

DEPAUL
UNIVERSITY



Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Application Guide & Tutorial for F-1 International Students

International Student and Scholar Services (ISS)

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Off-Campus Work Eligibility

- ❖ Off-campus employment authorization like curricular practical training (CPT) or optional practical training (OPT) may be granted to F-1 students under certain circumstances. F-1 students who have maintained lawful F-1 student status for **at least one academic year** (or whose graduate academic program requires immediate off-campus employment participation) can become eligible for off-campus employment authorization.
 - ❖ At DePaul University, one academic year is determined by three consecutive terms of full-time enrollment in Active F1 status.
- ❖ Off-campus employment must always be **directly related** to an F-1 student's major field of study. It is the student's responsibility to explain and document how the job duties relate to degree showing on I-20 form, if/when the government later questions student's employment history.
- ❖ Before beginning ANY paid or unpaid work off-campus (including some volunteer positions), F-1 students must obtain prior and specific work authorization like CPT or OPT from ISS/USCIS respectively. **Off-campus employment cannot begin without possession of a CPT-authorized I-20 form! Employment start date must be on or after the CPT authorization start date showing on CPT-authorized I-20 form.**
- ❖ If F-1 student starts working before they are authorized or without proper authorization like CPT or OPT, this will be **serious violation of their immigration status** and **ISS will have to terminate their SEVIS immigration record**. Student will have to leave the U.S. (reinstatement will not be an option and re-entry to the U.S. is not guaranteed). This status violation can lead to detention/removal from the country. It can also have long-term negative consequences on future immigration benefits and U.S. visa applications.
- ❖ F-1 students who are **already out of status** are not eligible for CPT or OPT work authorization or any other immigration benefits.

CPT Eligibility / Parameters

- ❖ CPT authorization allows an eligible F-1 student to earn required course credit while completing an off-campus employment opportunity (e.g. internship). Enrollment in a required **internship/elective course is mandatory** for CPT authorization, regardless of the term/time of year.
- ❖ The internship/elective course must be "**an integral part of an established curriculum**" and be directly related to the F-1 student's major field of study. The internship must either be required by the F-1 student's curriculum or be an elective that fulfills part of an F-1 student's degree program completion requirements.
- ❖ CPT is **not designed for long-term, continuous employment**. The amount of CPT work authorization an F-1 student may request from ISS depends on how many internship courses/credit hours their academic program requires for degree completion. For example, if their degree program only offers/requires one internship course, the student may only request CPT work authorization for that one term. Students cannot use elective internship courses that will count as "extra" credit for the purpose of requesting CPT work authorization.
- ❖ CPT is **time-specific**; the dates of a CPT authorization will correspond with [the dates of the term](#) in which an F-1 student is enrolled in a required internship/elective course. CPT authorization dates cannot be backdated and can only be approved for a future start date. If you enroll in a summer internship course, please check if it is for summer session I, summer session II, or whole summer term, as the duration/dates for these summer terms vary. If CPT work authorization dates are too restrictive for the student/employer, please consider OPT option instead (assuming the student qualifies).
- ❖ Students who obtain **one year or more of full-time CPT work authorization** are ineligible for post-completion OPT. Therefore, if you are planning on applying for OPT following graduation, please keep this mind.

CPT Eligibility / Parameters

- ❖ During the regular academic year (i.e. fall, winter, and spring terms) and during an F-1 student's final term of study, F-1 students may be employed up to a **maximum of 20 hours per week** (on and off-campus combined). Full-time employment may only be possible during an F-1 student's term of annual vacation. Reminder: if summer will be your final term, it cannot be counted as your annual vacation and therefore your hours will be limited 20 per week. **Exception to the 20 hour limit:** if the academic department requires all students in the degree program to work full-time, student may request full-time CPT during the regular school year. However, academic advisor will need to verify this requirement in writing at time of the CPT request.
- ❖ CPT is **employer-specific**; an F-1 student can only be employed for the employer specified on their I-20 form during the period of approved CPT authorization. If you want to change employers, please submit a new/separate CPT request to your academic department and ISS for review/processing and remember wait for new I-20 form showing the CPT authorization before starting employment with the new employer.
- ❖ CPT site of activity must be within **reasonable commuting distance** to DePaul University. Since F-1 students have to maintain full-time enrollment during the regular school year and report to class in person (they cannot count more than one online class towards full-time enrollment requirement), CPT site of activity has to be in or near Chicago during the regular school year (i.e. fall, winter, and spring terms).
 - ❖ If your position is fully remote and in another U.S. state, you may work for your employer while living in Chicago.
- ❖ If student takes an internship course as their only remaining class in their last term at DePaul, there has to be an **in-person component** to the internship course. In other words, student needs to arrange to meet with their professor at DePaul University on a regular basis to establish that they were on-campus and making progress towards their final degree program requirements in-person.

