

# F-1 Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Office of International Students and Scholars  
Eastern Illinois University

**Curricular Practical Training** is an opportunity for F-1 international students who are in good academic standing to gain off-campus work authorization for internship or coop **in their field of study**.

CPT is available only prior to the completion of your degree program. It must be an integral part of your curriculum, required for you to graduate, and you must have a job offer at the time of application. If needed, you can consult your Graduate Coordinator or Career Services about enrolling in an internship or coop class.

Please be aware that 12 months or more of full-time CPT will eliminate your eligibility for Optional Practical Training (OPT). During summer term you can do CPT and not be enrolled in any other classes, however, you **MUST** be enrolled in at least one credit hour CPT internship or coop. During fall and winter terms, you must be enrolled full-time or have an approved Reduced Course Load (RCL).

## CPT During Final Term

If you are enrolled part-time in your final term before program completion, you must have received Reduced Course Load (RCL) authorization from your Graduate Coordinator. This form must be submitted to OISS. Please note that you must take at least one credit along with your CPT on the final semester. This includes an in-class or hybrid course. **The credit CANNOT be online**. Being on Reduced Course Load will automatically put you in your final semester and you will be required to graduate at the end of that semester or you will be out of status.

**\*Note:** Work authorization is necessary for engaging in both paid and unpaid internship. There is a difference between volunteering and engaging in an unpaid internship. Volunteering refers to donating time with an organization whose primary purpose is charitable or humanitarian in nature, without remuneration or any other type of compensation. Authorization is not required for volunteering. The U.S. Department of Labor has guidelines for those seeking an unpaid internship. <https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm>

## Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for CPT, you must:

- Have been lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis for one academic year (i.e. two full consecutive terms) unless your academic program requires immediate participation for all students.
- Be in lawful F-1 status
- Have a job offer
- Receive approval from Graduate Coordinator (see form below)

## Step One

Fill out the student information and internship information sections of the attached CPT recommendation form **COMPLETELY**, and then have your Graduate Coordinator fill out and sign in section two of the form.

## Step Two

Bring your signed CPT recommendation form, employment offer letter, and your class schedule to OISS **at least two weeks** before you plan on beginning your job. The letter must be on letterhead and include the start & end date of your internship. CPT is approved per semester. A new application must be submitted to extend your CPT.

**Graduate Coordinator Recommendation Form  
For International F-1 Student Curricular Practical Training**

This form provides OISS with information required to grant CPT work authorization to an international student in F-1 visa status. The Graduate Coordinator must complete and sign section 2.

**STUDENT INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Major Field: \_\_\_\_\_

SEVIS ID (upper left corner of I-20): \_\_\_\_\_

1. **INTERNSHIP INFORMATION:** Company Name: (Employment offer letter is also required.)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Job Location Address:** (This must be the actual street address of where you are working)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Number of hours per week:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Begin Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**End Date:** (CPT is approved on a per semester basis): \_\_\_\_\_

2. **CURRICULAR CREDIT FOR THE INTERNSHIP:** Graduate Coordinator **MUST** certify and check **ONE** of the following (A-B)

A. \_\_\_\_\_ **The student will earn credit in a course.**

Course Title & Number: \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_ **The work is related/required to the student's degree program.**

Degree level and field: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

As the student's Graduate Coordinator, by signing this form you are certifying that this employment is **REQUIRED** for the academic CRE work authorization and that student is enrolled in an internship or coop class. You are also certifying that student is enrolled full-time if spring or fall semester.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Graduate Coordinator Signature

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** If the CPT is to go beyond the end date listed above the student is required to submit a new recommendation form. Student **MUST** have an I-20 showing this CPT is authorized **BEFORE** they can begin working.

**You must contact OISS before you change CPT employers!**