



DEFINING CPT

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is an off-campus employment option available to F-1 students when the training experience is considered to be an integral part of the established curriculum and directly related to the student's major area of study.

"Training" is used here to refer to paid or unpaid internships or employment. According to Immigration regulations, CPT may be an internship, practicum, or other work experience that is required for the degree program (as defined in the course catalog) or for which academic course credit is awarded.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for CPT, you must:

1. Have maintained legal F-1 status for at least 9 consecutive months
(Exception: if the graduate program requires training before completion of one academic year, consult an ISSS Adviser)
2. Be enrolled in a course that carries academic credit (if not a requirement of the degree program)
3. Hold a job/training offer related to your major area of study
 - o CPT is contingent upon a solid offer (for details, see CPT Guide to Employer)

Graduate students engaging in research as part of the thesis or dissertation must prove that the CPT request involves innovative technology available only at the particular corporation/research facility or that the CPT request is for completing data collection essential for completion of the thesis or dissertation.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Obtain an ISSS [CPT Application Form](#)
2. Obtain an offer letter (see [CPT Guide to Employer](#))
3. Obtain appropriate academic advisor signature, course instructor information, and course description, as required by the CPT Application Form
4. Submit CPT application documents to your International Student Adviser at least two weeks prior to your CPT start date
5. Allow ISSS one to two weeks to review and issue new I-20 for CPT authorization, if approved
6. Do not begin training until you receive the new I-20 for CPT authorization from your International Student Adviser

ISSS International Student Advisers review CPT application materials. If CPT eligibility is established, your International Student Adviser issues a new I-20 listing on page 3 the CPT start and end dates, plus employer name and address. Note: an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) from Immigration is not required.

CHANGES TO CPT

CPT is approved for a specific employer, place of employment, and time period. You may not change employers or extend training without prior consultation with your International Student Adviser. You must request all changes to your CPT program at least two weeks in advance. You must complete new CPT application forms in order to obtain new authorization from your International Student Adviser. You are not permitted to work beyond your previously-approved CPT dates until you receive a new I-20 authorizing new or extended CPT dates.

CPT HOURS & LIMITATIONS

- Part-time CPT is authorized for up to 20 hours per week
- Full-time CPT is authorization for 20 hours per week or more (anything beyond 20 hours per week is permissible)
- CPT is authorized to correspond with Vanderbilt University's academic calendar
- **Note:** If you are authorized for 12 months or more of full-time CPT, you will not be eligible for Optional Practical Training