OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BILLINGS

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 OIS Immigration Team. **Alisa Batchelor – DSO, International Student Services Coordinator or Abby Cook – PDSO, Assistant Director.**

- Employment may be part-time (20 hrs/week) or full-time (20-40hrs/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 <u>and</u> 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 unless the CPT is authorized for the summer term.

- **Performance on previous CPT internship(s) and/or a student's GPA will be considered prior to CPT authorization**

- **Please note that internship eligibility and requirements differ for each department/degree program on campus. You will need to speak with your academic advisor to coordinate an internship within your field of study.**

To Apply:

Students CANNOT begin CPT without prior consent from the OIS Immigration Team <u>and</u> be given the updated Form I-20 with CPT authorization.

Step 1: Attend a CPT seminar or speak with the OIS Immigration Team about CPT
Step 2: Speak to your department about internship requirements and determine who your faculty instructor/supervisor will be.
Step 2: Find an off campus internship.
Step 3: Submit your internship details in Career Link (instructions sent separately). Make sure you have the contact details for your faculty supervisor as well as your site supervisor/manager.
Step 4: Submit required materials to OIS Immigration Team for CPT authorization (see below) and receive an updated I-20.

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

- **Letter of Employment from site 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