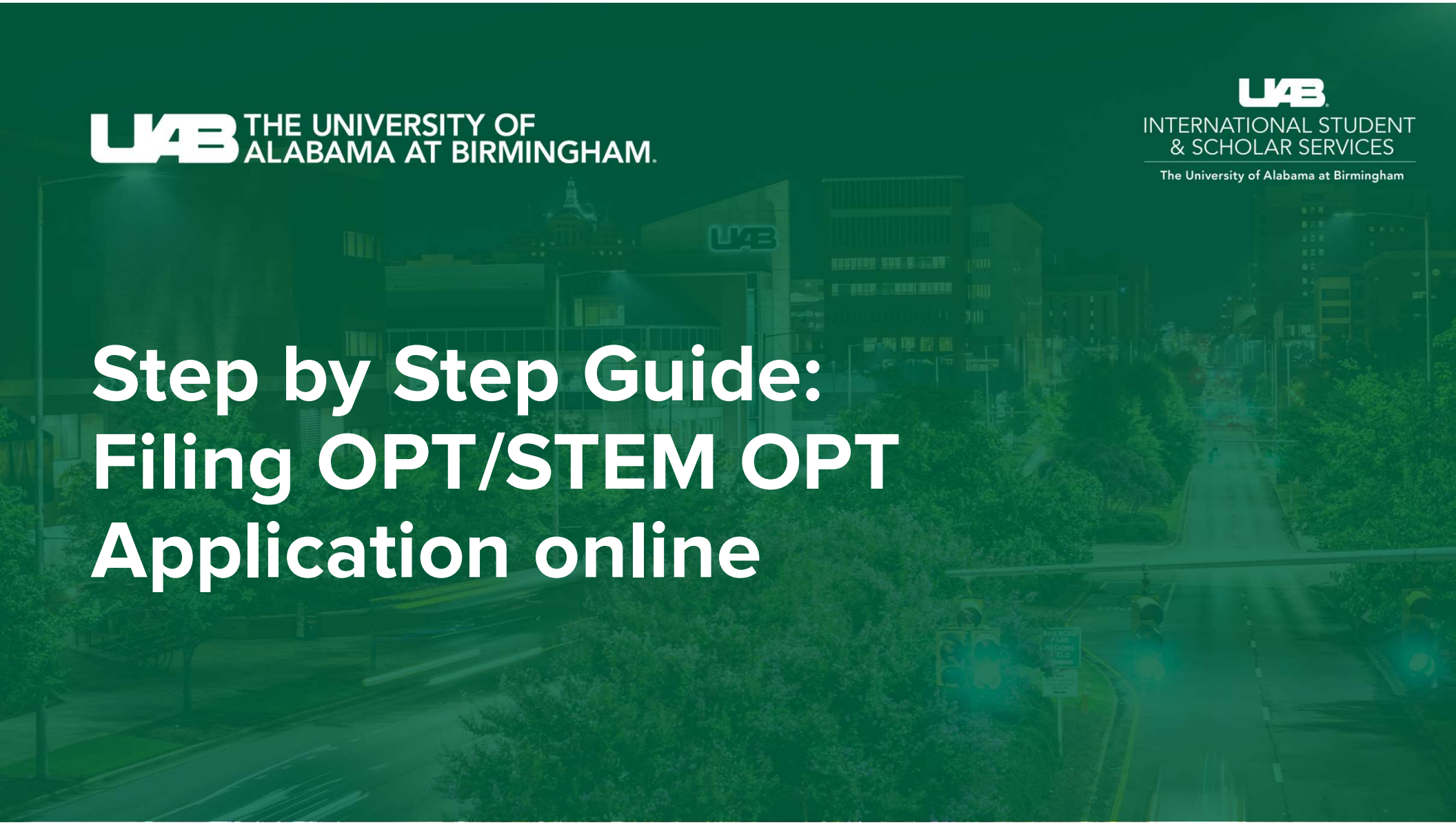
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM.
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR SERVICES
The University of Alabama at Birmingham
Step by Step Guide: Filing OPT/STEM OPT Application online

Filing Tips

✓ DO

✓ **Gather digital versions of your supporting documents.**

- Passport
- Most recent **I-94**
- **Passport photo**
- I-20 with OPT/STEM OPT recommendation on page 2.
  - Sign your I-20 at the bottom of page 1
  - USCIS MUST receive OPT application within 30 days of our recommendation.
- Previous I-20 with CPT/OPT work authorization (if you have one)
- Copies of all previous EAD(s) issued to you (if you have one)

✓ **STEM Applicants ONLY.**

- You must upload a copy of your official transcript & diploma for the STEM degree

✓ **Create USCIS account**.

