



CPT

Curricular Practical Training Packet

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Curricular Practical Training Rules and Regulations

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) allows F-1 international students to work while you are in school at UCCS. This program is designed to give students the opportunity to gain work experience related to your field of study. Through this program students can obtain job offers and once you are approved by (**your department**) and an acting DSO, you can work legally for the duration of their academic studies.

RULES TO REMEMBER:

- A student applying for CPT **MUST** have prior approval from the above mentioned departments **BEFORE** they begin working. Failure to obtain approval before working can result in termination of an I-20.
- To obtain approval and an I-20 with employment information an official letter of employment must be provided to the DSO for review. This letter must include:
 - A job description of your work duties
 - Your potential start date of employment
 - Acknowledgement that you will only be working 20 hours per week while you are attending classes.
 - It must be on official company letterhead and signed by the employer offering you employment.
- Employment on CPT cannot exceed 20 hours per week while attending classes. During the break and when you're not attending class students are allowed to work full-time. You can only work full-time while you are not taking classes.
 - Breaks include: summer break, holiday breaks and between school terms.
- International students must be enrolled full-time during the fall and spring semester to maintain status unless there are special circumstances that have been approved **PRIOR** to the start of the semester by the DSO.
- If you change employers you must notify the DSO of the new employer **PRIOR** to starting the new job. You will also need to provide the "Offer of Employment" letter from the new employer.
- CPT will only be approved for one year at a time. At the end of the year you must obtain approval again to work another year.
- You must take the letter of employment, your I-20 with CPT information and your verification of school attendance to apply for your social security card.
 - Please see the link on obtaining a social security card for more information.
 - <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10181.html>
- For CPT to be considered for approval it must be related to your field of study. Some types of employment that you can apply for: alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, off-campus employment or any other type of

required internship or practicum that is offered by sponsoring employers through a cooperative agreement with the school.

- If the employment is off-campus, a letter offering employment must still be provided and it must be related to your field of study.
- **UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT: (2.5 GPA)** Undergraduate students are not eligible to apply for CPT until one full-time academic year has been completed.
- **GRADUATE STUDENT: (3.0 GPA)** Graduate students are eligible to apply for CPT once you have started attending classes. This applies to work that is an integral part of your program, if it is not required for your program you must wait one year to apply for CPT.

STEPS TO APPLYING FOR CPT:

Step 1- Obtain the CPT eligibility packet from the office of International Student Scholar Services.

Step 2- To participate in an internship you must meet UCCS CPT (internship) and/or the Cooperative Education guidelines below:

- Students must have completed a least one academic year of enrollment as an F-1 student at UCCS. (Exceptions are made for Graduate students).
- Students must be full-time and in status. While employed the student must be attending full-time for every semester except the approved yearly semester break.
- The student must have at least a minimum of a 2.5 GPA for undergraduate students and 3.0 GPA for graduate students to apply.

Step 3- If you accept a paid or non-paid internship for academic credit: You must indicate whether or not you are going to be paid for your internship. Your employer will issue you a “Contract for Credit” that you will complete with your employer and faculty advisor.

If you accept a paid employment or internship on your own: You will need to provide an “Offer of Employment” letter for approval prior to working. The letter needs to contain: offer of start date, description of your job duties and acknowledgment you will only work 20 hours per week during school. You also need your dean to approve the employment prior to start to indicate that the job is related to your field of study. If it approved by your department dean you can take the letter and written approval to the DSO for final approval and issuance of I-20.

If you accept a paid internship without academic credit: You will need to provide an “Offer of Employment” letter to ISS with the necessary information for approval prior to your start date of employment.

Step 4- Once you have obtain the required information in step 3 contact the ISS office to make an appointment with an advisor to go over your application for approval.

Things to bring to your appointment:

-Your current I-20

-The “Contract for credit” if you are applying for an internship for credit, or “Offer of Employment” letter with ALL of the required information on it.

-Written approval from your dean that the internship or employment is related to your studies.

If your employment is approved the DSO will issue you a new I-20 with your CPT information on the 3rd page. This is an important document for you to take to apply for a social security card.

Please allow a minimum of one week for processing.

Step 5- ISS WILL CONTACT YOU when your CPT has been authorized by SEVIS and a new I-20 is ready to be issued. You will need to pick up your I-20 and sign the original to keep with you. This will become your current I-20. Once this I-20 has been issued your former I-20 will not be valid. **It is important to save all of your I-20s.**

Step 6- Apply for a social security card. See the above link so that you know what to take with you.

