

DHS Announces Expanded List of STEM Degree Programs

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) today announced an expanded list of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) designated-degree programs that qualify eligible graduates on student visas for an optional practical training (OPT) extension. This announcement builds on a series of administrative reforms designed to further the Department's commitment to attracting international students.

"Attracting the best and brightest international talent to our colleges and universities and enabling them to contribute to their professional growth is an important part of our nation's economic, scientific and technological competitiveness," said Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano. "International students and exchange visitors bring invaluable contributions to our nation, and this helps empower the next generation of international entrepreneurs, right here in America."

Under the OPT program, international students who graduate from colleges and universities in the United States are able to remain in the country and receive training through work experience for up to 12 months. Students who graduate from a designated STEM degree program can remain for an additional 17 months on an OPT STEM extension.

By expanding the list of designated STEM degree programs to include such fields as pharmaceutical sciences, econometrics and quantitative economics, the Department is helping bring the best, most qualified international students to the United States.

These reforms reflect the Obama administration's ongoing commitment to promote policies that embrace talented students from other countries, who come to study in our finest colleges and universities and enrich the nation by allowing highly skilled foreign graduates to extend their post-graduate training in the United States and work in their field of study upon graduation.

A full list of expanded STEM degrees is available [here](#).

Earlier this year, DHS announced [several measures](#) they will implement to streamline existing pathways for immigrant entrepreneurs to enter and create businesses in the U.S., retain more foreign-born science and technology graduates from U.S. universities, facilitate immigration by top researchers, and help U.S. startups and other companies compete for global talent.

For more information, visit <http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/>.