✓ **Filing fee $470.**

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Step 1: Create USCIS account

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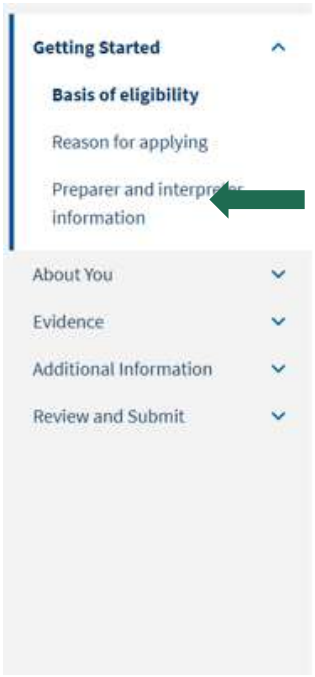
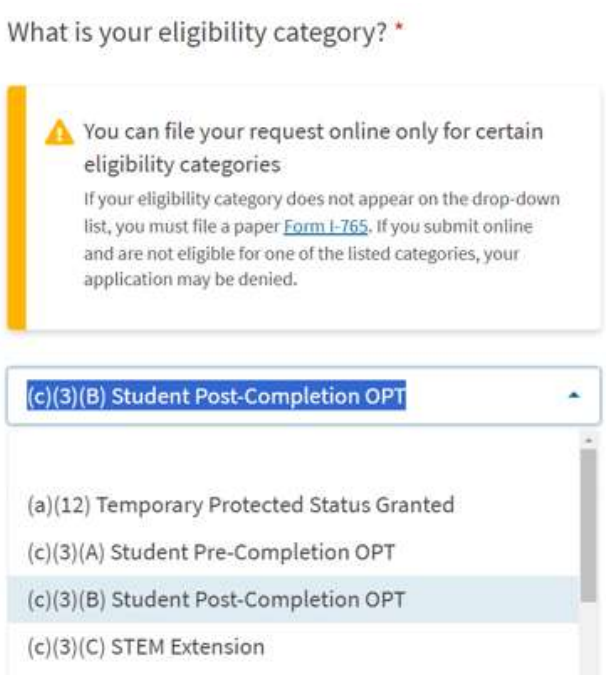
Step 2: File Form I-765 Online

- Logged in to your USCIS account
- Click **'My Account'**
- Select **'I-765 Application for Employment Authorization'**

Getting Started

- **Basis of Eligibility**
  - **(c)(3)(A) Pre-completion OPT** – select this option if your requested OPT start date occurs **before** the program end date listed on your I-20
  - **(c)(3)(B) Post-completion OPT**– select this option if your requested OPT start date occurs **after** end date listed on your I-20, or after completion of program.
  - **(c)(3)(C) STEM Extension** – select this option if you are currently on valid post-completion OPT and eligible to apply for STEM extension based on your degree
    - STEM OPT applicants only (c)(3)(C):
      - What is your degree?
        - List degree level and major field of study for your STEM OPT qualifying degree, as listed on page 1 of your I-20.
      - What is your employer's name as listed in E-Verify?
        - The University of Alabama at Birmingham
      - What is your employer's E-Verify company identification number or a valid E-Verify client company identification number?
        - 1234177





