

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

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What is CPT?

F-1 regulations define Curricular Practical Training as “alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum which is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the university.”

An F-1 student must be authorized by International Center to participate in a curricular practical training program.

Eligibility for CPT

- Currently have lawful F-1 student status
- Have completed at least nine months of full-time study. (Graduate students may begin earlier if their program requires an internship earlier)
- If you are a full time student (12 credits or more for undergraduate and six credits or more for graduate), you are only allowed to intern 20 hours or less a week during the academic term. Full-time CPT may be possible during summer. See “Academic Department Guidance”. (See back page)
- Have an internship or practicum credit that you must complete to earn your degree program that counts directly towards your major, but not non-major elective). You must work with your advisor to make sure the credits will apply to your program of study/degree requirement or a Cooperate education or contractual relationship with MSU (Examples of this have been Tech Plus and ROTC programs)

The Application Procedures

Pick up CPT materials or download it from the Kearney International Center website. It includes CPT Academic Advisor Verification Form. You must then set up an appointment with a Kearney International Center Advisor.

Please bring the following documents to the appointment.

- Current SEVIS I-20
- Curricular Practical Training Advisor Verification Form completed and signed by your advisor, chair, and/or internship coordinator (depends on major and system for internship).
- Current unofficial transcript (obtain from Campus Hub)
- Documented proof letter from the company/institution where you will work; including the name of the company, location (city and state) and a brief job description, dates of employment and number of work hours per week.

Note: You cannot start a paid internship without a prior approval from the Kearney International Center. If you do, it is considered to be unauthorized employment and will jeopardize your status. Please give the Kearney International Center about five working days to complete your CPT application.

FAQ

- **For how long can CPT be authorized?**

There is no limit to the total (aggregate) time CPT may be authorized. However, CPT authorization is on a semester by semester basis.

- **If I participate in Curricular Practical Training, will I lose my opportunity for Optional Practical Training, will I lose my opportunity for Optional Practical Training (OPT) after I graduate?**

If you have been authorized (in total) on year or more full-time Curricular Practical Training, you will not have any remaining OPT eligibility. Full-time CPT that has not met (or surpassed) the one year mark does not affect your eligibility

- **How will my employer know I am authorized to work under Curricular Practical Training?**

The I-20 (page 3) indicates the dates you are authorized to work for that employer.

CPT Academic Department Guidance

The Kearney International Center will work each academic department to ensure that paid internship experiences comply with the immigration regulations cited for CPT. Note a few guidelines within MSU to ensure consistency with internships:

- Internship credits need to go toward the degree program. The internship credits cannot prolong the degree or be simply “add on” extra courses.
- Internship in each semester would require of some credit. For example, summer internship requires registration for summer. If the internship continues in fall semester, another registration of credit for that experience is needed. Coop experience with a contract established between MSU and that internship site is the only exception.
- If the student has completed all course requirements, full-time internship is possible. If the student has coursework needed yet to complete the degree requirements during fall or spring semester, only partial internship can be allowed (20 hours a week or less).
- For summer internship, no other class registration is required.
- Graduate students may have an internship experience that would be directly related to the thesis or Alternate Plan Paper (APP). This type of course credit can be justified for CPT, but written confirmation is needed to ensure the relationship between the employment and actual research paper or project.