-Your new I-20 with your CPT approval listed on the third page

-Your “Offer letter of Employment”

-Verification of enrollment from UCCS

-A letter from ISS acknowledging the office knows you are applying for a Social Security card.

NOTE: Employer and/or faculty responsibilities:

Documentation required: a “Confirmation Letter” from the faculty/advisor describing the relevance of CPT and an “Employment Offer” letter from the employer describing the employment including the following information:

“Offer of Employment” letter

-Address of employer

-Description of your job duties

-Offered start date of employment

-Acknowledgement that you will be working 20 hours per week while enrolled in school

-Your direct supervisor's contact information

This letter **MUST** be on company letterhead and signed by the employer offering you employment.

If you change jobs a new letter **MUST** be obtained **PRIOR** to starting new employment.

NOTE: STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Providing letter of employment and advisor/dean's written approval of employment

Completed form applying for CPT that can be obtained by downloading it here:

Or from the ISS office.

NOTE: DSO RESPONSIBILITIES:

Provide an updated I-20 if CPT is approved. CPT is approved one year at a time and when the year expires a new I-20 will be issued to you.

-There is no SEVIS fee associated with CPT.

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) About CPT

Q: Will my CPT time affect my eligibility to apply for OPT (Optional Practical Training) after graduation?

A: Full-time CPT may total less than one year (365 days) without affecting your OPT. If full-time CPT is used for over one year you will be ineligible for OPT after graduation. Part-time CPT does **NOT** affect eligibility to apply for OPT.

Q: When can I pick up my CPT authorization (on form I-20) and when can I start working?

A: You can pick up your I-20 authorization **AFTER** ISS contacts you to let you know it is ready. Please allow up to one week before contacting ISS to check the status of your CPT application. You can submit your application any time but an appointment is preferred as someone in the office may not be available to meet with you without an

appointment. You **MUST** submit your application **PRIOR** to working. If you start working prior to authorization you will be working **ILLEGALLY** and will be subject to I-20 **TERMINATION**.

Q: If I am doing a CPT extension or a continuing CPT, do I need to be reauthorized?

A: Yes. Any time you want to make a change to your CPT “program,” it needs to be reauthorized. This means that you must stop by the ISS office and notify us, and we will make the change in our database, and you will receive a new I-20.

Q: How much can I work on CPT?

A: CPT may either be full-time or part-time. Part-time CPT is limited to 20 hours per week while attending classes. Full-time CPT can only be used while on break. Full-time students are not eligible for full-time employment while attending classes.

Q: Do I have to be registered?

YES. CPT is given so that students may meet an academic objective associated with a specific part of your curriculum. It can be credit bearing and count towards the completion of your degree. It can also be a paid position off-campus that does not count towards credits but is related to your major. You can also apply for non-credit internships. All of these must be pre-approved before working.

Q: Can I work on campus while doing CPT? Can I keep my teaching or research assistantship?

A: This is an unlikely situation because **ALL** of the employment positions you are approved for cannot exceed 20 hours per week **TOTAL**. This means that no matter how many jobs you have you cannot work over 20 hours total, not 20 hours per week at each job. Please discuss this matter with your international student advisor. This is not recommended.

Q: Can I get CPT authorization first before getting a job offer?

A: **NO**. You **MUST** have an official job offer first before getting authorization for CPT. You must complete all of the necessary steps for approval.

Q: What is the difference between CPT and OPT?

A: CPT: Provides employment or training opportunities for students while they work towards their degree. It must be an integral part of their program, authorized by ISS

and is only approved for one year at a time. CPT ends at the end of your program or if you transfer schools.

OPT: Provides employment opportunities for students after they complete their program. You can only apply for this up to 90 days before your graduation date. You **MUST** apply **BEFORE** you graduate or you are not eligible for OPT. Once you submit your application for OPT you cannot change the start date so it is important to consider your start date carefully.

You can apply for this while you are job seeking and can start OPT up to 60 days after graduation. You are obligated to update any employment information with the DSO. You are eligible for up to 12 months of OPT plus the 2 month grace period.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood all of the information in this form.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

ISS Official: _____ Date: _____

COMMENTS: