Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Office of International Services
8CFR214.2(f) (10)(i)

“…an integral part of an established curriculum. [CPT] is defined to be alternative work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum that is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school. … Students who have received one year or more of full time [CPT] are ineligible for post-completion academic training. A student may begin [CPT] only after receiving …. the DSO endorsement.”
What is CPT?

An off-campus employment option for F-1 students where the employment is a part of the program of study.
It is training that is:

- academic in nature;
- directly related to the field of study;
- part of a degree program; and
- appropriate for the education level.

So it’s just a job?
CPT authorization is required for any training experience or internship paid or unpaid that fits the US Department of Labor’s definition of employment.
Given the difficulty and ambiguity of the [US] DOL six-factor test, the safest rule for international students should be that, if a student is providing a beneficial service to an employer, whether paid or unpaid, the student should obtain proper authorization to work.

- National Association of Colleges and Employers, December 2015; Legal Issues: International Students and Unpaid Internships
What is the purpose?

To provide practical experience that compliments classroom learning.
Who is Eligible for CPT?

F-1 student in a degree program with a valid passport & active I-20 who has been enrolled full-time for at least one academic year (30 weeks) in a degree seeking program.
More Eligibility Details

- Time spent in English Language or non-degree does not count.
- The two semesters must total 30 weeks. Therefore, summer semester does not count.
Other Details about CPT

- The training should occur between the regular start & end dates of the semester.
- It is limited to the time required by the program of study as defined by the curriculum design.
- The training may be full or part time.
If CPT is full time, you may enroll part time for additional classes in the Fall or Spring.

If your CPT is part time, you must enroll in a full course of study in the Fall or Spring.
Please Note!

Students who use a year or more of full time CPT are not eligible for OPT (Optional Practical Training)
CPT at USF
Four types that are part of the established curriculum.
The practical training/work experience is a REQUIREMENT for all students to obtain the degree as stated in the official university catalog.
CPT Type 1

Must follow specifics of degree requirement.

If a course is required, you must be registered for the course during the CPT authorization.

Examples-

- supervised field work,
- clinical practicum,
- internship
CPT Type 1

EXAMPLE

USFSM Hospitality Management

*From 2015-2016 Catalog*

- Students must complete a total of 1000 hours of industry experience.
  - 650 hours prior to taking HFT 4945
  - 300 hours while enrolled in HFT 4945
CPT Type 2

- REQUIRED as part of an elective course as listed in the official course description.

- The course was specifically designed to award academic credit for employment experience.
CPT Type 2

Examples include

- Marketing Practicum
- Engineering Internship Course
- Field Experience in Public Health

Independent study & directed research may NOT be used for this type of CPT.
The practical training/work experience is ESSENTIAL for thesis (Masters) or dissertation (Doctoral).
CPT Type 3

After completion of all coursework

Must be enrolled in thesis (6971) or dissertation hours (7980) during CPT.

Experience must be cited in thesis or dissertation.
CPT Type 4

Experience facilitated by USF Career Services
CPT Type 4

- Student must be approved for Cooperative Education by USF Career Services.

- All rules established by USF Career Services must be followed.

- See their website for eligibility and application.
What if experience doesn’t fit?

You might consider using some of your OPT before graduating.
Using OPT instead

Most students save their OPT for after graduation so they can have 12 full months.

Can be used while enrolled, after graduation, or combination of the two

- Can be used PART time Fall/Spring OR
- FULL time in Summer.

You must apply to USCIS and pay a fee ($380) for each period of OPT.
CPT vs OPT

CPT
- Part of the curriculum
- Occurs while enrolled in program.
- Approved by DSO by updating I-20.
- No application fee.
- Work authorization is on the I-20.

OPT
- Limited to 12 months of full time (unless STEM)
- Application fee - $380
- Approved by USCIS (takes 2-4 months).
- Work authorization is an EAD card.
What’s NEXT?
CPT E-Form

Prior to completion of E-Form you should:

- Have Course Registration (when applicable)

You will be required to upload the following when completing the E-Form:

- Proof of fit (see next 4 slides for examples)
- Letter from employer on letterhead with:
  - employer’s full name
  - Location/Address of employment
  - description of CPT employment
  - start & end dates of employment
  - number of hours per week you will be employed
  - name of supervisor who will monitor your CPT
Proof it Fits the Type

CPT Type 1 – required to graduate

Official catalog page listing the mandatory requirement for the internship/work experience for all students in the program.

Enrollment in course if required
Proof it Fits the Type

- CPT Type 2 – part of elective course
- Copy of official course listing from USF schedule of courses or dept website with description of work requirement
- Proof of enrollment in course
Proof it Fits the Type

- CPT Type 3 – thesis or dissertation
  - Department verification on form.
  - Proof of enrollment in thesis/dissertation hours for the semester in which you will engage in Practical Training.
Proof it Fits the Type

- CPT Type 4 – USF Career Services
- Career Services approval
How do I apply?

- Complete CPT E-Form through iStart. Once approved by your academic advisor, your CPT E-Form will be reviewed by our office. If approved the authorized I-20 will be printed and put at our front desk for pick up.

- Complete E-Form at least 2 weeks before your employment start date.
When can I begin working?

After you received your updated I-20.

On or after the CPT start date listed on your new I-20.

Employment dates are normally limited to the start and end dates of a semester.
Proof of Work Eligibility

Your new I-20 with the CPT Authorization is your proof of work eligibility.

Show this to your employer’s HR office.