



Center for Global Engagement  
International Student Services  
Mary Lyon Hall, Garden Level, Room 043  
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## Guide to CPT (Internships)

**Curricular Practical Training (CPT)** is employment which

- ~Does not need approval by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
- ~Is authorized by PSU International Student Services (ISS)
- ~Must be an integral part of the curriculum
- ~If it is **REQUIRED** for program completion, it will always qualify as CPT
- ~If it is **NOT REQUIRED** for program completion, it may still qualify as CPT if it is done for academic credit and it is an integral part of the degree program

Curricular Practical Training may be **part time** (up to 20 hours per week) while the student is enrolled for classes. Students who are authorized for part time CPT must be very careful not to exceed the 20 hour/week limit. This is **NOT** an average; it is absolute.

Curricular Practical Training may be **full time** (more than 20 hours per week). If a student engages in full time CPT for 12 months, he/she loses eligibility to engage in Optional Practical Training at that degree level.

Study during the summer is not an issue for status and if CPT is an integral part of your curriculum and it is properly authorized (whether full or part-time), the student may choose to do both at the same time without violating status. Regulatory cite:

§ 214.2(f)(5)(iii) Annual vacation. An F-1 student at an academic institution is considered to be in status during the annual (or summer) vacation if the student is eligible and intends to register for the next term.

### **USCIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service) Student Eligibility for CPT:**

- ~Student must be in lawful F-1 status.
- ~Student must have been enrolled for a full academic year.



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### **USCIS Employment Eligibility for CPT:**

Work must be related to your major field of studies as indicated by your current I-20. It must be appropriate to your degree level as well. The employment authorization given for CPT by ISS **is only for the employer named on your I-20 and only for the dates indicated.**

### **Application Process:**

Submit to ISS **at least two weeks** ahead of proposed beginning of employment:

- ~Completed PSU Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Application and signed by student, academic advisor, department chair, and the AVP for Undergraduate Studies or the appropriate graduate level administrator
- ~Letter from employer describing the job title, job responsibilities, begin and end dates of employment, number of hours per week, place of employment.

ISS will review the information provided and upon verification that the student is registered for the course in Banner, ISS will enter the employment authorization into the SEVIS system, and return the properly endorsed I-20 directly to the student.

### **Important General Employment Information:**

- ~Types of employment for F-1 international students allowed under federal regulations include: **on-campus, CPT (Curricular Practical Training) and OPT (Optional Practical Training).**
- ~All types of employment require authorization by a student's international student adviser or DSO. **OPT also requires authorization by USCIS.**
- ~Off-campus work without prior authorization puts the student "out of status" under the designated rules of the USCIS.