



Office of Global Engagement

Curricular Practical Training

What is Curricular Practical Training (CPT)?

Curricular Practical Training is work experience (internship) tied to academics for which a student is paid. The experience must be in the student's major field of study. Such experience must be an integral part of the established curriculum, listed in the course catalogue, documented and supervised by college faculty. **A course offered for the primary purpose of facilitating employment authorization does not qualify for curricular practical training.**

Am I eligible for CPT?

1. Student must have been in lawful F-1 status for at least one academic school year (2 semesters) and must currently be in status. Graduate students in programs that require immediate participation in CPT may begin their training before they have been here one academic year. Students enrolled in English language training programs are eligible for CPT.
2. Students must register for internship credit
 - a. CPT or internship may be required or it may be elective. The training program must be listed in the university course catalog with the assigned number of credits and name of the faculty members teaching the course clearly indicated. There should also be a description of the course with the course objectives clearly defined. Students enrolled in such a course may work out the details of their specific projects within the established course objectives under the supervision of the instructor.
 - b. The internship experience must be approved by the overseeing CPT faculty of the student's department at USU for work experience related to major field of study.
 - c. If more time is needed to complete internship than is originally stated on the I-20, student must re-apply for an extension of program and of curricular practical training by completing again the original process **BEFORE AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES.**

How do I apply? Complete the Checklist below!

All steps must be completed before CPT can be granted—have the checklist done before making and keeping your CPT appointment with an International Students and Scholars (ISS) immigration advisor.

Complete the attached form (at the back of this information packet) signed by the internship overseeing staff/faculty member in the department and Academic Advisor if applicable (See p. 3 for further important Graduate guideline).

Bring to the ISS office your I-20, passport, unofficial transcript, current registration and Banner account summary (should show a zero balance).

Obtain original offer letter from prospective employer *stating that employment will be an internship, or Curricular Practical Training*. Must include begin and end date of employment (see example). Please note you must submit this original offer letter on company letterhead.

Register, including internship credit (should show in Banner when you come to ISS for apt.)

If you are a PhD student or Master's plan A student, bring a copy of your program of study.

If you are a plan A or B Masters or PhD, also include a letter from your supervising professor explaining how the employment contributes to your studies.

Once you have gathered/done all above, submit the proofs to the ISS at your CPT appointment.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

What if I need to extend my CPT?

You must do the same procedure as when you first applied. Your total CPT employment should not exceed 11.5 months so that you in no way jeopardize your chance to receive OPT.

Can I apply for CPT after my defense or completion of coursework? NO! Once all coursework is completed and you are in the semester you are ready to graduate, you will need to apply for OPT.

Part-time vs. Full-time Curricular Practical Training

Part-time Training:

Employment of less than 20 hours per week while also enrolled full-time for classes is considered “part-time” CPT. The employment authorization written on the back of *Form I-20* must specify permission to engage in “part-time” training.

Full-time Training:

Employment of more than 20 hours per week is considered “full-time” CPT. The employment authorization on *Form I-20* must specify permission to engage in “full-time” training. You must register full-time regardless if your CPT is part-time or full-time.

Curricular Practical Training and eligibility for Optional Practical Training

If students participate in 12 months or more of “full-time” CPT, they lose eligibility for Optional Practical Training (OPT) after completion of studies. Participation in “part-time” training programs or less than 12 months does not affect eligibility for OPT.

Practical Training for Consecutive Semesters

Some internships are granted for two or more consecutive semesters. In such case, the student must sign up for credits each semester the student is on CPT.

Tax Information/Withholding/Social Security

On Campus: According to the Internal Revenue Service, earnings of foreign employees working in the United State are subject to certain withholding taxes. The taxes that are withheld depend on the type of visa classification of the employee and tax treaty agreements between the countries. Non-resident alien employees may not claim “exempt” status on the W-4 form. All international students and scholars employed by Utah State University must complete the appropriate forms in the Payroll Office at the time of employment. Appointments may be made to complete these forms by calling 435- 797-1059 or you visiting the Payroll Office in Old Main, Room 26. Ask for who deals with taxes there.

Off-campus: Tax treaties and taxes withheld for off campus employment must be discussed with and determined by the employer.

Caution: It is your responsibility to comply with all immigration regulations, which apply to F-1 students. If you drop your internship credits while on CPT, you have fallen out of status and are not eligible to either continue on CPT or, equally important, to legitimately apply for OPT.

Graduate Students on Curricular Practical Training

To eliminate any confusion about the use of CPT, the School of Graduate Studies will implement this policy as it pertains to CPT.

- 1) The program of study may not be changed two months prior to defense date nor can it be changed after the defense. If adding internship credits to the program of study is required for the awarding of a degree it must be conducted two months prior to the defense date and never after the defense.
- 2) The CPT will be based upon learning objectives mutually agreed upon by the student, major professor, employer and the ISS office.
- 3) The use of CPT will be carefully monitored by the major professor and the ISS to make sure that curricular practical training is part of an integral part of an established curriculum.
- 4) The use of CPT may include evaluations by the employer.
- 5) A student who engages in a CPT may provide feedback about the experience usually in a short formal paper.



Office of Global Engagement Curricular Practical Training Form

Mr/Mrs/Miss _ (Students Name) is a student in the department of _
(Department Name) who is participating in internship training program beginning on _ / _ / _ and ending on _ / _ / _ . Such internships may only be authorized for one semester at a time.

This work experience is an integral part of the student's course of study. As defined in the internship agreement, the student will be registered for # _ of CPT credits and # _ of academic credits.

This internship will be:

- a. Part time (working less than 20 hours per week)
- b. _ Full time (working more than 20 hours per week)

This internship is:

- a. Required
- b. _ Elective

Name of Employer: _

Employer Address/phone number: _

Brief Description of Job: _____

I agree that this work experience is an integral part of the established curriculum, in the student's course of study. The above named student will register for cooperative education or internship credit will be supervised during the internship by this department. Furthermore, I understand that this course is offered for meeting academic objectives and not for the primary purpose of facilitating employment authorization.

(Internship Overseeing Department Faculty)

(Academic Advisor Signature--Graduate Only)

**Sample Employer Letter (You can give this to your employer) for
F-1 “Curricular Practical Training”**

Company Letterhead Stationary

Date

EMPLOYER ADDRESS

Dear **STUDENT NAME**,

This is to confirm that **COMPANY NAME** is offering you employment as a **JOB TITLE** for **NUMBER** of months beginning **DATE**. The employment ending date will be **DATE**. This employment will serve as Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and will supplement your degree in **MAJOR**. It is our understanding that you will be receiving academic credit for this experience and that it is an integral part of your academic program. Pursuant to these terms, this company agrees to provide the necessary information and documentation to Utah State University, in order to help evaluate your experience regarding your program of study.

The goals and objectives of your training with us will be **DESCRIPTION OF JOB DUTIES**. Specifically, you will be involved in **PRIMARY JOB DUTIES**.

The location of your experience will be **CURRENT ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER**.

We recognize that under federal law your employment is limited to 20 hours per week during an academic semester if participating in part-time CPT. However, during official Utah State University vacation periods or holidays, you may increase your work hours with the permission of your supervisor.

We recognize that if you are participating in full-time CPT, your employment must exceed 20 hours per week during an academic semester.

On behalf of the company, I welcome you to **NAME OF COMPANY**.

Sincerely,

NAME
TITLE

*cc: Utah State University
Office of Global Engagement*