

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Instructions & Authorization Request Form for Students in F-1 Status



Definition of Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

The U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services - USCIS defines "Curricular Practical Training (CPT)" as employment which is an integral or important part of your curriculum, including:

...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.

According to the USCIS, the word "required" does not always limit this type of practical training only to work experiences which are required parts of the curriculum. This clarification is discussed below in more detail.

Job Eligibility Requirements

To be considered Curricular Practical Training (CPT), the work must be directly related to your major field of study and must be at your level of study (i.e. the position should require a masters or doctoral candidate). If you have a training opportunity which involves employment, check with the Assistant Director of International Services and/or department Program Advisor to determine if it qualifies as Curricular Practical Training (CPT).

Student Eligibility Requirements

- **Employment Which Is a Required Part of Your Degree Program** (Teacher Education program only). Training which is required by your degree program always meets the requirements for Curricular Practical Training (CPT), regardless of whether or not you receive academic credit for your work. As long as you are maintaining lawful F-1 status, you may apply for permission to engage in Curricular Practical Training (CPT) whenever your program requires your participation, even if it is immediately upon beginning your studies.
- **Employment Which Is Not a Required Part of Your Degree Program.** Training which is not required by your degree program may meet the requirements for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) if you receive academic credit for the employment experience and if it is an integral part of your studies. In order to be eligible to apply for CPT permission, you must (1) be in lawful F-1 status and (2) have been a full-time student for at least nine (9) months. **You must earn units for your involvement** (only exception is for students in doctoral studies/continuous registration).

Part-Time vs. Full-Time Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

- **Part-Time Training.** While completing coursework, you may only be authorized for part-time employment (less than 20 hours per week). This time is inclusive of any on-campus employment you may have. There is no limitation upon the length of time you may participate in part-time CPT but you must be simultaneously enrolled in order to maintain lawful F-1 status. The authorization will be able granted on a **semester by semester** basis.
 - **Exception:** If you are part-time in your last semester of coursework study at CGU, you may be authorized for full-time CPT (please see below)
- **Full-Time Training.** While part-time in your final semester of coursework, during school breaks (i.e. summer semester or spring break), or while registered for continuous registration/doctoral studies, you may be authorized for full-time CPT (20+ hours per week). There is no limitation upon the length of time you may participate in full-time CPT but a cumulative total of twelve (12) months or more of full-time CPT will make you ineligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT).

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Eligibility for Optional Practical Training

Participation in part-time training programs does not affect your eligibility for Optional Practical Training (OPT). If you use a cumulative total of twelve (12) months or more of "full-time" CPT, you will lose eligibility to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT).

Application and Authorization Procedures

- Print the Curricular Practical Training (CPT) form attached in this packet (you can also obtain this form from the international staff).
- Fill out the top part of the form ONLY. Your academic advisor is responsible for filling out the bottom portion of the form.
- Bring the completed form, along with your work contract/job offer letter (if available) to the international staff at CGU no later than 3 business days before your employment begins.
 - **DO NOT WORK WITHOUT PROPER AUTHORIZATION.** Working without CPT authorization is illegal, and is grounds for automatic termination from the program. Please allow up to 3 business to obtain your authorization.
- You will be emailed when your new I-20 listing your CPT authorization is ready (be sure you can receive your CGU mail).
- Be careful not to continue employment beyond the date authorized on your I-20 (3rd page). Submit extension requests (a new CPT form) in a timely fashion.

Physical Presence Requirements

As a school, we must take care to not make it seem as if CPT is being authorized without regard to the rules regulating a student's primary purpose and physical presence requirements. This becomes "tricky" when independent studies for CPT are used or in cases where the requested employment necessitates a move away from CGU. A few common scenarios and their repercussions are laid out for you here:

Academic Scenario	CPT Implications	Notes
1 physical CGU course plus 1 independent study	Part-time CPT allowed	Physical presence requirement justifiably satisfied
2 independent study courses	No CPT	This may appear as if students are being allowed to technically bypass the physical presence requirement for the sole purpose of employment (strictly forbidden)
1 physical CGU course plus one concurrent enrolment course at another institution (up to 4 units taken at another institution can count towards CGU 8-unit full-time requirement with prior approval from the department and international staff)	Part-time CPT allowed	Physical presence requirement justifiably satisfied
1 independent study course plus one concurrent enrolment course at another institution	No CPT	This may appear as if students are being allowed to technically bypass the physical presence requirement for the sole purpose of employment (strictly forbidden)

Any other scenario will be handled on a case-by-case basis by international staff. In addition, it should be noted that exceptions to academic policy (i.e. taking required courses at another institution) must be **first** approved by the Director or Program Coordinator of that program.

