

# F-1 CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT)

## WHAT IS CPT?

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is temporary 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. CPT must be **directly** related to an F-1 student's academic program and can only be granted by the Designated School Official (DSO) at the Office for International Students and Scholars (OISS). CPT is typically done on a part-time (up to 20 hours a week) basis during the school year, or it can be done on a full-time (over 20 hours a week) basis or part-time basis during vacation periods. CPT gives students the possibility to gain work experience off campus or to work for more than 20 hours a week on campus if certain qualifications are met (see CPT Eligibility requirements).

The primary purpose F-1 visa is academics and any CPT can only be secondary to that objective. Employment/internships cannot interfere with or cause delay in timely graduation from your program. CPT is never guaranteed and every CPT application will be adjudicated on case-by-case basis each semester. You must familiarize yourself with the CPT packet well ahead of application. Typically, students will have a maximum of one to two full CPT experiences during a degree program.

## CPT ELIGIBILITY

- F-1 students are eligible to apply for CPT after completion of two semesters of full time study (one academic year). Exception: Graduate students whose degree **requires** immediate participation in an internship may apply at any time. Most programs do not have internship requirements.
- F-1 students who are requesting full-time CPT during an academic semester **must register full-time. OISS will only grant full-time CPT for one academic semester for the duration of a student's academic program. Student may be granted full-time CPT for summer semesters upon meeting CPT requirements.**
- Students may not take a reduced course load and then apply for full-time CPT in the same semester, there is some exception to last semester RCL (see OISS advisor).
- Students who are approved for a reduced course load and want to apply for part-time CPT will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**NOTE:** CPT **will not be granted** to students who have finished their program requirements, defended or students who are delaying completion of studies to gain experience.

## TYPES OF CPT

- **Required for the degree program:** In order for training to be considered "required," **all students in the degree program must be required to complete an internship or practicum in order to receive their degree.** Very few programs at MSU have these requirements. **Proof of requirement from Registrar Office (RO) Academic Programs Catalog or Department website must be included with CPT request.**
- **Integral part of an established curriculum:** If the internship is not required, then it must be taken for academic credit. The student and the advisor will need to note the appropriate course number on the CPT Authorization Form, and the student must show OISS proof of enrollment. If the internship takes place in the summer, the student can either enroll for an internship credit or connect CPT to a relevant class, in the major/field, being taken during that semester or the upcoming fall semester.

## MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CPT

- Student **must** have a signed, written offer of employment on the employer's letterhead to apply for CPT. Please refer to details about offer letter requirements under "Steps for Applying for CPT." Off-campus unpaid internships require CPT authorization. Please consult with an OISS advisor prior to participating in any off-campus activities.
- Part-time CPT is defined as working 20 hours or less per week and does not affect Optional Practical Training eligibility. Full-time CPT is defined as working more than 20 hours per week. **If a student accumulates 12 months or more of full-time CPT authorization, then the student will not be eligible for OPT.** If student changes

employers while on CPT or will work for more than one employer at a time, student needs to file a new CPT application. CPT is employer specific and student can only work for the company listed on the I-20.

**NOTE:** Music students with “gigs” should consult with the Music Department and complete the [Curricular Practical Training \(CPT\) - Music Short-Term Gigs Only](#).

- You are authorized for specific dates of employment on your I-20. You may not begin before the start date or continue working after the end date. If you expect that you will need to work past your end date, you must reapply for CPT and be issued a new CPT I-20 with a new end date. If you work before you are authorized or past the authorized CPT end date, you will be working without employment authorization and your immigration record will be terminated.
- OISS cannot authorize CPT with a start date in the past. (**submit all completed paperwork at least 7 to 10 days in advance of the day you wish to begin working.**)
- OISS will only authorize CPT for one semester at a time with proof of course registration. Students must reapply by completing all necessary steps in the process for each semester that they will work on CPT.
- **Health Insurance While on CPT:** If you will be employed outside of the Lansing area and are using MSU’s Blue Care Network (BCN) health insurance, please make sure you know which local doctor’s offices and hospitals are in BCN’s network. If you need medical care and accidentally go to an out-of-network health care facility, you will pay much more for your medical bills than if you go to an in-network facility. Search for in-network health care facilities here: <http://www.bcbsm.com> . **Special note for students applying for summer CPT:** Spring semester registration includes a fee for both spring and summer health insurance coverage. If you did not receive a waiver of MSU’s BCN health insurance, you will automatically have health insurance coverage for the summer term.

