

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Definition of Curricular Practical Training:

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a type of work authorization for F-1 international students who want to gain experience in their field of study. F-1 regulations state that Curricular Practical Training (CPT) must be “an integral part of an established curriculum.”

Regulations define CPT as “alternative 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 school.” [8CFR 214.2(f)(10)(i)]

International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) interprets “an integral part of an established curriculum” as it is related to the major and bound to the curriculum through cooperative agreements between the university and the employer. Enrollment in credit IS normally required. Unpaid internships would also fall under the umbrella of curricular practical training (CPT).

One of the following options students may gain approval for CPT:

- Practical Training Experience is required for a student’s degree
- Practical Training Experience is required to earn internship/practicum/independent study credit for which a student will be registered
- Practical Training Experience will provide research that is necessary for the student’s thesis or dissertation.
- Practical Training Experience will yield a project for a particular course that is required by the student’s degree program

For more information on the details of these options, please see the rubric provided in this document.

To gain more information about CPT, students must complete the [CPT Eligibility Course](#). Completion of the course, and 100% grade on the Final Exam is required for completion of the course.

International Student and Scholar Services

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University of Colorado
Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus

Preconditions:

Students must have been lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis at a USCIS approved school for one academic year (2 full-time semesters) as an F-1 before being eligible for CPT. Exceptions exist for graduate students whose programs require immediate practical training experiences.

Available only while student is in F-1 status, **before graduation**. For work authorization after graduation, student must utilize Optional Practical Training (OPT).

Approval Periods for CPT:

CPT is approvable during three specific periods of time. Any approval that spans over different approval periods must gain separate approvals. CPT is not required to start or end at a specific time, but approval for CPT, must occur during the following periods:

Spring: Approval period includes the day after Fall semester ends to the end of the Spring semester.

Requires Spring Enrollment.

Example: A student could be approved for Spring Semester CPT from December 15th through commencement date of Spring semester. In this example the academic calendar lists the Fall semester end date as December 14th.

Summer: Approval period includes the day after the Spring semester ends to the end of the Summer semester. **Requires Summer Enrollment.**

Example: A student could be approved for Summer Semester CPT from May 16th through commencement date of Summer semester. In this example, the academic calendar lists the Spring semester end date as May 15th.

Fall: Approval period includes the day after Summer semester ends to the end of the Fall semester. **Requires Fall enrollment.**

Example: A student could be approved for Fall Semester CPT from August 1st through commencement date of Fall semester. In this example, the academic calendar lists the Summer semester end date as July 31st.

Location:

Students may engage in CPT only for a specified employer, location and period approved and recorded in SEVIS for page 2 of the I-20. Out of state employment is authorized in the Summer if on-location. Remote positions are also allowed regardless of employer location. CPT requests for out-of-state on-location employment/training during the Fall & Spring semesters will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Enrollment Requirements:**When is credit enrollment NOT required for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Approval?**

If the practical training experience or employment is required for the degree completion, then a student may gain approval for Curricular Practical Training (CPT). For CPT to be considered 'required for the degree' it must be documented as such in an official university publication or catalog.

When IS credit enrollment required for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Approval?

In ALL other instances other than what is listed in the previous section above, enrollment IS required for approval of Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

CPT Eligibility for Continuing F-1 Students

<i>Completed academic semesters at CU DENVER ANCHUTZ</i>	Eligible to begin CPT during:
Fall & Spring	Summer session or Fall
Spring & Summer	Fall
Spring & Fall	Winter Break or Spring
Summer & Fall	Winter Break or Spring

CPT Eligibility for F-1 Transfer Students

Completed semester/one year & transfer to CU DENVER | ANSCHUTZ

F-1 Transfer students will be eligible for CPT if they have been a full-time student for at least one academic year in an undergraduate or graduate degree (not ESL), or completing OPT from a previous degree.

Academic Requirements

Students must be maintaining a full-course of study as defined by their academic program, and SEVP guidance on course of study. [8 CFR 214.2(10)] Additionally students must be considered in good academic standing as defined by their school or college.

If you have any additional questions, please [contact an International Services Specialist](#).

Full-time Vs. Part-Time CPT

Upon meeting eligibility requirements students are eligible for Full-Time or Part-Time CPT.

- Part Time CPT: 1-20 hours/week*
- Full-Time CPT: 21-40 hour/week*

365 days of Full-Time CPT will render a student ineligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT).

