

OFFICE *of*
GLOBAL
ENGAGEMENT

UtahStateUniversity®

Employment Workshop

How to apply for Post-Completion OPT

Immigration Advisors

- ▶ **Shelly Ortiz:** Director of ISSS & advising Visiting Scholars
- ▶ **Chris Cameron:** advising initial students
- ▶ **Brendan Lund:** advising F-1 students last names A-J & all sponsored students
- ▶ **Suzanne Mitri:** advising F-1 students last names K-Z & all J-1 students

Purpose

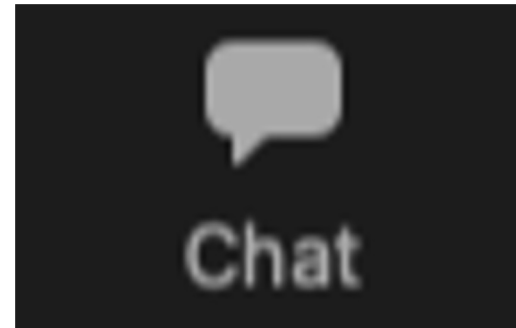
OPT Application
Process

Answer Your
Questions

Do not work or take an internship with an off-campus or non-USU entity without work authorization first

Questions?

- ▶ Type them in the Zoom **chat box** at any time and we will try to get to them all at the end



Learning Materials are found in the ISSS Portal Request Forms

1 Important Information



2 Personal & Program

3 Student Forms

REGISTRATION REMINDER

Do NOT withdraw below these minimum credit levels as this will result in a termination of your SEVIS record. **A "W" grade does NOT count toward the full course of study requirement.**

No more than 3 credits of **online** courses can count toward the full course of study.

- Full-time course of study for graduate students is:
 - 9 credits or more



OPT Request

What is Post-Completion OPT?

Optional Practical Training:

A one-year work authorization for employment directly related to your degree.



Who can apply for OPT?

Currently enrolled students who are within 90 days of completing a degree and have not already used this benefit at the same degree level.

Post-completion OPT

- ▶ Can apply for **12 months** of work authorization for F-1 students after completing a program of study
- ▶ Available at each degree level (ex: AA, BA, MA, PhD) if you apply within the program completion timeline
- ▶ Must follow the application process and be within the timelines (**or you will be denied**)
- ▶ Do **not** need a job offer to apply for OPT
- ▶ Will be allowed up to 90 days of unemployment while you look for a job