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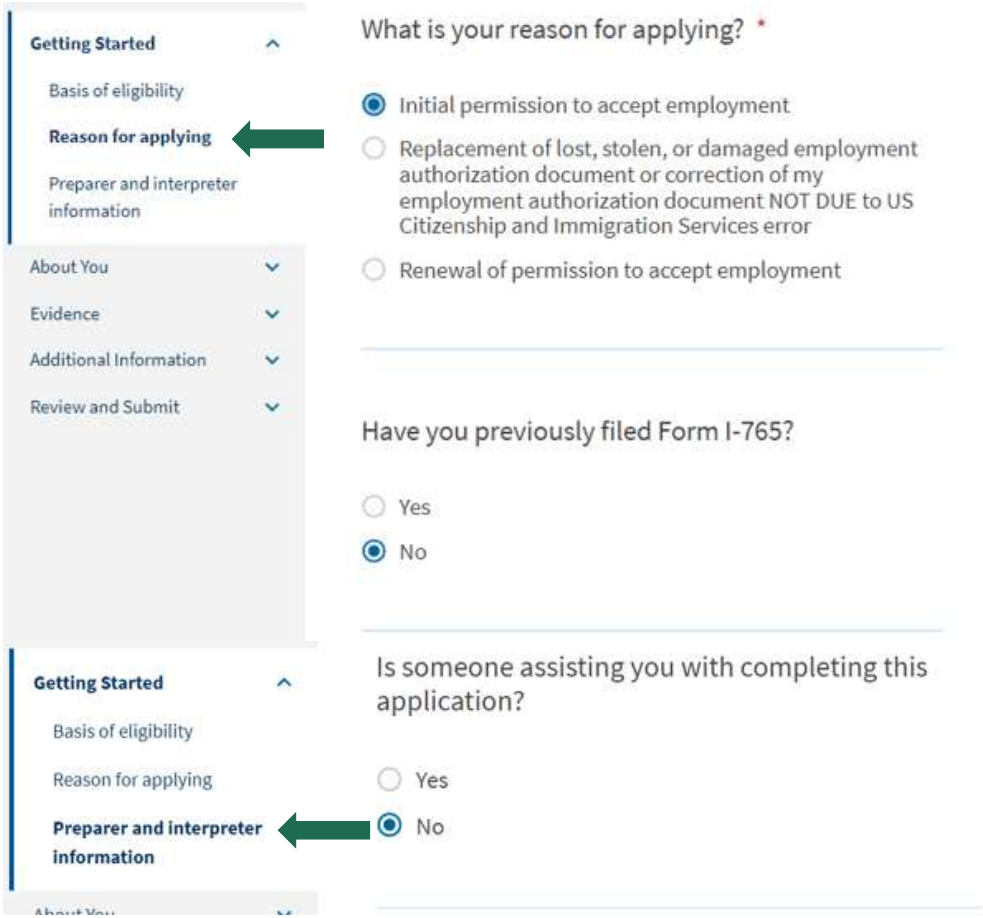
Step 2: Continue

Getting Started

- **Reason for applying**
  - What is your reason for applying?
    - Select ‘Initial permission to accept employment’
    - STEM OPT applicants ONLY
      - Select ‘Renewal of permission to accept employment’
  - Have you previously filed Form I-765?
    - If you have previously filed Form I-765, select ‘Yes’
    - If you have not previously filed Form I-765, select ‘No’
- **Prepare and Interpreter Information**
  - Is someone assisting you with completing this application?
    - Select ‘No’



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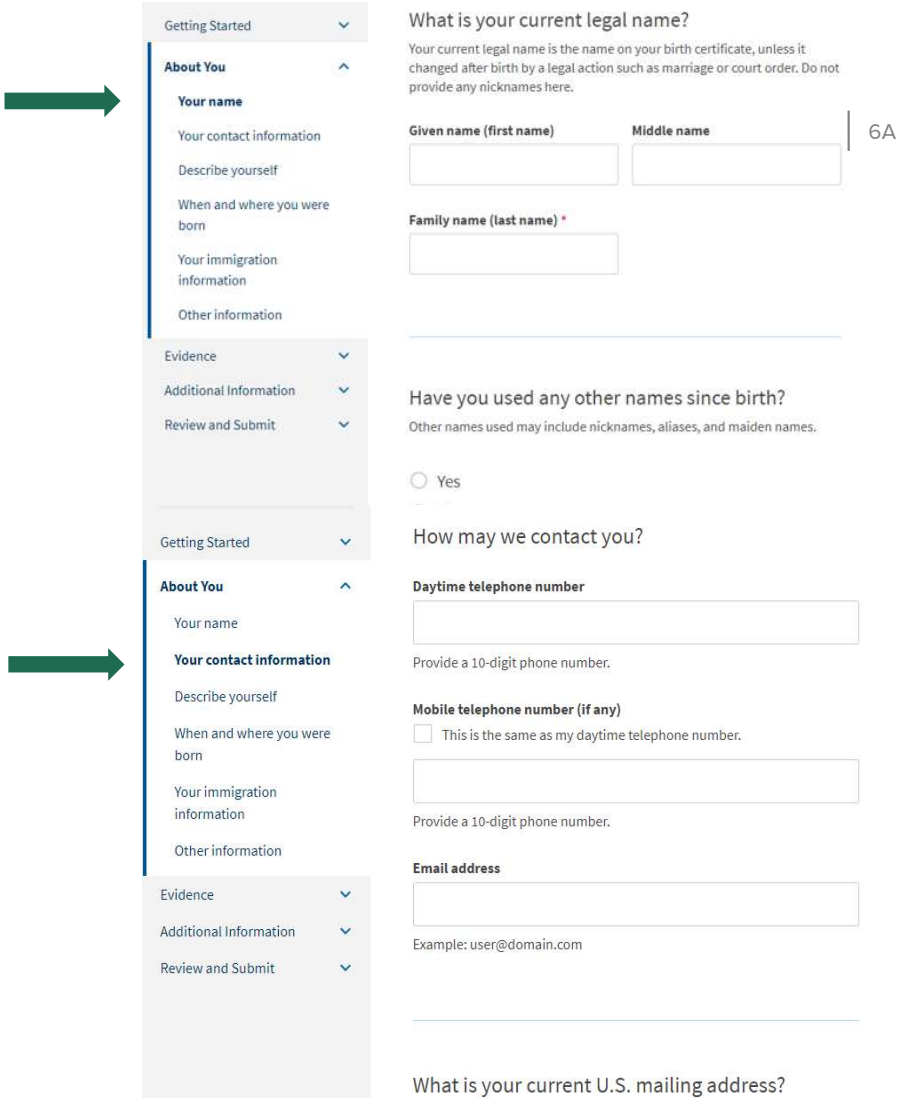
Step 2: Continue

