



## Business Immigration Reporter

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### STEM DESIGNATED DEGREE LIST

STEM is an acronym referring to degrees in fields related to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Foreign national students who have earned a STEM degree may be eligible for an extension of their one-year optional practical training (OPT) employment authorization in the United States for an additional two years, which is not available to non-STEM degree holders.



Christian G.A. Zeller, Esq.

The STEM Designated Degree Program list is a complete list of fields of study that DHS considers to be science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) fields of study for purposes of the 24-month STEM optional practical training extension described in the Code of Federal Regulations at 8 CFR 214.2(f).

For interested students and employers, the updated list is included [here](#).



### FACT SHEET ON REDESIGNED FORM I-20

Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced that the new Form I-20, the Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status for Academic and Language Students and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), must be used uniformly by all colleges, universities and schools moving forward.

The release date of the new form dates back to June 26, 2015, but the deadline for conversion and consistent use for all students is July 1, 2016.

After July 1, 2016, the old forms will no longer support:

- Visa applications
- Entry to the United States



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- Applications for social security numbers and driver licenses

If you require additional information concerning the conversion requirements, take a look at ICE's I-20 fact sheet located [here](#).

### **VISA BULLETIN FOR JULY 2016**

There have been no significant advances in any of the categories; however, the EB-4 category (employment-based fourth preference) and Certain Religious Workers category from El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico have retrogressed to January 1, 2010.

This means if your organization has petitioned for a 4th preference category special immigrant or a religious worker and his/her priority date is younger than 1/1/2010, you cannot move forward with consular processing or adjustment of status at this time.

This development is especially concerning for applicants who are stateside in valid non-immigrant visa status such as a R-1 religious worker and who have an approved I-360 petition with a priority date after 1/1/2010, because they cannot file their adjustment of status application until their priority date becomes current. Given the fact that R-1 visas are limited to five years, some R-1 visa holders may have to consider changing status to another non-immigrant visa category until their priority date becomes current and some may have to leave the U.S. and await final adjudication of their cases outside the U.S.

Stay tuned for developments and updates. Here's a link to the current visa bulletin [here](#).

### **FIRM NEWS**

#### **Exhibitions**

From May 29 to June 3 we exhibited at NAFSA in Denver, CO where we raffled away a Michael Kors purse. The lucky winner was Marisol Salcedo of San Ignacio College in Doral, FL.

#### **Corporate Office**

Tampa  
813-221-1366  
[Map](#)

#### **Branch Offices**

##### **Immigration Help Center**

Tampa, Florida  
813-888-6700  
[Map](#)

##### **Orlando, Florida**

407-857-1300  
[Map](#)

##### **Albuquerque, New Mexico**

505-266-8739  
[Map](#)

##### **El Paso, Texas**

915-533-6699  
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From June 19 to June 22 we will exhibit at SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) Annual Conference & Exposition in Washington, D.C. at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center located at 801 Mount Vernon Place NW, Washington, DC 20001. Come visit us at our booth #620 and enter to win a summer handbag.



### Promotions

Attorney Joe ThurdeKoos of our Orlando, Florida office has been promoted to partner at Maney|Gordon|Zeller. Mr. Thurdekoos has successfully managed our Orlando practice since August 2010, which exclusively engages in U.S. Immigration & Nationality law matters. You can find Mr. ThurdeKoos' profile and information about our Orlando office [here](#).



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