Fall 2023

SEPT 16, 2023

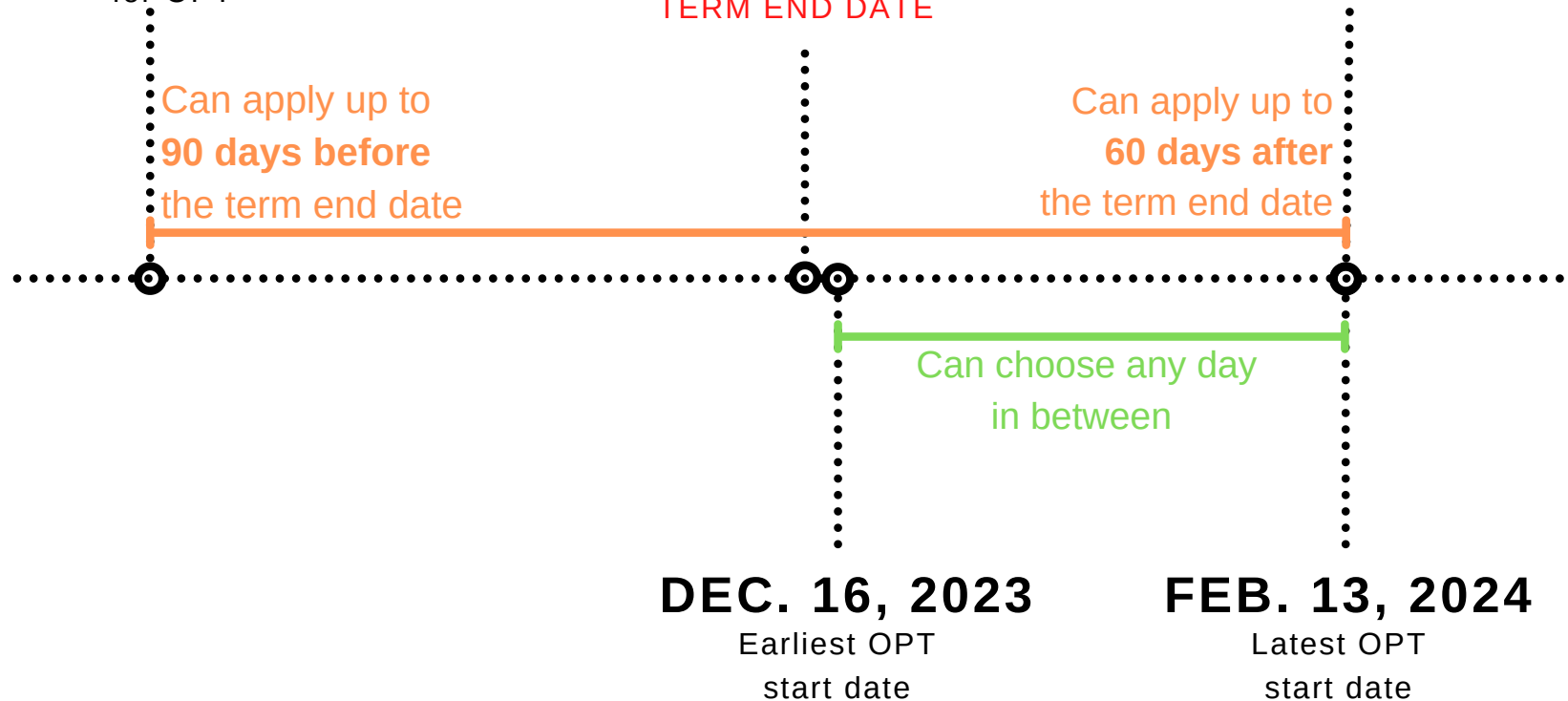
Earliest day to apply
for OPT

DEC. 15, 2023

TERM END DATE

FEB. 13, 2024

Latest day to apply for
OPT



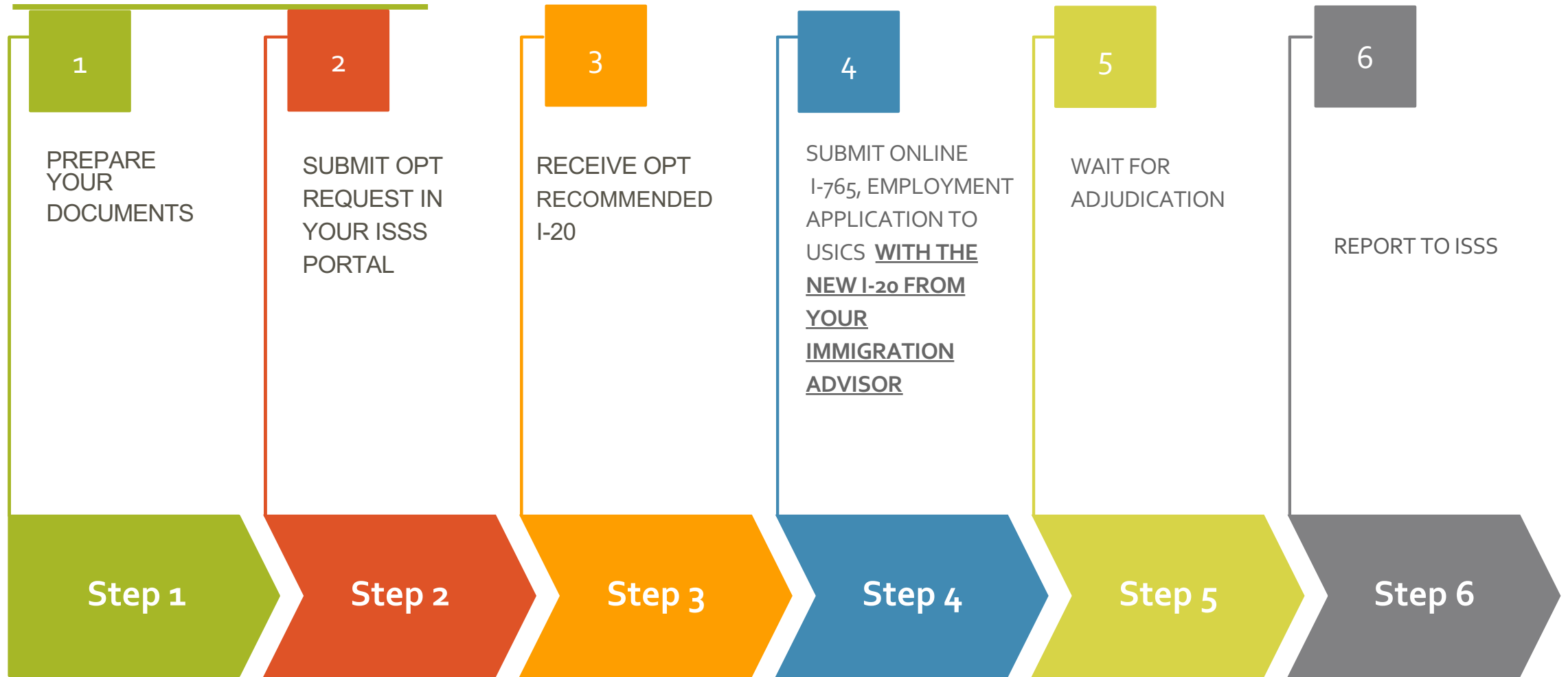
OPT Application Timeline

- Can apply between 90 days before graduation – 60 days after graduation
- Must choose a "start date" between the day after graduation – 60 days after graduation

Current USCIS Processing Times:

- 80% cases adjudicated within 2.5 months
- Most EAD cards arrive within 7-10 days after approval

Post-Completion OPT Steps



It is important to follow the steps in order

STEP 1: PREPARE

COMPLETE REQUIRED COURSE WORK / SET DEFENSE DATE

Final semester of your program

✓ Meet with academic advisor



REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS* (upload in your OPT Request)

1. Passport-style Photo
2. I-94 record – both pages
3. Valid passport
4. All I-20s with approved CPT or OPT
5. Form I-765 www.uscis.gov/i-765
("Draft Snapshot" pdf)



New I-20 with OPT Recommend (See Step 3)

Check the learning content in the OPT Request if you have questions on how to complete these

