. Your academic adviser

Who should you tell when you get a new job?

A. USCIS

B. Your best friend

C. MU International Student and Scholar Services

D. Your academic adviser

When should you update them?

A. Today

B. Within 10 days

C. Within one month

D. As soon as you accept the job

When should you update them?

A.
Today

B.
Within 10 days

C.
Within one month

D.
As soon as you accept the job

After initial OPT

STEM extension

- Eligibility:

  > Your degree is in [STEM-qualifying field](#)

  > You are working in a **paid** position related to your major

    - You can work for multiple employers, but **each** must be more than 20 hours/week

 > Your employer is registered with the **E-Verify** employment verification system

Application for 24-month STEM extension

- Must apply **before** initial OPT period ends

- Log in to myStatus to request OPT STEM extension

  > Some additional documents needed, so review online checklist

H-1B cap-gap extension

- Eligibility: F-1 students working on OPT who have:

  > An OPT work authorization end date between April 1 and Sept. 30 or April 1 must fall within your OPT grace period

  > An employer who has filed a timely H-1B petition for you with a start date of Oct. 1

  > Any major is eligible for H-1B; not restricted to STEM students

- Have questions? Meet with an international student adviser

GoinGlobal (at career.missouri.edu)
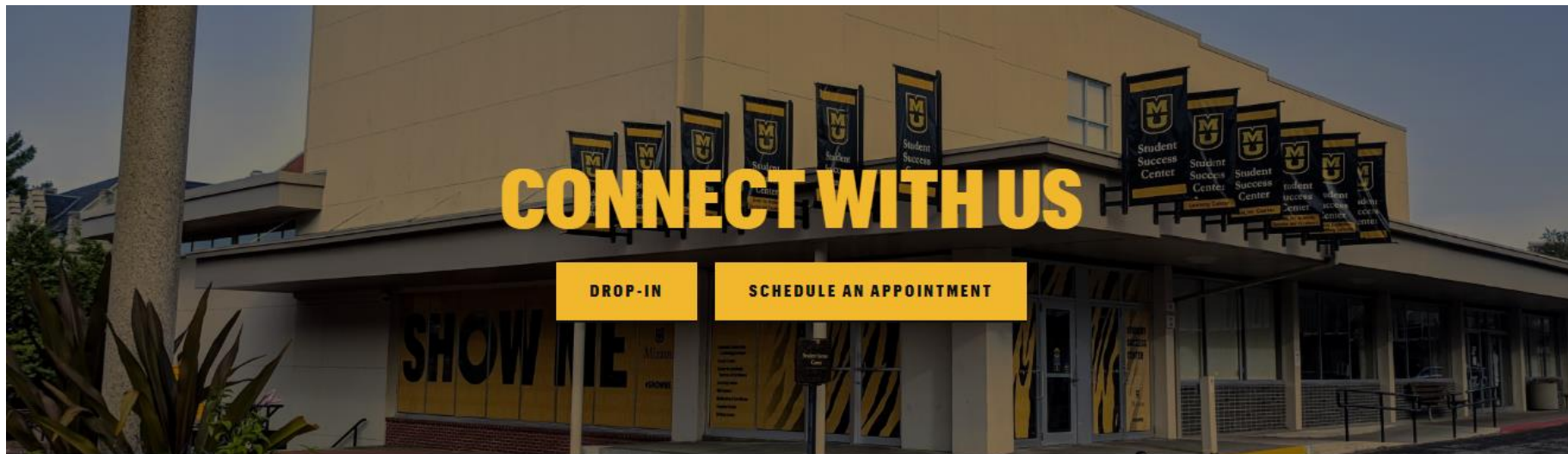
Questions?

- International Student and Scholar Services website: international.missouri.edu/isss

- **Jillian Collins:** collinsjk@missouri.edu

- **Kim Adams:** kimberlyadams@missouri.edu
  > All sponsored students

- **Kristen Carranza**: carranzak@missouri.edu
  > Last names starting with A–B

- **Katie Humphrey:** khumphrey@missouri.edu
  > Last names starting with E–O

- **Mo Whitley**: whitleymo@missouri.edu
  > Last names starting with C–D, P–Z

International Student
& Scholar Services
University of Missouri