F-1 Student Curricular Practical Training Requirements

CPT/Off-Campus Internships
Eligibility Requirements & Application Process

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is available to those students who can receive academic credit for either a paid or unpaid internship or assistantship off-campus that can be considered an integral part of the student’s academic program.

Eligibility Requirements

- You must have been enrolled as a full-time undergraduate/graduate student for at least one academic year (9 consecutive months)
  - Exception: Graduate students whose program requires or encourages immediate internship participation
  - IELP students are not eligible for CPT

- Employment must be approved by the Immigration Specialist/DSO or the OIS Executive Director/PDSO

- Employment may be part-time (20 hrs/week) or full-time (20-40 hrs/wk)
  - Note: Full-time CPT is allowed ONLY during school breaks or when all coursework has been completed but thesis research is still in progress

- Total full-time CPT employment period may NOT exceed 12 months (cumulative over the entire program duration) or the student becomes ineligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT) following graduation
  - Part-time CPT does not affect OPT eligibility

- CPT employment MUST be directly related to the student’s field of study and it MUST be determined as an integral part of the study curriculum;
  One of these two options must be apparent:
  - An internship must be either required by an existing and relevant course curriculum (a course description with clear objectives is helpful), or
  - An internship is highly encouraged and the student must receive at least one (1) credit for the CPT opportunity, which will be evaluated by a faculty member from the student’s degree program

- The student is required to maintain a full course of study in F-1 status during CPT

- Performance on previous CPT internship(s) and/or a student’s GPA will be considered prior to CPT authorization
To Apply:

Students CANNOT begin CPT without prior consent from the Immigration Specialist/DSO and be given the updated Form I-20 with CPT authorization.

Step 1: Attend a CPT seminar or speak with the DSO about CPT
Step 2: Find an internship
Step 3: Apply for internship credit via CareerLink (http://www.msubillings.edu/careers/clmenu.htm)
Step 4: Submit required materials to Immigration Specialist / DSO in the Office of International Studies

Required materials for CPT authorization:
1) letter of employment, 2) letter from faculty supervisor, and 3) internship course syllabus

- **Letter of Employment from direct supervisor should include:**
  - Full name of the student
  - Offer of employment stating the weekly hours expected to work
  - Employment beginning and ending dates
  - Testimonial describing the student’s employment duties & supervision
  - The offered salary or stipend, if any
  - A statement indicating that the employer agrees to cooperate with MSUB in achieving the curricular purposes of the employment/training

- **Letter from the internship’s faculty supervisor or department head should include:**
  - Testimonial that the work the student will be doing is an integral part of his/her program curriculum and how it relates to the program and/or course
  - Describe how the CPT will be evaluated academically
  - State whether or not the student will receive course credit and if so, how many credits

- **Internship course syllabus should include:**
  - The course number, title, credits offered and the instructor’s name and contact information
  - Provide a detailed overview of the curriculum and evaluation process