Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Information for Current F-1 Students

The University of Texas at Tyler
Office of International Programs
Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
What Is CPT?
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What Is CPT?

CPT is temporary employment authorization for qualifying F-1 students whose degree program either:

A. Awards course credit for the employment, OR
B. Requires the employment.

Employment that is neither required by a student’s degree program nor degree credit-bearing is not considered *integral* to the student’s curriculum for the purposes of determining CPT eligibility.
Beyond the relevance of an employment opportunity to your academic program, there are additional criteria you must meet to be eligible for CPT consideration.

- You must have finished two successive long semesters at UT Tyler prior to beginning CPT, unless one of the following exceptions applies:
  - You are a graduate student, and your program requires you to participate in an internship in your first year.
  - You transferred to UT Tyler having already completed two long semesters without a break in your studies at your previous school.
• You are enrolled in *and* finish the course granting you degree credits for the employment *during the same semester* in which it takes place.
Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
How Much CPT Can You Do?
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How Much CPT Can You Do?

CPT is by design an *academic need-based benefit*. As such, no more than the minimum amount of employment required for you to meet all relevant degree program objectives may be granted. So, regardless of what is permitted by your department in general -

- If you accrue 12 months of *full-time* CPT, you lose post-completion OPT and, if applicable, STEM OPT Extension, eligibility for your current degree level.
  - Note that USCIS defines full-time as > 20 work hours/week. Outside USCIS, however, most employers will consider any employment < 40 work hours/week part-time. So make sure your CPT employer is using “part-time” in the same sense when determining your weekly work hours.

There is no maximum on total part-time CPT hours.
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Steps to Apply
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1. With your academic advisor’s help, determine if there is a course you may take in conjunction with employment for credit or if paid employment is required at any point during your degree program.

2. If the former, secure a qualifying position—one that would meet course requirements—and obtain a job offer letter on company letterhead containing the following details:
   a. Specific start and end dates in the future
   b. Job title and description of expected duties/learning outcomes
   c. Work site address where you’ll be performing those duties
d. Expected total hours per week (under 20 is considered part-time; 20 or more is considered full-time)

e. Signature from company representative and the date of signing

3. Fill out the top third of the Curricular Practical Training Request (pictured in following slide) and forward it with your job offer letter to your academic advisor to review and verify. If approved, before sending your form over ensure that both your academic advisor and dean of the CPT course-offering college have signed your request.

4. Submit your completed request and job offer letter to oip@uttyler.edu.

5. Allow 1-3 business days for our office to issue and email you a new I-20 authorizing you for CPT.

Note that you may not start working (paid or unpaid) until you’ve received your CPT I-20!
Complete and sign this portion of the CPT Request form, then email it with your job offer letter to your academic advisor for review.
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Frequently Asked Questions
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• *On my CPT Request, what is the earliest and latest date I can request to start and end my CPT employment?*

As noted in the Request form, provided you are enrolled in a CPT course in the same semester and your job offer letter states the same start and end dates, you may specify a start date as early as the 1st day following the official university end date for the previous semester, and an end date as late as the day before the university start date for the next.
Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Frequently Asked Questions

• *Does my CPT course have to be worth 3 credits?*

  No.

• *If my internship will be unpaid, do I need to apply for CPT first?*

  Not if the “internship” isn’t actually a substitute for what would otherwise be a paid position, and there is truly no remuneration for your work, now or in the future, stated or implied by the company.

  Note that even implying you will receive a paid position once you’ve graduated and are on post-completion OPT would be considered a form of compensation.
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