

Curricular Practical Training

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a type of off-campus work permission for F-1 international students who are currently pursuing study programs in the United States and want to gain experience in their fields of study via an internship. CPT is an academic experience and is not intended to be used for regular off-campus work. CPT is not available after a student completes a degree program. Students should be mindful to keep all records of CPT and the academic work related to CPT, and how that employment is integral to the degree program. Students will need to retain copies of all previous CPT I-20s when later applying for Optional Practical Training (OPT).

It is best to start planning your CPT at least one semester prior to starting. You must obtain CPT authorization BEFORE beginning employment. Authorization can't be backdated. To participate in CPT, you must meet the following requirement:

1. You must complete one academic year (TWO semesters) at CSUB. Winter and summer terms DON'T count toward the two-semester completion. The only exception to the two semester requirement is for students enrolled in Master of Health Care Administration (MHA) program. MHA students have to complete an internship in order to earn their degree.

If you participate in 12 months or more of full-time CPT at the same degree level, you automatically forfeit your OPT eligibility. The use of full-time CPT in a prior degree at the same level will be included in the 12 month calculation. It is the student's responsibility to calculate their CPT usage. Accrual of part-time CPT should not negatively affect eligibility for OPT. There are no limitations on part-time CPT, however, high CPT usage can cause U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to subject increased scrutiny to OPT applications (especially STEM OPT), visa applications, H1-B petitions, etc.

Here are the items you need to do before you can participate in CPT:

1. Have a valid i20 from CSUB and be registered in classes at CSUB for the term you are wishing to participate in CPT
2. You must be enrolled in an internship class at CSUB during the term you are participating in CPT. Please see the CSUB course catalog to find the internship class for your respective major. The class must say internship in it.
3. You will have to find a professor in your major to teach you the internship class. Please contact a professor directly about teaching you the internship class. Have your professor contact the International Students and Programs Office (ISP) if they have questions. Unfortunately, ISP can't help you find a professor to teach your internship class.
4. You need to secure an academically appropriate internship that is directly related to your field of study. Positions such as retail sales, food service, and other unskilled positions will be denied as that is not allowed in the USCIS regulations. Your immediate supervisor for your internship can't be someone that is an F-1 or J-1 visa holder.
5. You will need your proposed internship site to write a letter on their company letterhead stating the following:

This letter is to certify the participation of “student’s name” in an F-1 Curricular Practical Training internship work-based learning experience with “company/organization name.” “Company/organization name” agrees to provide the student an educational work-based learning experience directly related the student’s major field of study.

- Student’s Legal Name:
- Company/Organization Name:
- Company/Organization Address:
- Student’s Job Title:
- Student’s Job Description: (including how the internship relates to the student’s major)
- Proposed dates of Employment: (must fall within the semester student is participating in CPT)
- Hours per week: (20 hours or less per week is considered part time and 21+ hours per week is considered full time, CPT can only be issued part-time or full-time)
- Salary (if none, indicate “unpaid”):
- Supervisor’s Name:
- Supervisor’s Job Title:
- Supervisor Email:
- Supervisor Telephone:

6. Student will then bring items 2&5 to International Students and Programs Office (ISP) or email it to csubis@csub.edu three weeks in advance of their proposed start date.

ISP is happy to talk to employers about CPT if they are confused or have questions. If this is a paid internship and you don’t have a social security card, please let ISP know that so a social security letter can be issued (you can start working when Social Security says so). ISP will review and issue your CPT i20.

More information on CPT can be found at:

[Foreign Academic Students | USCIS](#) (click CPT)