

# CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT) FOR STUDENTS ON F-1 VISAS

## Summary

Curricular practical training (CPT) is defined by the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Service (USCIS) as employment that is an integral part of a student's curriculum. It may include internships/practicums (required or not required) or a co-op program.

Employment not required by the degree program or arranged through an approved co-op agreement, must earn academic credit. The employment must be related to the student's major field. Earning academic credit for the CPT authorization requires that a student register for a Directed Study course, Independent Study course, or a course in the established curriculum that requires the employment. Thesis credits or FTE courses cannot be used for CPT. The enrollment should occur during the semester in which the employment begins or as close to the beginning of the CPT as possible. A student's failure to enroll for and complete the course violates the CPT regulations and will jeopardize a student's legal status. International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) provides the authorization for CPT. Once students satisfy all requirements for their degree programs, they lose eligibility for CPT. Graduate students are not eligible to apply for CPT after they have completed their defense.

## Eligibility Requirements

- Students must complete the CPT online workshop at [z.umn.edu/cpt](http://z.umn.edu/cpt) prior to submitting this application.
- Students must have completed full-time studies for one full academic year and must be pursuing an academic program. An exception to this rule allows graduate students to participate in CPT if immediate participation in an internship is required by their program.
- Part-time or full-time employment may be authorized depending on eligibility.

## Types of CPT

- (a) Internship/practicum required by the degree program
- Internship must be required for the completion of the degree program.
  - Students are required to document the program's internship requirement.
  - Authorization may be part-time or full-time depending on the internship requirement.
- (b) Elective internship/employment
- Available to students who want to gain practical work experience related to their field of study.
  - Must be based on the student receiving course

credit. Student must register for a course in the established curriculum that requires employment or a Directed Study or Independent Study course. It is important that the course requires employment with a specific begin and end date.

- Student must receive an Incomplete in the course until the period of CPT has been satisfied.
  - Failure to remain registered for a credited course that corresponds with each CPT application will jeopardize the student's F-1 status.
- (c) Co-op program
- Available to students selected to participate in an official co-op program through their college or department.
  - Employment authorization may be part-time or full-time depending on the co-op agreement.
  - Student will need to provide evidence of college/department co-op approval.

## Part-time CPT

- Part-time CPT is defined as 20 hours/week or less. CPT authorization is not required if the part-time employment is located on the Twin Cities campus or paid through University of Minnesota Twin Cities payroll.

## Full-time CPT

- Full-time CPT is more than 20 hours/week.
- Full-time CPT is available under the following conditions:
  - ◇ Student has completed all course requirements for the degree and is working full-time on research or thesis.
  - ◇ Student is participating in a co-op or required internship that requires full-time work.
  - ◇ Student intends to participate in employment during the summer vacation period or semester breaks.
- A student holding on-campus employment (including assistantships) must add the on-campus hours when determining total hours to be worked. For example, if a student holds a 50% assistantship and has been offered an internship off-campus for 20 hours/week, the total work hours will be 40 hours/week and will require full-time CPT authorization.
- Full-time authorization requires that students continue to work the equivalent of full-time on their academic program. Students with full-time CPT authorization must file a Reduced Course Load (RCL) form for

each semester they are enrolled less than full-time. The reason on the RCL cannot be “participating in a required internship” when the employment is elective.

- Students who want to use CPT to work more than 20 hours/week at the University of Minnesota must complete a new Form I-9 at the University Payroll office. Bring the following items to Payroll: passport, Form I-94, and I-20 with page 2 reflecting the CPT authorization. The payroll office is located in the West Bank Office Building at 1300 South 2nd Street, SE, Suite 545.

### **Application Procedures**

Allow 7 working days for ISSS to process CPT applications. Submit the following items to an ISSS adviser during walk-in hours or a scheduled appointment. ISSS cannot accept your application for processing unless all these items are completed.

1. Student Request and Academic Adviser Verification form
2. Course Description form or evidence of the internship/practicum requirement or co-op approval from college/department if applicable
3. Certificate of completion of the CPT Online Workshop (paper or pdf)
4. Financial Certification Statement Form if I-20 financial information is changing by greater than 25%

Note: College of Pharmacy students must have the Academic Adviser Verification section of this form completed by the College of Pharmacy, Office of Student Affairs (OSA).

### **Authorization**

- ISSS authorizes CPT for part-time or full-time employment. ISSS cannot authorize CPT for more than 12 months per application. Students can apply for a maximum of 12 months of CPT at a time with 1 course credit.
- CPT authorization will be noted on page 2 of the I-20.
- Once CPT has been authorized, it cannot be changed, voided, or restored if the time was not used for practical training.
- Students cannot begin employment until they have employment authorization in hand.

