

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Workshop for F-1 Visa Holders

*Required Workshop for F-1 Students
Wishing to Gain
Practical Work Experience*

What is CPT?

- CPT is an internship (not a long-term job) opportunity for F-1 students to put classroom knowledge into practice in a real-world setting.
- It is an Immigration benefit available for students who have maintained their status.
- CPT is a class.
- Remember that your priority should—by law—remain your coursework and not getting/keeping a job.

The Requirements

- You cannot have a graduate assistantship while you are on CPT—no exceptions, unfortunately.
- You cannot work on campus while you have full-time CPT.
- You must complete two semesters (fall and spring OR spring and fall) of full-time enrollment at ODU before being eligible.
- You must have an approved RCL on file for each fall and spring semester you had a reduced course load.
- You need a minimum GPA:
 - 2.0 for undergraduates
 - 3.0 for graduates

Reduced Course Load Request (RCL)

- UGs: before you go below 12 credits, your RCL must be approved by ISSS
- GRs: before you go below 9 credits (*even if you have an assistantship*), your RCL must be approved by ISSS
- RCLs should be submitted to ISSS before the end of course registration at the beginning of the fall or spring semester—not summer.
- If a situation comes up after the end of registration and you need to drop a class, make an appointment with an ISSS advisor before you drop/withdraw.

Hours, Dates & Time Limits

- Part-time CPT equals 20 hours or less per week.
- Full-time CPT is 21 or more hours per week.
- Full-time CPT is done in the following circumstances:
 - Summer semester
 - Final semester of your academic program
- One semester of part-time CPT is also allowed during any semester of your choosing in conjunction with your academic advisor.
- ***Internships are a class, so it is not possible to do an internship during school vacations...just as you would not be sitting in a History class during Winter Break.***

Exceptions

- The only exceptions to the previous are
 - If an internship (not an elective) is required of ALL program participants. **OR**
 - In cases where the CPT work is directly related to the completion of a thesis or dissertation.
- Documentation must be provided in either case.

OPT & Graduating Semester CPT

- OPT & CPT: Once you apply for OPT, Immigration no longer allows us to issue a CPT I-20.
- Graduating Semester CPT
 - Must enroll in at least one other credit; failure to do this indicates a fraudulent extension of your academic program and is, therefore, a violation of your visa status
 - If you do Graduating Semester CPT but you do not graduate, you cannot apply for CPT again. You will need to apply for OPT instead.

Application Checklist

- **STAPLING OR CLIPPING YOUR APPLICATION WILL RESULT IN A LONGER PROCESSING TIME.**
- Original offer letter with original signature and on company letterhead
- Fully completed CPT Request Form
- No registration holds
- Registration for at least one other credit if doing Graduating Semester CPT
- Health insurance through the end of the required date for that semester
- RCL on file, if needed

Offer Letter

- The following information must be included; a template can be found on the ISSS web site:
 - Student's name
 - Name and address of the company
 - Hours of work per week
 - State if the position is paid or unpaid; if paid, the wages should be stated in hourly rate
 - Brief description of duties
 - Start and end dates for the current semester only (if you will continue with the internship in a following semester, a new letter will be needed)
 - State that you are only doing an internship and not long-term employment

Offer Letter

- For your protection, the following words and phrases should not be included in the letter:
 - Appointment
 - Contract
 - Benefits
 - Insurance
 - Retirement
 - Annual salary

Timelines to Remember

- Anticipate 10 business days for processing a complete application in ISSS.
 - If we need to contact you about missing information or documentation, the 10-day "clock" must start again.
- Always give your internship supervisor two weeks' written notice if you decide to terminate your CPT at one place for another position. Also, send a reminder about two weeks before your internship ends.
- Your CPT start date can never be in the past when you submit your application. It should allow the processing time posted on our site (10 business days).
- The last possible day for CPT is the last day of exams.

Tips & Reminders

- If you report for work before your CPT paperwork has been issued and/or the start date on your I-20, **you are working illegally**. This means you are **violating your visa status** and **possibly creating legal problems for the company**.
- Refer your employer to the *Off-Campus Employment* section on the ISSS web site for information on taxation for international students.
- A entire new CPT application must be done if you wish to change your dates, your employer or your hours.
- Status checks should be done after the 10-business-day processing time and only via e-mail. Phone or in-person status checks will not be done.

Upon Approval of Your CPT

- An e-mail will be sent to your ODU student e-mail account.
- You will get a new I-20 with your CPT info on the last page.
- Your paperwork will be available at the main desk of ISSS.
- If you can't come, you can designate a friend to get your paperwork for you via reply to the e-mail you'll get from our office.

If Your CPT Is Out of the Area

- Check your ODU student e-mail weekly.
- Be sure you read all ISSlist-I announcements.
- If you think you will apply for OPT, attend the workshop before you leave the area.
- Continue to use the ISSS web site as a resource for information, requests and forms.
- Update your three addresses...

Required Addresses

- As an F-1 visa holder at ODU, you must maintain three addresses. **FAILURE TO MAINTAIN THESE ADDRESSES IS A VIOLATION OF YOUR VISA STATUS.**
- Any of the addresses must be changed within five (5) days of a move.
- The three addresses are:
 - SEVIS U.S. address—update on ISSS site (FORMS page)
 - SEVIS Non-U.S. address—update on ISSS site
 - "Permanent" address—used by ODU for mailing; usually same as your SEVIS U.S. address; update on LeoOnline

Final CPT Checklist

- Find a job via the CMC or your own network
- Start your paperwork with your CMC liaison.
- Fill out the CPT application on the ISSS web site.
- Ask your CMC liaison to sign the Request for CPT – Semester Internship.
- Submit your offer letter and request form to ISSS after making sure you meet the requirements for CPT.
- Respond to e-mails from ISSS and other offices as soon as possible.
- Enjoy your experience!