CPT Application Checklist

1. Read this tutorial in its entirety to make sure you understand the **parameters** of CPT authorization.
2. Review your **enrollment history** to make sure that you meet the one-year academic requirement. ISS advisor will also review your unofficial transcripts in Campus Connect before authorizing the CPT work authorization. If your graduate program requires students to start practical training earlier, please ask your academic advisor to email ISS this information at the time of your CPT request.
3. Obtain a **job offer letter** with a future start date that directly relates to your major field of study showing on I-20 form. Check with your prospective employer that the proposed dates of employment will not exceed the duration of your internship course.
4. Check with your Academic Advisor **if/when an elective/required internship course** is offered in your program that will count towards your degree completion and **register for this internship course** before the “last day to add/switch” university deadline for the term. Note, your unofficial transcript will need to show that you are enrolled full-time, including the required internship/elective course, for the term that you are requesting CPT authorization. If your CPT request is for summer annual vacation, then you only need to enroll in the corresponding internship course during the summer. Note, ISS will NOT be able to process your CPT authorization if your enrollment is incomplete.
 - University Internship Program (UIP) Courses:** Students enrolled in UIP courses will need to contact the University Internship Program in the Career Center (DPC 9500): <https://resources.depaul.edu/career-center/services-resources/career-courses/Pages/default.aspx>.
 - College of Computing and Digital Media (CDM)** students should visit the following CDM website for more information about CDM internship procedural requirements: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/InternshipsandCOOPs.aspx>.
5. Complete and submit the **CPT I-20 Request Form** (example on next page; form available at <https://intlportal.depaul.edu/portal/>). Please **make sure that all fields are complete**, including your employer/employment and [Academic Advisor details](#) (not your faculty or your ISS advisor!). Please note that in order for your Academic Advisor to complete the form, you will need to provide a job offer letter from your prospective employer that details your job duties, hours, and starting and ending dates.
6. **Submit CPT I-20 Request Form to ISS** for review/processing. If you recently travelled or renewed your passport/visa, please include copies of your most recent I-94 card, and renewed passport/visa (only if ISS does not already have copies of these updated documents). Please also verify that your U.S. home address is current and active in Campus Connection. You may drop these documents at ISS front desk or email scanned/clear copies to your ISS advisor.
7. If you qualify for CPT and your request/enrollment looks complete, ISS will process your new I-20 form showing the CPT authorization approximately **5-7 business days** from the date you submit your request to ISS. Incomplete request will result in delayed processing times. Please keep this in mind as you discuss your employment start date with a prospective employer.
8. ISS front desk will send you an email notification once your new I-20 form is ready. Collect your updated I-20 form from ISS prior to the start of your employment. Note, **you will need your new I-20 form (showing CPT authorization) on your first day of employment** to demonstrate your legal U.S. work authorization.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

- Sample of what the Curricular Practical Training Request Form will ask.
- Actual form can be found here: https://intlportal.depaul.edu/_portal/

Student Information Section



Academic Advisor Section



International Student and Scholar Services

CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING I-20 REQUEST FORM

| Student Information This section must be completed by the student. | |
|---|---|
| Last Name (Family Name): | First Name (Given Name): |
| Student ID Number: | Telephone Number: |
| | Email Address: |
| Level of Study (select one): | <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate |
| I am applying for (select one): | <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time Curricular Practical Training (20 hours per week or less) <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time Curricular Practical Training (20 hours per week or more; refer to CPT tutorial for full-time CPT limitations) |
| <i>I have been enrolled on a full-time basis and have maintained lawful F-1 student status for at least one academic year (or, I qualify for participation in off-campus employment in my field of study prior to the completion of one academic year at DePaul University due to my academic degree program requirements). I request Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for the term indicated below and will not begin off-campus employment before receiving the appropriate authorization to do so.</i> | |
| Student's Signature: | Date: |
| Academic Recommendation This section must be completed by your academic advisor (signatures from faculty advisors will not be accepted). | |
| The student above is registered for the following required internship/elective course for the term indicated below. The student's employment authorization will correspond with the START and END dates for the term indicated below (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY): | |
| Internship/Elective Course Number: | Number of Credit Hours: |
| Term/Year Enrolled in Internship/Elective Course: | / |
| Expected Graduation Term/Year in which all degree requirements will be completed: | / |
| Name of Employer/Company: | |
| Address of Employer: | |
| | STREET ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP CODE |
| The Code of Federal Regulations 8 CFR 214.2 (f) (10) states: "An F-1 student may be authorized, by the Designated School Official (DSO), to participate in a curricular practical training program which is an <u>integral part of an established curriculum</u> . Curricular practical training is defined to be alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of <u>required</u> internship or practicum which is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school." | |
| I certify that this internship fulfills a degree requirement. This internship course is an integral part of our department's established curriculum, supervised by a faculty member, has clearly defined established course objectives, and is listed in the school's course catalog. The student will be making normal progress toward degree completion while pursuing practical training. | |
| Advisor's Name: | Advisor's Signature: Date: |

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