### **Important Considerations**

- Immigration regulations mandate that CPT authorization not delay students' completion of studies. If students have been authorized for 12 months or more of full-time CPT, they will not be eligible for a program extension if unable to finish all degree requirements by the completion date noted on the I-20.
- Students cannot extend their academic programs for the purpose of employment.
- Undergraduate students and master's students in Plan

### C Programs

Undergraduate programs and master's students in Plan C programs are coursework only. Students are expected to complete their courses during the term for which they are registered, including master's Plan C Projects. A student with an incomplete in his/her final semester is not eligible for CPT after that term. Students must be registered for at least one course in addition to the CPT course in their final semester.

- Students who have been granted a program extension are not eligible to apply for full-time CPT.
- Students who have received 12 months or more of full-time CPT are not eligible for optional practical training (OPT). Part-time CPT does not affect eligibility for OPT.

### **Extension of CPT with same employer**

- If a student wants to extend CPT authorization with the current employer(s) for less than one month, the student must submit authorization from the College or Course Instructor as described below.
- Required internship: Letter from college/department verifying need to extend internship to complete program requirement. Letter must state the revised end date.
- Elective Internship/Employment: ISSS CPT Change Form and the signed and completed CPT Course Instructor Change Authorization Form
- Co-op: Revised co-op agreement, letter from U of MN co-op program sponsor, or course instruction that reflects co-op extension requirement. Agreement or letter must state the revised end date. Note: EE5041 does not allow extensions.

Extensions of more than one month of CPT require a new application and, for elective CPT, either a new CPT course registration or the addition of at least one credit to the current CPT course.

### **Employer Change under CPT**

For changes of employer or extensions of less than one month with a different employer, the student must submit the ISSS CPT Change Form and the completed and signed CPT Course Instructor Change Authorization Form.

CPT authorization for new employer must be in hand before a student can begin new employment.



# ACADEMIC ADVISER VERIFICATION

Academic adviser should complete the section below.

To the Academic Adviser:

Please review the Student Request for curricular practical training completed by the student. Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is work authorization for employment that is an integral or important part of the student's curriculum and related to his/her major field of study as noted on the student's I-20 (see item 6 on the Student Request form). If a graduate student has satisfied the requirements for his/her degree program, including submission of Plan B, thesis, etc., s/he is NOT eligible to pursue curricular practical training. Students in Plan C programs can only work full time CPT during vacation periods before completion of coursework. They are expected to complete their courses during the term for which they are registered, including Plan C Projects.

CPT can be authorized under one of the following conditions:

- if it is required by the degree program
- if it is an elective internship and the student is enrolled for a course requiring the employment
- if it is an approved U of M co-op program

Pursuit of CPT should not delay the student's completion of studies. Your verification of the information the student has provided on the Student Request form is needed to insure that the University of Minnesota is in compliance with immigration regulations.

I agree with the information.  I disagree with the information (Please briefly state why in the Comment space below.)

Academic Adviser Signature

Month Day Year

Name (print)

Phone

Department or College

Comments:

## ISSS will complete this section:

Curricular Practical Training for  hours/week from  to   
Month Day Year Month Day Year

Curricular Practical Training for  hours/week from  to   
Month Day Year Month Day Year

Curricular Practical Training for  hours/week from  to   
Month Day Year Month Day Year

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Info                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Registered for CPT course (no thesis cr. or FTE) | <input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled full time<br>(CPT credit alone does not meet FT requirement) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program Plan                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Previously authorized for full-time CPT          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Holds                              | Number of months <input type="text"/>                                     |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed one full academic year   | <input type="checkbox"/> Program extension granted for this degree        |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Give I-20 due date slip to student | <input type="checkbox"/> Completed CPT online workshop                    |  |

Date submitted to ISSS  International student adviser initials   
Month Day Year

Adviser Comments

## COURSE DESCRIPTION (FOR F-1 CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING)

To the Course Instructor:

Curricular practical training (CPT) provides work authorization that allows international students to gain experience directly related to their field of study prior to degree completion.

To be eligible for CPT, the student indicated below, must enroll in a course directly related to his/her field of study that requires participation in the specified employment. The course can be Directed Study, Independent Study, or an established course, as long as employment is a requirement of the course. Thesis credits or FTE courses cannot be used for CPT.

Please complete the information below. CPT cannot exceed one year. If a student enrolls in an extended term course student should be given an Incomplete until the employment or course requirements have been completed.

**IMPORTANT: The CPT application will not be processed without evidence of enrollment for course credit at the time the application is submitted.**

I am verifying that  will be employed  
Student's Name

as a  at   
Position Employer

Student will receive  of credits during  semester  
Number Semester and Year

for course   
Course designator and number

Employment from     to \*     
Month Day Year Month Day Year

**\* a final grade should not be given prior to student's employment end date**

for  hours per week is a requirement for this course.

Course Instructor Signature

Month Day Year

Name (print)

Phone

Department or College

E-mail