## STEPS FOR APPLYING FOR CPT

1. Meet with your Academic or Graduate Advisor to discuss appropriate employment opportunities for your major.
2. Find an internship, co-op, practicum, or other position. For assistance, contact MSU’s Career Services Network.
3. Complete **Student section** of the CPT Authorization Form.
4. Have your Academic or Graduate Advisor complete the **Academic or Graduate Advisor section** of the CPT Authorization Form.
5. Come to OISS during walk-in hours (M-F, 1-3pm) or make an appointment online to see an advisor and bring the following required documents with you:

- A Valid Passport**
- I-94 card or Printout of the electronic I-94 screen from CBP website: [www.cbp.gov/I94](http://www.cbp.gov/I94)**
- Current I-20**
- CPT Authorization Form completed and signed by your Academic Advisor/Graduate Advisor**
- Proof of course enrollment. A printed copy (schedule) from StuInfo is sufficient.**
- Required CPTs only: a proof of requirement from Registrar Office Academic Programs Catalog or Department website must be included with CPT request.**
- A new employment letter with current dates is required for each CPT, past letters are invalid.**
  - Signed by employer**
  - Company/Business letterhead**
  - Job title**
  - Start and ending dates of employment (The start date must be in the future)**
  - Wage/salary/remuneration**
  - Number of hours per week to be worked**
  - Full address of employer**
  - Description of work (duties performed) with the statement “The employer agrees to cooperate with the school in achieving the curricular purposes of the employment/training.”**

**NOTE:** A new CPT I-20 will be issued within a week after submission of complete CPT documents.

# CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING AUTHORIZATION

## THIS SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT

|   |           |                           |  |                                      |
|---|-----------|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Last Name:  |           | First Name:               |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors   |
| MSU E-mail:   | PID #: A  | Phone:                    |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Masters     |
| Name of Company/Organization:   |           |                           |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral    |
| Employer Address:   |           |                           |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate |
| City:   | State:    | Zip Code:                 |  |                                      |
| Job Title:  |           |                           |  |                                      |
| Start Date:   | End Date: | Number of hours per week: |  |                                      |
| If integral part, then I am enrolled in the course listed by my advisor below during the semester stated below and understand that dropping or failing to complete the course voids the work permit; I must stop working immediately and contact OISS advisor. If my work authorization is voided when I disenroll or drop from the course, I understand that I will lose my F-1 student visa status. |           |                           |  |                                      |
| Student's Signature: _____  |           |                           |  | Date: ____/____/____                 |

## THIS SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED BY THE ACADEMIC OR GRADUATE ADVISOR

|   |
|---|
| <b>Undergraduate:</b> Expected Completion Date of Degree Requirements: ____/____/____                                       |
| <b>Graduate student:</b> Expected Defense Date (or Comprehensive Exam Date for non-thesis Master's student): ____/____/____ |

**Choose One:**

- Required:** All students in this major must do an internship or they will not graduate from this program. **Proof of requirement from Registrar Office Academic Programs Catalog or Department website must be included with CPT request.**
- Integral Part of the Student's Curriculum:** Student will be receiving course credit(s) that will count as part of the student's major of study.

Course Name & Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester Enrolled: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Credits: \_\_\_\_\_

**Explain how this CPT is directly related to the chosen course in the student's major and field of study.** (If you need more space please attach a letter)

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| Name (print):                           | Title: |
| Department:                             |        |
| E-mail:                                 | Phone: |
| Academic or Graduate Advisor Signature: | Date:  |