About You

- **Your Name**
  - What is your legal name?
    - Enter your name as it appears on your passport and visa
    - Have you used any other name since birth?
      - If ‘yes’, provide the other names you have used. If ‘no’, continue to the next section.

- **Your Contact Information**
  - How may we contact you?
    - Enter your mobile number and email address.
  - What is your current U.S. mailing address?
    - This is where your EAD will be sent. Your must enter an address that will be valid for the next 4-5 months. If your address will change, you can ask a relative or employer if you can add their name and U.S. address. EADs will not be sent abroad. If you use a relative or employer’s address, you must write their full name in the “In Care of Name (if any)” field.
    - You are welcome to use the ISSS/Sterne Library mailing address (below) on your I-765.
      - **UAB ISSS c/o Justin Lampley, PDSO**
        SL 1720 2nd Ave South
        SL 248
        Birmingham, AL 35294
  - Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?

    Select ‘yes’ or ‘no’.



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Step 2: Continue

About you

- **Describe Yourself**
  - What is your gender?
    - Select the gender as is reflected on your passport
  - What is your marital status?
    - Select your current marital status
- **When and Where Were You Born?**
  - What is your city, town, or village of birth?
    - Complete the information as is listed on your passport/birth certificate
  - What is your state or province of birth?
    - Complete the information as is listed on your passport/birth certificate (if it applies to you)
  - Is your country of birth?
    - Complete the information as is listed on your passport/birth certificate
  - What is your date of birth?
    - Insert your date of birth (MM/DD/YYYY)

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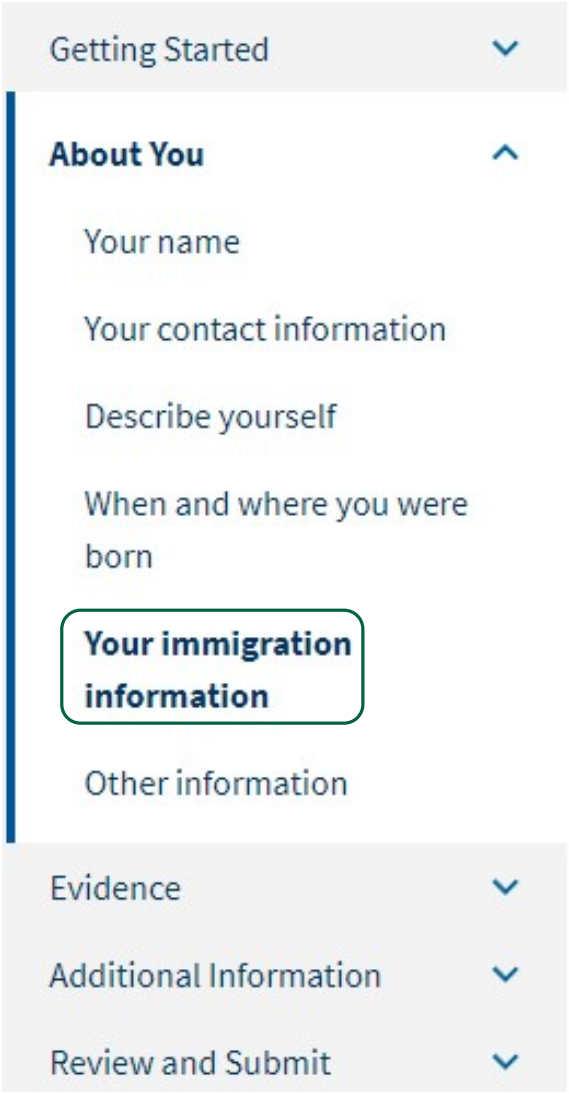
Step 2: Continue

