

# 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 (20-40hrs/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 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)  
(<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