

CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT) IS A PERIOD OF WORK AUTHORIZATION COMMONLY KNOWN AS A CO-OP, PRACTICUM OR INTERNSHIP, WHETHER PAID OR UNPAID.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is designed to allow F-1 students to participate in training that is (1) related to their current major field of study and (2) be an integral part of the *established* academic curriculum.

If the work is not a required or an elective component (open to all students in the program) of a student's degree program, the student will need to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT).

GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS:

1. Student must have been in lawful status for one academic year, full-time enrollment. (Graduate student programs that require entering training before the completion of one year are waived from this requirement).
2. You must obtain the position (acceptance of position) before permission can be given.
3. Switching employers during CPT is not allowed.
4. CPT is always employer specific.
5. Full-time CPT is possible and is defined as more than twenty hours. Full-time CPT is allowed during the summer semester when not enrolled in classes for credit.
6. If you use more than one year of full-time CPT, you will forfeit all Optional Practical Training (OPT).
7. If part-time CPT is granted you must maintain full-time student status.

THE FOUR CPT CATEGORIES DEFINED BY INS:

1. Degree requirement. The degree and major field of study require the work experience. If there are optional major tracks, that have required field placements, then the position will qualify.
2. Regular Course Requirement. The work experience is part of the regular requirement for a class in which the student enrolls. Independent study classes do not qualify.
3. Established Academic Internship. The work is part of a placement made by the Co-Op Office as an established academic department requirement of one of their established programs OR internship class requirement. (*NOTE: This cannot be a job created just for one student. The idea is to allow F-1s access to opportunities available to all students.*)
4. Gathering Essential Data. The work is required in order to gather data for the thesis or dissertation research. (*NOTE: The intention is to allow students to engage in essential research to gather data. CPT in this category should not be used to gain general experience. The CPT should reflect only the amount of time necessary to gather the data for the research project.*)

STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN REQUESTING CPT:

1. Obtain an employment letter from the employer. The letter should be on letterhead and should state clearly the job title (e.g. intern, trainee), the job description, the location of the job (city, state), the exact beginning and ending dates, the number of hours per week, and salary agreement.
2. A letter from your academic department head verifying that the Curricular Practical Training is a required part of your degree program.
3. For internship or data collection, ISS staff will verify registration in correct class.
4. For co-op CPT, submit a memo from the Co-Op Office that you have completed the processes required in their office and a signed registration form.
5. Submit all of your I-20's (from every school attended as an F-1 student).
6. Submit a copy of your I-94 card (front & back)
7. Submit a copy of your valid passport.
8. Submit a current student transcript (available in the Record's Office).

Please submit all the above materials as a packet to the International Student Services Office.

QUICK CHECKLIST

- Immigration documents
- Letter from employer
- Letter from academic department head
- Academic transcript (student copy)
- Memo from Co-Op Office when participating in established co-op
- Proof of registration from Co-Op Office for co-op class or by graduate coordinator for internship class

The process takes several days to complete after submitting the entire packet of required documents, so *plan accordingly* (**same-day permission is not possible**).

Remember, you may not begin employment before you have been given written permission on your I-20 from the International Student Services Office. Documents will not be backdated and registration in an internship or a co-op class is required before the last date to add classes for a semester.