

Overview

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is defined as "alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum which is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school." CPT must be an integral part of an established curriculum" and "directly related to the student's major area of study."

CPT Categories

Degree Requirement:

Part of the student's program of study requires employment in the field of study to graduate such as required clinicals or internships.

Course Requirement / Thesis or Dissertation Research:

Employment is part of a regular course for which the student is registered. CPT may be authorized for students who enroll in a course that requires employment to earn a grade, or a course where students design their own research project based on the employment. Enrollment in the course must be concurrent with the employment. Authorization will be granted on a semester-only basis. However, if a student wishes to work for a period longer than the last day of the semester, he or she must enroll in the next available semester before authorization can be extended beyond the current term.

Employment that is necessary to collect data for dissertation or thesis.

CPT and Federal Immigration Regulations

F-1 students are responsible for complying with all immigration regulations, including employment regulations. Working without the proper authorization is a serious violation of nonimmigrant status in the U.S. If a student fails to comply, he or she may not be eligible for benefits normally granted to F-1 students and may jeopardize his or her stay in the U.S. Prior to accepting any employment in the US, students should consult with an Office of International Student Scholar Services DSO.

There is no limit to the amount of CPT a student is eligible for; however, if 12 months or more of full-time CPT are used, a student forfeits OPT eligibility. Accrual of part-time CPT does not affect eligibility for OPT. CPT is not available after a student completes a degree program.

CPT Eligibility Requirement

To be eligible for CPT a student must:

1. Be in a valid immigration status with full-time enrollment for at least two consecutive semesters prior to the requested start date CPT employment.
2. Secure a job offer that is an integral part of the curriculum.
3. Enroll in the appropriate course during CPT term
4. Maintain full-time student status during the CPT authorization period.

5. Obtain CPT authorization listed on I-20 BEFORE beginning employment; authorization cannot be postdated.

Process for Requesting CPT

To be considered for CPT authorization, students must complete the following steps:

1. Obtain an offer letter from the employer on the employer's letterhead that includes the following information.
 - a. Employer name and address
 - b. Position title
 - c. Brief description of job-related duties
 - d. Exact start and end dates of employment
 - e. Number of hours to be worked per week
 - i. part-time up to 20 hours per week
 - ii. fulltime 21-40 hours per week
2. Submit offer letter to academic advisor for approval.
3. Have academic advisor provide justification to the Office of International Affairs (through letter or email) detailing how the employment is directly related to the curriculum and falls under one of the two CPT categories listed above.

Upon CPT Approval

If the DSO determines that the student is eligible for the requested CPT, the SEVIS record will be updated with the CPT authorization and an updated I-20 with the CPT approval will be provided to the student.

CPT authorization is only valid for the approved employer during the approved timeframe and for the approved hours per week. CPT will be approved for either part-time or full-time (see above) and is not interchangeable. Any employment outside of the CPT authorization is a violation of the student's immigration status.