About you

- **Your immigration information**
  - What is your country of citizenship or nationality?
    - Your I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number can be retrieved here
  - When did you last arrive in the United States?
    - Insert the name of your country of citizenship. If you hold multiple citizenships or nationalities, select “add country” to ensure all countries of citizenships or nationalities are reflected.
  - What is your Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number (if any)?
    - List your arrival date, place of arrival and status at arrival. You can refer to your most recent I-94 for this information.
  - What is the passport number of your most recently issued passport?
    - Please refer to the biographical page of your passport.
  - What is your travel document number (if any)?
    - Note: most F-1 students would not have a travel document separate from their passport.
  - What is the expiration date of your passport or travel document?
    - Please refer to the biographical page of your passport.
  - What country issued your passport or travel document?
    - Please refer to the biographical page of your passport.
  - What is your current immigration status or category?
    - Select “F1 – Student, Academic or Language Program.
  - What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)?
    - Your SEVIS number can be found on the upper left-hand side of your most recent I-20.



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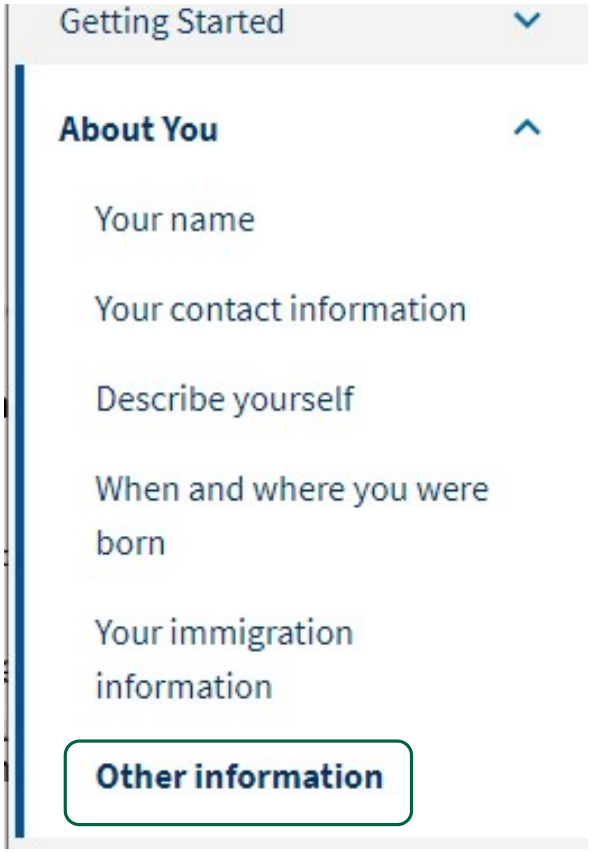
Step 2: Continue

About you

- **Other Information**
  - What is your A-Number?
    - You can list your A-number (if you have one) or select 'I do not have or know my A-number'.
    - Most F-1 students will not obtain an A-Number until after being approved for Post-Completion OPT
    - STEM OPT Applicants ONLY
      - A-Number is a USCIS number listed in front of your EAD card
  - What is your USCIS online account number (if any)?
    - You can list your USCIS Online Account Number (if you have one) or select 'I do not have or know my USCIS online Account Number'.
    - STEM OPT Applicants ONLY
      - USCIS online account number will be auto populated for you.
  - Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security Card to you?
    - If you have a Social Security Number, select "Yes" and enter your Social Security Number. If you do not have a Social Security Number, select "No". You will then be asked of you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security Card to which your response will be "Yes". You will need to agree to the "Consent for Disclosure" and provide your father's and mother's birth names (first and last names at birth).



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Step 2: Continue

Evidence

Upload

- Passport photo 2x2
- Most recent Form I-94
- Employment Authorization Document or Government ID
  - Previous EADs or passport and visa.
- Previously Authorized CPT or OPT
  - Previous I-20s with CPT and OPT approved.
- I-20, Certificate of Eligibility For Nonimmigrant Student Status
  - I-20 with OPT/STEM OPT requested on second page.