A Note of Caution

While USCIS regulations provide a variety of opportunities for you to be employed during your time in F-1 status, working improperly or without authorization is a serious violation of your status and is grounds for automatic termination of your immigration record. The international staff can advise and counsel you regarding your responsibilities, but it is your responsibility to comply with all USCIS F-1 regulations. If you fail to comply with your responsibilities, you may be dismissed from the program and disadvantage yourself in the future (i.e. H1B applications).

Employment Eligibility Verification

When you begin work, you and your employer must complete a form entitled "Employment Eligibility Verification" (Form I-9), which the employer retains. The I-9 must be updated each time you receive a renewal of your work permission.

Social Security and Other Taxes

In general, F-1 students who have been in the U. S. less than five years are exempt from Social Security (F.I.C.A.) taxes. Your earnings are subject to applicable federal, state and local taxes. Students must file a tax return on or before April 15th of each year, which will determine if any of the withheld taxes can be refunded. If you have questions regarding taxes, please contact International Place, as they have tax advisors come to campus to assist students with their taxes.

Helpful Hints/Common Errors When Completing CPT Authorization Request Forms

Below are the common areas on the CPT Request Form where mistakes are made. Please read all sections of this handout carefully to ensure that your CPT is granted. Incomplete forms will be returned to you.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED TRAINING

Address of the Company – include the complete street address, including postal zip code.

NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK

Part time is any employment at 20 hours a week or less. You must include in this time any on-campus positions or any other CPT position you may have. If the total time between all employment is more than 20 hours a week your CPT must be entered as full-time; remember, if you use one year of full-time CPT you will become ineligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT).

BEGINNING AND ENDING DATE:

Please make sure to include an appropriate start and end date. **DO NOT BEGIN TO WORK WITHOUT BEING PROPERLY AUTHORIZED FIRST.**

- If you are currently enrolled in courses (working on your degree requirements), CPT can be granted on a **semester by semester basis ONLY**
- Doctoral Studies/Continuous Registration students – you may be authorized for CPT up to one year at a time
- CPT can only be authorized until the end of your I-20 – take care not to request a start date that goes beyond your I-20 end date (section 5 on the I-20).

ACADEMIC ADVISOR'S ENDORSEMENT:

This section should be **completely filled out** by your academic advisor – DO NOT COMPLETE THIS SECTION YOURSELF.

Student Progress Verification

Your academic advisor must be able to verify both statements before CPT can be authorized. Students on academic probation cannot be authorized for CPT. In addition, the CPT cannot interfere with your ability to complete your coursework (meaning that your education must **always** remain your primary priority – you are required by law to make continuous satisfactory academic progress towards completion of your degree).

Unit Enrollment Information

Please read the information below **CAREFULLY**.

CPT requests will fall into 2 categories:

1. CPT that is required for graduation – currently, only Teacher Education students.
2. CPT that is not required for graduation – all other students.

Students currently earning units (working on course work) who do not fall into category 1 **must earn units for CPT involvement**. There are no exceptions. To do this you have 2 options:

1. You may build this CPT into a current class *if your employment closely aligns with the curriculum of one of your current courses* (i.e. if you are taking an Ethics in Business course and will be conducting research for a company whose focus is on ethical conduct of business, this would be considered to be related. You could write a paper on your findings at the end of the semester, earn a grade for this paper, and in this way “build” the CPT into your current course).
 - a. You will need to speak with your academic advisor to see if this is appropriate and can be done in your case. If this is the case, have them indicate the number of units and **course number** for which you will be incorporating the CPT and ask them to sign the form where it says “under the supervision of _____”.
 - b. The CPT will not be authorized until you register for the course you have specified. **Remember, you must be authorized for CPT before you begin employment.**
2. You may register for *at least* one unit of Independent Study (again, all employment must specifically relate to your major and be at your level of study).
 - a. Ask your academic advisor to indicate the number of independent study units you will earn and sign the form where it says “under the supervision of _____”. They will need to check the “internship/field study” box.
 - b. The CPT will not be authorized until you register for the units specified. **Remember, you must be authorized for CPT before you begin employment.**
3. Doctoral Studies/Continuous Registration Students – ask your academic advisor to indicate that you will earn “0 units of doctoral study under the supervision of your academic advisor's signature.” **Your CPT involvement must directly further your dissertation/thesis progress for it to be authorized.**

SUMMER SEMESTER EXCEPTIONS

In the summer semester **only** your CPT work may be applied towards the next Fall term. In other words, you may complete an internship in the summer and earn the units in the Fall by building it into a course you will be taking in the Fall semester. To do this, you must be registered for the Fall course at the time the CPT request is received. This practice will only apply to students building the CPT into a course for the Fall. If you will be enrolling in internship units to complete your CPT, this is not an option – you **must** take your internship units during the summer (at the time the internship is being completed). This also only applies to people who will not graduate in the summer term (if you will be completing your program in the summer, your CPT units must be registered in the summer).

STUDENT FOLLOW UP

You are required to submit a copy of your work contract or job offer letter, preferably *at the time of your CPT request*. If you are unable to provide this at the time of your request, please ensure that you submit a copy as soon as it becomes available.

Curricular Practical Training Authorization Request Form



To the student: to receive employment authorization return this completed form to the international staff, along with a job contract/offer letter if possible. Please allow 1-3 business days for processing. You will be notified by email when your CPT I-20 is ready. You must have the authorization in-hand to begin employment. **Please do not work without proper authorization.** Please review the CPT regulations and instructions **prior to submitting this request** to determine eligibility.

Guidance for the Academic Advisor:

Definitions & Types of CPT: The U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services – USCIS defines "Curricular Practical Training" as employment which is an integral or important part of a student's curriculum. There are two categories of Curricular Practical Training. The first is training which is a required part of the curriculum (e.g. teaching component of teacher education program) and can be done at any time during a student's enrollment. The second category is training which is not a degree requirement but for which a student receives academic credit (optional Curricular Practical Training). Examples would be PP 396 (Field Work/Internship) and MGT 395 (Field Study in Management).

Requirements/Guidelines: A student must be in valid F-1 status for one academic year (9 months) before engaging in optional Curricular Practical Training. **Students in this category must earn units for their involvement in CPT** (only exception is for those in doctoral studies/continuous registration) and the CPT cannot affect their ability to complete their program on time. Students currently completing coursework can only be authorized for one semester of CPT at a time. Doctoral studies students may request CPT authorization for up to one year. Students on academic probation cannot be authorized for CPT as they must be making satisfactory academic progress at all times.

Student Name: _____ Department: _____

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED TRAINING (to be completed by the student)

Name of Company: _____

Address of Company (including zip code): _____

Job title: _____

NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK

___ Part-time (20 hours per week or less)

___ Full-time (more than 20 hours per week) (May only be full-time if the student is on Doc Study, during winter or summer break, or if the student is attending part time in his/her last semester. If it's the student's last semester, please initial here _____)

BEGINNING DATE: _____ ENDING DATE: _____
(mm/dd/yy) (mm/dd/yy)

ACADEMIC ADVISOR'S ENDORSEMENT (to be completed by the academic advisor; please see above for CPT requirements and guidelines)

I have reviewed the above named student's offer of employment and have determined that it meets the guidelines for Curricular Practical Training as follows:

Student Progress Verification

- The student is currently making good academic progress and is not on academic probation.
- The requested CPT will in no way affect the student's ability to complete his/her course of study as intended.

Unit Enrollment Information

The proposed employment fulfills the following degree requirement (Teacher Education only): _____

The proposed employment is not a degree requirement. Student will register for

___ units of _____ under the supervision of _____
Department & Course Number (e.g. Mgt 395) Professor/Academic Advisor's name

This course is is not a field study/internship course.

Advisor's Name (please print) Signature Date