STEP 2: SUBMIT REQUEST

LOG INTO ISSS PORTAL

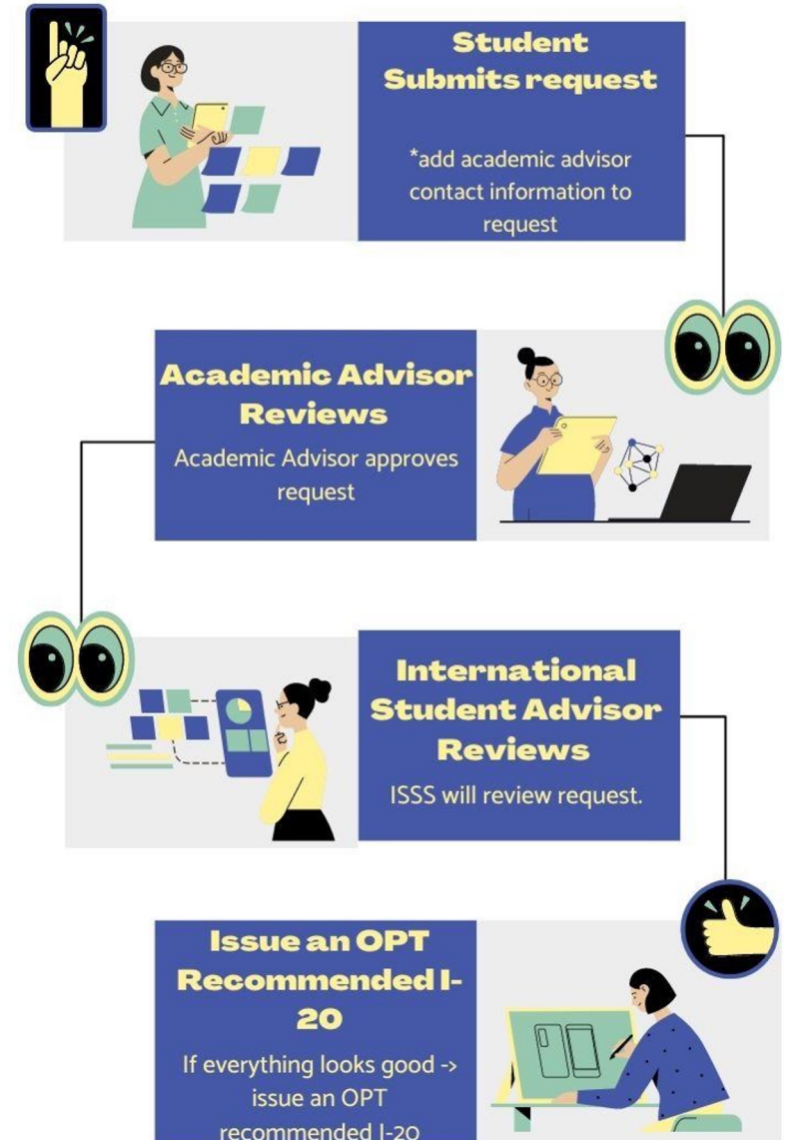
- Look for the OPT Request icon
- ✓ Fill out required information fields
- Upload required application documents from STEP 1



***The online I-765 is your “OPT application”
- this request is not your OPT application***

OPT REQUEST

submit in ISSS portal



STEP 3: RECEIVE NEW I-20 WITH OPT RECOMMENDED



WHAT'S NEXT?

1. Review feedback on your application materials from your advisor and make appropriate corrections to your I-765
2. Pick up your new I-20 (with OPT Recommended) from our office

(You must complete your online I-765 within 30 days of the signature on this new I-20)

STEP 4: SUBMIT I-765 APPLICATION

Finish submitting your online I-765 within 30 days of your new I-20 with DSO recommendation being created:

1. Upload the new I-20
2. Make any changes to I-765 based on feedback
3. Pay the USCIS fee (\$410) and submit your OPT application (the I-765)
4. (The Premium Processing fee is an additional \$1500)



DO NOT submit or pay for your OPT application without your new OPT-recommended I-20

STEP 5: WAIT FOR ADJUDICATION

WHAT DOES 'ADJUDICATION' MEAN?

- to make a decision about your opt application

HOW DO I CHECK MY STATUS?

- go to egov.uscis.gov and enter your receipt number

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

- Around 30 – 120 days (currently about 60)
- Around 2-7 days with Premium Processing

CAN I WORK WHILE I WAIT?

- No, you must wait to have your EAD card in hand and be within the dates on the EAD card

STEP 6: REPORT TO ISSS

APPROVED!

- USCIS will mail your Employment Authorization Documentation (EAD) Card
- Submit OPT Employer Update Request in your ISSS portal
- **Employment must be related to program of study & 20+ hours week**

OPT Employer Update icon
in ISSS portal



OPT Employer Update



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION

Surname
Given Name
USCIS#
Category Card# C03B
Country of Birth
Terms and Conditions None
Date of Birth Sex
Valid From: 01/24/22
Card Expires: 01/23/23
NOT VALID FOR REENTRY TO U.S.
fingerprint not available

Important Reminders!

Point 1



An employment offer is not required to apply for Post-Completion OPT



Point 2

Can only work when you have your physical EAD Card in hand

Point 3



You are only allowed 90 days of unemployment during Post-Completion OPT



Point 4

Can only work during the dates listed on your EAD Card

Point 5



Post-Completion OPT should be 20 hours or more a week/ Full-Time



Point 6

Report changes to ISSS with 10 days

- Employment status
- US address
- Phone number
- Preferred email



QUESTIONS ABOUT Post-completion OPT?



