Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Workshop

Spring 2021 (updated February 26, 2021)
What is CPT?

• CPT is a benefit for F-1 students to apply for work authorization while still a student. It is not a right nor a guarantee. You must meet all the requirements to be eligible.

• “an integral part of an established curriculum”
• “directly related to the student's major area of study”
• Requires enrollment in at least 1 credit for each term CPT is requested or co-op approval

Since CPT is part of your degree, the IPO does not decide which courses you should enroll in. This is determined by your advisor (academic/faculty/career). Therefore, the CPT process starts with them, not the IPO. The IPO will not review anything unless your advisor has approved it.
CPT Eligibility

• In **Active F-1 status for two full-time terms**
  – Active F-1 Status begins when you use your F-1 visa to enter the U.S. (or change within country)
  – Two semesters full-time
    • If you start in January, you are not eligible for Summer CPT since you have not been enrolled full-time for two academic semesters unless the work experience is *required* by your program
    • A few exceptions to this rule—grad program requires immediate participation in CPT or you have been in the US on another immigration status/enrolled as an F-1 for 9 months

• You must continue to be enrolled full-time while on CPT for fall/spring terms

• You are NOT eligible for CPT if you have finished your degree requirements

• If you do not continue to make academic progress while on CPT, you may not be approved for future CPT opportunities

• CPT is not to be used just for work authorization
CPT Considerations

- CPT authorization is only required for paid internships or if the employer requires it
  - Various scenarios if you are outside the U.S. but internship company is inside the U.S. then you may need CPT—contact IPO Advisor if this applies to you

- You cannot begin CPT until you have been authorized for it. Plan accordingly or your start date may be changed! **Give yourself (and us!) at least 2 weeks to get everything done.**
  - There are several offices who coordinate to get your paperwork authorized so it takes time. **Please do NOT email us asking for an expedited approval or if we received your request prior to the 5 business days. Multiple email requests only slow us down.**
CPT Considerations (continued)

• CPT authorization is date, employer, hours, and location specific. If approved for something that changes, this requires an additional CPT authorization.

• 20 hours or less is part-time; 20 hours or more is full-time

• 12 months or more of full-time CPT eliminates OPT eligibility
  – You should keep track of your full-time CPT usage
  – Part-time CPT is unlimited

• Working 20 hours on-campus and having CPT authorization is a gray area of the regulations. The regulations don’t say no, and they don’t say yes, but the IPO does not recommend doing this.
CPT Application Steps (plan 2 weeks to get through this!)

1. Receive the Internship Offer!
   - Ensure it meets the requirements
     • Offer Letter on company letterhead (with complete mailing address) which must contain ALL the following information:
       • Job title
       • A brief description of your job duties
       • Number of hours you will work per week
       • An exact employment start and end date
       • Location where you will be working
       • Your Salary and related compensation
   - We will accept emailed updates if needed, but preference is to have everything in the offer letter
CPT Application Steps continued...

2. Ensure your academic program permits the internship and arrange to be enrolled in at least one credit
   - Each College’s requirements/procedures are slightly different so please check!
   - College Specific Websites for CPT are listed on the IPO’s CPT website

3. Complete the Career Development Hub’s Handshake process
   - In addition to submitting an Experience Contract in Handshake for each academic term you want CPT, along with additional paperwork related to Covid-19 (these are not part of the IPO’s required paperwork, but you must complete these for UMass to approve the internship and award credit) (Mary Lysakowski: mklysako@umass.edu).

4. Apply for CPT!
   - Upload offer letter, proof of course enrollment or co-op approval (screen shot of SPIRE of course enrollment; co-op departmental permission form and co-op request email to the Registrar provided by the Career Development Hub, etc.), and copy of approved Handshake
CPT Application Steps continued...

5. Your request goes to your academic advisor/career center advisor for approval
   • The IPO does not receive the request until the advisor has approved it. You can check the status in UMass VIP (the portal where you submitted your CPT request).

6. Wait 5 business days for approval after your academic advisor approves it.
   • Please do NOT email us asking for an expedited approval or if we received your request prior to the 5 business days. Multiple email requests only slow us down.

7. IPO reviews and approves if everything is correct. Receive your I-20 with CPT authorization via email and print out.

8. Begin your internship! Update SPIRE with your address if you move.

9. Follow through with any course requirements established in Step 2 (The IPO is not involved in this).
Frequently Asked Questions

• Can I extend my CPT?
• My CPT is for multiple terms. How do I request it?
• My hours have changed! What do I do?
• Can you expedite my request? I start tomorrow!!
• I’m moving across the country for my internship. What do I do?
• I work at Company X but am paid by company Y. Is this ok?
• Do I need a Social Security Number (SSN)?
  [https://www.umass.edu/ipo/iss/social-security-and-itin](https://www.umass.edu/ipo/iss/social-security-and-itin)
Good luck in your internship search!

- Remember to use your resources
  - Talk to your Career Advisor
    - Network!
- Give us time to process everything
Questions? Put them in the chat box during the CPT workshop or email your IPO Advisor directly.

IPO’s CPT Website:
https://www.umass.edu/ipo/iss/curricular-practical-training-cpt