Part-time CPT does not affect OPT eligibility.

On-Campus Work combined with CPT

On-Campus Employment and Curricular Practical Training are considered by SEVP as two separate approvals, and approval for these can be allowed simultaneously. For example, a student may only work 20 hrs/week with on-campus employment during the fall and spring semesters, and work any number of additional hours by utilizing curricular practical training (CPT) since employment through CPT is integral to an established curriculum.

For more information on this, see the information on our [CPT Policy](#), or [contact ISSS](#).

CPT Approval Process |

Downtown Denver Campus Students Through [Experiential Learning Center](#)

International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) grants permission for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) on a case-by-case basis after establishing the student's eligibility and reviewing all documentation after receiving a recommendation from the [Experiential Learning Center](#). The F-1 International Student may not begin their employment using CPT until they have received full authorization from ISSS and an updated I-20 with the CPT approval on page 2 of the I-20.

Please be aware that each step in the process is important and are required for you to be properly approved to participate in CPT.

Students enrolling in **internship credit** in the following schools and colleges are required to follow the process with the ELC listed on the following page:

Undergraduate:

- All undergraduate students enrolling in internship credit (except for SEHD students).

Graduate (Master's/Doctorate):

- College of Liberal Arts & Sciences (programs listed below):
 - ✦ Biology
 - ✦ Communication
 - ✦ Environmental Science/Geography
 - ✦ History
 - ✦ Sociology
 - ✦ Social Sciences
- School of Public Affairs
- College of Engineering & Applied Sciences
- School of Business

The total amount of time for this process can take up to one month, but can be shortened depending on time to gather all documentation from employer and academic department. (Process Continued on Next Page)

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CPT Approval Process | Downtown Denver Campus Students Through Experiential Learning Center (continued)

Approval process:

1. Complete the [CPT Eligibility Course](#).
2. Register for and complete ELC Internship Workshop Canvas Course. Contact ELC to be added to the workshop.
3. Obtain a **Letter of Offer from the potential employer**. See Page 11.
4. Complete the Internship Experience reporting and approval process on Handshake. Approvals will be needed from your potential employer and internship faculty sponsor. Your ELC Internship Advisor can guide you through this process.
5. After all parts are completed in Handshake, the ELC will notify ISSS of their recommendation for CPT.
6. Complete the CPT Student Data Entry form in MyISSS. Please make sure the information you enter on the form matches the information in Handshake.
7. An ISSS reviews your CPT Request. If approved, ISSS will email your I-20 with CPT approval on page 2. ISSS will issue I-20 within 10 business days of receiving CPT Student Data Entry Form.
8. Show I-20 to the employer as proof of work permission. You are not authorized to begin work until you have the new I-20 with CPT approval and only during the dates listed on the CPT approved I-20.

The renewal process consists of steps 3-8.

****Failure to receive CPT authorization on page 2 of the I-20 before beginning employment will result in termination of the I-20 and loss of F-1 status.***

CPT Approval Process | Denver Campus (Non-ELC) & Anschutz Medical Campus Students

International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) grants permission for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) on a case-by-case basis after establishing the student's eligibility and reviewing all documentation. The F-1 International Student may not begin their employment using CPT until they have received full authorization and an updated I-20 with the CPT approval on page 2 of the I-20

Please be aware that each step in the process is important and are required for you to be properly approved to participate in CPT.

The total amount of time for this process can take up to one month, but can be shortened depending on time to gather all documentation from employer and academic department, and completion of forms.

Approval process:

1. Complete the [CPT Eligibility Course](#).
2. Obtain a **Letter of Offer from the potential employer**. See Page 11.
3. Complete [CPT Request Form](#).
4. Faculty or Advisor will be notified to complete CPT Recommendation Form after completion of [CPT Request Form](#) by student.
5. Faculty or Advisor completes CPT Recommendation Form.
6. ISSS will review and approve, deny or ask for evidence of CPT Request.
7. ISSS will email your new I-20 with CPT approval on page 2. Show this to the employer as proof of work authorization. You are not authorized to begin work until you have the new I-20 with CPT approval and only during the dates listed on the CPT approved I-20.

The renewal process consists of steps 2-7.