OPT STEM Extension

OPT STEM EXTENSION KEY POINTS

ARE YOU STEM ELIGIBLE?

Check the CIP Code on
your I-20 for STEM degree

HOW TO APPLY?

The same way as you did for the
original OPT →
ISSS portal request & USCIS
online application

Don't forget to go through the
ISSS portal and get the new
I-20 with STEM recommended
first

WHEN CAN YOU APPLY?

You must apply **BEFORE** your
original OPT end date.

You can apply up to 90 days
before that end date.

HOW LONG IS OPT STEM EXTENSION?

24 months

How is OPT STEM Extension different from my original OPT?

E-Verified Employer

You must have an employer to apply for STEM and they must be E-Verified

Reporting every 6 months

You must report your STEM participation every 6 months through the ISSS portal

The Form I-983 Training Plan

This form is completed by you with your employer 3 times:

1. upon starting your job
2. 12-months later
3. upon finishing your job

Am I STEM OPT Eligible?

Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

Check your CIP Code:

DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List

<https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/stemList2023.pdf>

Department of Homeland Security U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement		I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status OMB NO. 1653-0038	
SEVIS ID: N00*****			
SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME YOUR FAMILY NAME PREFERRED NAME YOUR PREFERRED NAME COUNTRY OF BIRTH INDIA CITY OF BIRTH		GIVEN NAME YOUR FIRST NAME PASSPORT NAME COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP H EAR MBER	
FORM ISSUE REASON INITIAL ATTENDANCE		Class of Admission F-1 ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE	
SCHOOL INFORMATION			
SCHOOL NAME Utah State University Utah State University SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISOR NAME International Student Advisor			
AND APPROVAL DATE 165000 2003			
PROGRAM OF STUDY			
EDUCATION LEVEL MASTER'S PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Required START OF CLASSES 26 AUGUST 20**		MAJOR 1 PROGRAM NAME (CIP CODE) 01.1101 ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES Student is proficient PROGRAM START/END DATE 19 AUGUST 20** - 17 DECEMBER 20**	
MAJOR 2 None 00.0000 EARLIEST ADMISSION DATE 20 JULY 20**			
FINANCIALS			
ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR 12 MONTHS Tuition and Fees \$ 22,196 Living Expenses \$ 8,327 Expenses of Dependents (0) \$ Personal Expenses \$ 6,642 TOTAL \$ 37,165		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR 12 MONTHS Personal Funds \$ 0 Tuition waiver, assistantship, insuran \$ 28,513 Family Funding \$ 47,222 On-Campus Employment \$ TOTAL \$ 75,735	
REMARKS REMARKS I-20 REMARKS.			
SCHOOL ATTESTATION I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above was entered before I signed this form and is true and correct. I executed this form in the United States after review and evaluation in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcripts, or other records of courses taken and proof of financial responsibility, which were received at the school prior to the execution of this form. The school has determined that the above named student's qualifications meet all standards for admission to the school and the student will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form. X SIGNATURE OF: DSO, International Student Advisor DATE ISSUED 16 December 20** PLACE ISSUED Logan, UT			
STUDENT ATTESTATION I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and those of any extension of stay. I certify that all information provided on this form refers specifically to me and is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I seek to enter or remain in the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above. I also authorize the named school to release any information from my records needed by DHS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.3(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18. X SIGNATURE OF: STUDENT NAME DATE NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN SIGNATURE ADDRESS (city/state or province/country) DATE			



QUESTIONS ABOUT OPT STEM Extension?



Travel while on OPT

Traveling Outside the U.S. while on OPT

You will
need to
carry the
following:

- EAD Card
- Letter from employer
- Valid passport
- Valid U.S. visa
- Current I-20 with a travel signature
 - Travel signature within last 6 months

You must also be employed and returning to a job in the U.S.



More QUESTIONS?

Contact us:

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suzanne.mitri@usu.edu

Questions?

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