



Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for F-1 Students

Overview

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is defined as:

“employment which is an integral part of an established curriculum, including: ‘...internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum which is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school.’ 8CFR214.2(f)(10)(i).

CPT is available only *prior* to the completion of the student’s degree program and may not delay the completion of the academic program.

CPT is authorized for specific work with a specific employer to meet the criteria of a specific educational program. CPT is often recommended even for unpaid positions to ensure the student maintains status in an employment environment and to give the student the option to receive remuneration at any time.

Students generally pursue CPT in the following order:

1. Find a suitable position and receive an offer letter (see specifications below)
2. Submit the offer letter to one’s internship director (or advisor)
3. After approval, enroll in the internship course
4. Initiate the CPT process at least 2 weeks before the desired start date
(see below for application procedures)

Types of CPT

Required: When the academic program mandates practical work experience in the field of study to graduate, course credit is not required.

Non-required: When the work experience is not required of all graduates in the program, but will meet the requirements of a course directly related to your major. Course credit is required.

Eligibility

Students are eligible for CPT if they have completed at least one academic year in valid F-1 status (with the exception of graduate programs requiring immediate participation).

Students applying for the non-required CPT must enroll in the internship course in the semester for which they will apply.

Restrictions

CPT is generally authorized within the semester dates and limited to 20 hours per week during the Fall and Spring semesters (unless program requirements demand full time work). Summer internships can be authorized for full-time work. Students must also be enrolled in a full load of courses to maintain F-1 status. There is no limit to the number of months part-time CPT can be authorized.

Full-time CPT may be authorized during the annual summer break. However, authorization for 12 months or more of full time CPT renders the student ineligible for Optional Practical Training.

Application Procedures

Once you have discussed the course requirements with the internship or practicum director and secured a suitable employment offer, you may apply for CPT from the Office of International Students and Visiting Scholars following these steps:

1. Register for the course relating to the internship (for non-required CPT applications)
2. Distribute your offer letter to your faculty or internship advisor and Lucy Dawson.
3. Request your employer to complete the employer verification form (available at <https://www.acu.edu/community/offices/academic/oisvs/f-1-students/f-1-student-work-authorization.html>)
4. Complete the CPT Form (also available at the web page above)
5. Submit copies of your current passport and I-94
6. After you're notified, pick up your new I-20 with the CPT authorized. This is the only work authorization document for CPT.

Outcomes

Students approved for CPT will receive an I-20 notated with the CPT authorization and specific employer and location on page 3. **Employers can refer to The Handbook for Employers, USCIS publication M-274 revision 1/22/17, page 58 for information on employment authorization verification that is acceptable for the I-9 documentation.**

Students are required to report any changes in personal address to the OISVS within 10 days of moving. Please note that the CPT authorization is employer-specific, meaning that this authorization enables the student to work only for the employer specified in the application.