STEM OPT Applicants ONLY

- College Degree
  - Diploma
- Institution Accreditation
  - Official transcript

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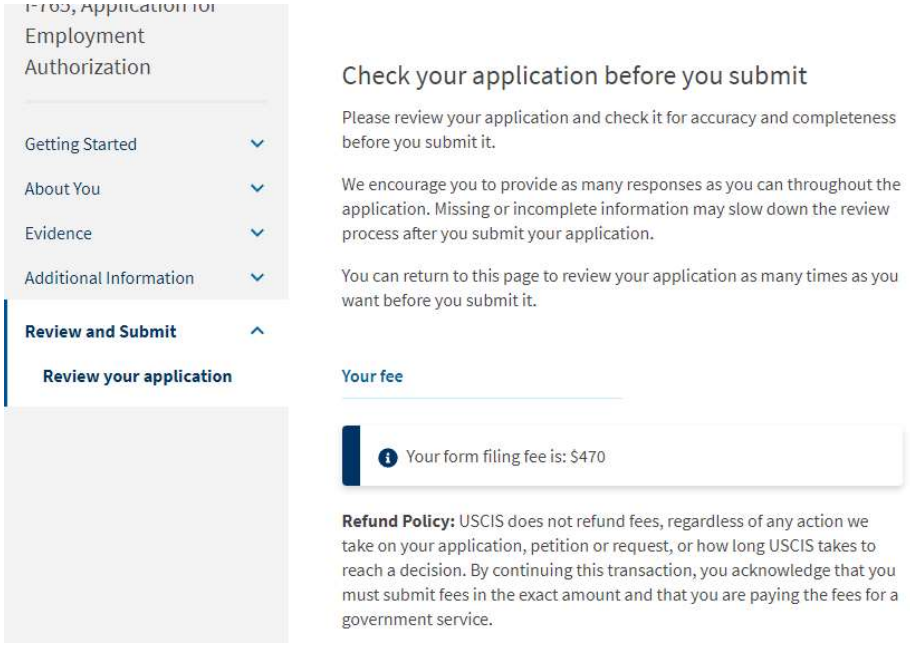
Step 3: Review and Submit

- Thoroughly review the information reflected on your I-765 and make sure you have included the OPT I-20 signed by you and ISSS.
- You will need to make payment of the current filing fee online prior to submitting your application.
- Payments can be submitted via credit/debit card or bank account information.

Note: standard OPT and STEM OPT applicants are not required to pay a biometrics fee.



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After you apply – What next?

- **Receipt number**
  - After your application is successfully submitted online, you will receive a receipt number immediately. You can check the status of your application by entering this receipt number on the Status Page by logging into your USCIS account.

- **Contact ISSS when**
  - Have questions regarding your OPT dates, don't graduate as planned, unable to submit your OPT application within 30 days of OPT recommendation on your I-20, receive an RFE or rejection.

- **OPT/STEM OPT Processing Time**
  - Currently, USCIS may take between 3-5 months (from the receipt date) to process your OPT application.

- **Once your application is approved**
  - You will receive your EAD at the address listed on your I-765.
  - SEVP portal link to create your SEVP account. This link will be sent to your email address that you used when you applied to UAB.
  - STEM OPT Reporting Requirements

- **Responsibilities**
  - All F-1 students who engage in Post-completion OPT, including STEM Extension, must fulfill certain regulatory reporting requirements. For detailed information regarding responsibilities while of F-1 OPT/STEM OPT, please visit the ISSS website. Consequences of not fulfilling your reporting requirements could lead to termination of your F-1 status.
  - If moving to a new address while the application is pending. Please make sure you update your mailing address in the 'myUSCIS' portal and request 'mail-forwarding' through the US Postal Service.

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SEVP Portal Overview

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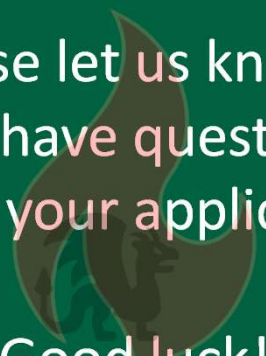
Contact us

Phone	205-934-3328
Address	Sterne Library, 2nd floor.
Email:	ISSS@uab.edu
Website	ISSS-Employment



"Please let us know if you have questions about your application.

Good luck!"

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