Curricular Practical Training [CPT]

What is Curricular Practical Training [CPT]?

CPT is a work benefit for F-1 students to gain practical experience related to their major. The work experience cannot be related to a minor or general education course. It is only available to F-1 students when it is an integral part of an established curriculum. This means that the work falls into one of the following categories:

It is required for all students in the program
It is a part of a co-op, practicum, clinical, internship course, or other work experience course
Above and beyond the requirements for a course in the student’s major including an independent study

Some important things to consider:

- You must register for the course approved by your academic department in order to engage in CPT. We cannot authorize your CPT until you have registered.
- You cannot use CPT as a way to be registered less than full time.
- CPT is approved on a semester-by-semester basis. You may not extend your CPT period. You may, however, apply for another semester of CPT if recommended by your department.
- CPT is not a convenient way to work off campus. The employment must be an integral part of your curriculum.

When can I engage in CPT? To be eligible for CPT, you must meet the following criteria:

- You must be maintaining F-1 status.
- You must have completed at least two full-time semesters (Fall and Spring) by the requested employment date.
- You must speak with your academic advisor to see if CPT is a part of your academic program. Many academic departments have very specific guidelines for when you can engage in CPT. It is not an automatic right granted to every student.

Is CPT part-time or full-time? There are two classifications of CPT:

- Part-time: 20 hours or less per week
- Full-time: 21 hours or more per week If you engage in 12 months or more of full-time CPT, you will lose your eligibility for Optional Practical Training. It is your responsibility to keep track of how much full-time CPT you have taken. Part-time CPT does not affect OPT.
What do I need to apply for CPT?

1. You must be registered for the appropriate course. (ISS will look this up in the university database.)
2. An offer of employment on company letterhead stating: Your name; the number of hours to be worked per week; the full address of the office location where you will be working; the exact start and end dates of your employment (as determined by the related course start and end dates); a general description of your duties/responsibilities; a completed Curricular Practical Training Request Form.

How long will it take for my CPT to be processed?

It will take 1-2 business days for ISS to process your paperwork. We will issue you a new I-20 with your CPT authorization on page; this will serve as your legal proof of eligibility to work.

Important: Until you have your CPT I-20, you cannot begin working. To do so would be unauthorized employment. Be sure to tell your employer of the above processing times when they ask about your availability to begin working.

For additional questions, contact Lora Steiner (lsteiner@su.edu or 540-665-1293).
Curricular Practical Training Request Form

Section A – To be completed by the student:

Complete this page and submit it with your other CPT materials.

Name: __________________________________________________________

Shenandoah ID#: ____________________

I am requesting:   ____ part-time (<20 hours)    ____ full-time (>20 hours)

Please sign below to certify that you have read all of the information in this packet and that you understand the F-1 regulations regarding CPT.

Signature: __________________________________ Date: _____________

Section B – To be completed by the student’s academic department:

Please check one:

_____ Internships/practicums are required for graduation.

_____ The student is registered/will register for a course within the major to which the work experience is related. Course number: ______________

How is the work experience related to the student’s major field of study and the course listed above?

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Academic Department Signature  Date

_________________________________

Print or type name  Phone

Title