



INTERNATIONAL CENTER

Curricular Practical Training (CPT): Internship/Practicum and Co-op Information for F-1 Students

What is Curricular Practical Training?

The Department of Homeland Security authorizes practical work experience under certain circumstances for international students. Curricular Practical Training (CPT) allows for training that is *required* for a degree program or *optional but integral* to a degree program. Activities that are “recommended” are not eligible for CPT approval, nor are DIS courses. UNF offers two basic options for CPT: internship/practicum or Co-op, which may be paid or unpaid.

Who is eligible for CPT?

International students must meet two criteria in order to participate in CPT:

1. **SEVIS eligibility:** Students must have been enrolled full-time for a minimum of one academic year. Graduate students who are required to begin CPT in their first year of study are exempted from the one academic year requirement.
2. **Academic eligibility:** A student’s degree program must include a CPT experience. Students must register for an internship/practicum or Co-op course (typically consisting of one to three credit hours) and pay the appropriate tuition fees. Students should consult the course catalog entry for their program of study and meet with their Academic Advisor to determine if their degree program allows for CPT. Students who wish to undertake training that does not fulfill a degree requirement but is directly related to the major field of study should consult with an International Student Advisor about Optional Practical Training (OPT).

How many hours a week can I work during CPT? For how long can I work?

Students may train part-time or full-time. USCIS defines part-time as 20 hours or less per week. Full-time is defined as over 20 hours per week. While enrolled in a full course of study, a student may only pursue CPT part-time. During summer break, a student may pursue CPT full-time. Because CPT is based on a course, it cannot be authorized beyond the start and end dates of the academic term. Students may NOT begin work before the authorized start date and must end work before the authorized end date.

Please note: Students who have completed a total of 12 months of full-time CPT are ineligible for OPT. Part-time CPT does not affect eligibility for OPT.

Do I need permission to begin CPT?

Yes. Your internship/practicum/Co-op Advisor or your Academic Advisor must certify that your degree program allows for CPT, that the proposed training experience is appropriate, and that it is relevant to your course of study. Additionally, an International Student Advisor must update your I-20, which authorizes your employment in SEVIS. *You may NOT begin employment until an International Student Advisor updates your I-20 and you have it in hand.*

Where can I work using my CPT?

Employment is only allowed at the specific site listed on the I-20. Any off-campus employment without prior authorization is a serious violation of F-1 status.

How and when do I apply for CPT?

Students must make an appointment with an International Student Advisor before classes begin for any semester in which they wish to participate in CPT. Several weeks in advance is suggested. However, students should begin the process of arranging for such a work experience as soon as they know they are eligible for CPT. Students must bring the completed *Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Advisor Endorsement Form* (attached) to their appointment.

