

Instructions for International Engineering Graduate Students Applying for CPT Authorization for a Summer or Winter Term Internship

You can apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) authorization when you have received a paid summer or winter term internship offer from the employer. **You will need: A formal job offer letter, an appointment with the Engineering Career Center graduate advisor, submission of an Experiential Learning Request in SPIRE, enrollment in a 1 credit practicum credit and submission of an application for your CPT I-20.**

PLEASE FOLLOW THESE STEPS:

1. Engineering Career Center: Schedule an appointment with Christina Mata via Handshake or cmmata@umass.edu to review offer letter and required CPT process

2. The job offer letter must contain the following:

- Be addressed to you and written on company letterhead (including company address)
- Provide a job title and brief description of duties
- The number of hours the student will work per week (Students may work up to 40 hours per week during summer or winter session.).
- An exact employment start and end date
- Complete address where the work will take place (street, city, state and zip code)
- If the work will be done remotely, that should also be indicated
- Salary and related compensation

(Please note: A summer or winter break internship must not overlap with an academic semester)

3. Email your advisor, cc' Associate Dean Caitlyn Butler at csbutler@engin.umass.edu with your offer letter requesting approval for your internship and the one (1) credit CPT practicum course required. Your advisor will forward their approval, including the offer letter, to Professor Butler. Please also CC: cmmata@umass.edu.

4. Once you receive both approvals, complete an Experiential Learning Request in SPIRE: Click on the **Academics** tile, go to Forms and Academic Requests tab, select **Experiential Learning Request**, click **Create a New Request**. **Fill out the required information, then upload your offer letter.** In the box requesting catalogue number, you will enter 698. Choose only the **primary internship term** if you have an internship for more than 1 term (ex.: winter and spring). You will need a new ELR I-20 for a new term's internship.

5. After you submit the completed SPIRE, you will get an email response about next steps in applying for CPT. You will then need to request a University+ Enrollment Appointment in SPIRE for your 1 credit CPT Practicum course. The UMass Career Hub will get you enrolled in the 1 credit practicum course after your ELR is approved. When the registration is completed, you will see the 1 credit in SPIRE

6. Take a screenshot of your 1 credit internship practicum course and have all documents (offer letter, SPIRE approval email and screenshot of the 1 credit practicum) ready to upload to apply for CPT authorization on the **Eform Portal** by visiting the OGA website:

<https://www.umass.edu/ipo/iss/curricular-practical-training-cpt>

(On this website go to *Application Steps, Step 5.*)

After logging in, you will be prompted to upload appropriate documents (offer letter, copy of the SPIRE Experience approval and screenshot of your CPT practicum credit in SPIRE. Once approved you will receive an email from the Office of Global Affairs with your I-20 work authorization. As a reminder, you are not legally authorized to begin CPT employment until you have received approval confirmation and a new I-20 form from OGA.

Additional Questions? Please contact Christina Mata, Associate Director of Graduate Career Programs, Engineering Career Center: cmmata@umass.edu or Evan Coyne, Immigration advisor in the Office of Global Affairs at: evancoyne@umass.edu

Important Notes: Students must be on-campus during the last semester of their degree completion. Interning without a completed work authorization (CPT I-20) for your employment will cause you to be out of F-1 Visa status and you could be asked to leave the country.

Please refer to the OGA website on work authorization and CPT & OPT:

<https://www.umass.edu/ipo/iss/f-1student-employment> for a more comprehensive understanding of how going on CPT may affect your eligibility for future post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT), travel considerations, and social security card information.

Practicum/Internship 1 credit course numbers for CPT

Biomedical Engineering: BMED-ENG 698

Chemical Engineering: CHEM-ENG 698

Civil & Environmental Engineering: CE-ENG 698

Electrical & Computer Engineering: E&C-ENG 698

Mechanical & Industrial Engineering: M&I-ENG 698

12/17/2025