



Office of International Students & Scholars

Information on

F-1 Curricular Practical Training

Revised December 1, 2006

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is one of the two types of temporary employment available to students in legal F-1 status. It was established for the purpose of allowing students to gain some practical experience in their fields of study while pursuing the educational objective. CPT is defined in the Code of Federal Regulations 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” [8 CFR § 214.2(f)(10)(i)]. The regulations state that CPT must be an integral part of an established curriculum.

CPT is available to students who are in F-1 status and have been in legal and full-time status for at least one academic year. It requires a job offer from the prospective employer. In order to qualify for CPT, students must either:

- ❖ enroll in a course designating that employment is part of the established curriculum which **requires** an off-campus employment component to receive a grade;
- ❖ enroll in a course for which the course advisor or teacher determines that off-campus employment **is necessary** for satisfactory completion of the course; or
- ❖ enroll in dissertation research credits and have the academic advisor confirm that the employment **is a part of the research** necessary for completion of a thesis.

Employment may be:

- full-time (more than 20 hours per week) during the semester breaks or holidays,
- part-time (20 or fewer hours per week) during the academic terms, or
- full-time under special circumstances during the academic terms.

A student may apply for as many periods of CPT as are necessary during the course of study. There is no specified time limit for CPT. After spending a total of 12 months in full-time employment on CPT a student will not be eligible to apply for the one-year period of Optional Practical Training (OPT). Part-time employment on CPT, however, does not affect OPT eligibility.

To apply for CPT, call 713-348-6095 to schedule an appointment to see an OISS advisor.

Application Check List:

- Obtain a letter of job offer from the employing company, written on company letterhead indicating:
 - a brief statement of the job assignment,
 - the beginning and ending dates of employment,
 - the number of working hours per week, and
 - the location of employment (street address, city, state, and zip code);
- Request a letter from the professor of a course requiring off-campus work experience, or from the academic advisor. The letter should describe the need for off-campus employment and how it is an integral part of the academic studies;
- Complete the top half portion of the attached Form I-538 and sign it.

CPT must be authorized through SEVIS by the international student advisor in the OISS **before** a student can begin employment. The authorization is noted on page 3 of the student’s I-20.