****Failure to receive CPT authorization on page 2 of the I-20 before beginning employment will result in termination of the I-20 and loss of F-1 status.***

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Student Guidelines/Rubric for CPT Approval

CPT is defined to be alternative work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum that is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school. [8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(i)] Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) has stated: "In practical terms, 'integral part of an established curriculum' means an opportunity must be required by the curriculum or, if not required, the student must receive credit for the training." [SEVP Online DSO Training]

International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) interprets "an integral part of an established curriculum" as it is related to the major and bound to the curriculum through cooperative agreements between the university and the employer. Unpaid internships would also fall under the umbrella of curricular practical training (CPT).

One of the following are the specific options students can gain approval for CPT. The information and examples below are not meant to cover every possible scenarios for which CPT could be approved. Rather, it is meant to serve as a general guide.

If you have a situation that falls outside of the information below or are unsure of whether or not CPT is necessary to participate in an experience, please [contact an International Services Specialist](#) to discuss in more detail.

CPT Option	Explanation	Examples
Practical Training Experience is required for a student's degree	Practical training experience or employment is required for the degree completion	A student's degree program requires that students work as a Teaching or Research Assistant during the final semester of the program. This is a requirement of all students and is formally documented in the program's Student Handbook.
	Enrollment in credit is not necessarily required because the requirement is part of the student's official program requirement, not necessarily course completion	A student's degree program requires all students gain practical experience through part-time employment in their field of study in the metro area. This requirement is listed in the program requirements as cited on the university website for students in this major.

(Additional three options continued on next page)

Student Guidelines/Rubric for CPT Approval (continued)

CPT Option	Explanation	Examples
<p>Practical Training Experience is required to earn internship/practicum/independent study credit for which a student will be registered</p>	<p>Internship, practicum, independent study credit is specifically linked to the student's academic department or School/College (ex. Computer Science internship course)</p> <p>Enrollment in credit is required and may or may not be counted towards the degree requirements</p>	<p>A student's degree program requires participation in a (paid or unpaid) internship in the final semester in a company/organization off-campus directly related to a student's field of study. The academic department has internship course credit and will count this towards the student's total degree requirements.</p> <p>A student's degree program does not require students to do an internship in order to graduate, but does offer the option to enroll in internship credit. Students would only be eligible for CPT and enrollment in internship credit before completion of all requirements of the degree program (i.e. a student cannot only enroll in elective internship credit in the final semester if they have finished all other degree requirements for graduation).</p>
<p>Practical Training Experience will provide research that is necessary for a student's thesis or dissertation.</p>	<p>Students enrolled in thesis or dissertation credit <i>might</i> be eligible to be approved for CPT in connection with this credit if the off-campus work is directly related to research goals/objectives</p> <p>Enrollment in thesis or dissertation credit alone does not automatically mean that a student would be approved for CPT.</p>	<p>A student is enrolled in dissertation credit and is working on research necessary for the completion of the dissertation that can be completed through off-site employment in a in the student's field of study. The employment at the company specifically connects to the student's dissertation – it is NOT simply related to the general field of study.</p>
<p>Practical Training Experience will yield a project for a particular course that is required by the student's degree program</p>	<p>Students enrolled in a course that is required by their program in order to graduate.</p>	<p>A student is enrolled in a course that requires a final project as part of the grade. The goals/learning objectives of the final project can be achieved directly through the responsibilities/duties of a position off-campus that a student has been offered in their field of study.</p>

Template for Letter of Offer:

COMPANY LETTERHEAD with address – ORIGINALS ONLY – NO COPIES

LETTER OF OFFER

DATE: month, day, year

Employee's Full Legal Name

Employee's Full Address

RE: Part-time/Full-time POSITION NAME

Dear Mr. / Ms. Employee's Full Legal Name Here

Organization/Company name is pleased to offer you the Part time/Full time position of Position title at place of office beginning 1st working date and ending on position end date. Your salary will be \$XX.XX per hour and will require you to work X hours per week between the hours of XX and XX, Monday – Friday (or other days, as appropriate).

The duties of this position will include: (include detailed job description here with specific field of study-related duties here). Your mentor/direct supervisor will be name of the person who will evaluate the intern at the end of the term here. His/her contact information is: LIST the supervisor/mentor's email and phone number here.

If you need additional information, please feel free to call Human Resources or the supervisor of Employee's Full legal Name and we will be glad to assist.

Sincerely,

Original Signature of Company Representative

Company Representative's name

Company Representative's Title

Contact Information