

CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING FOR STUDENTS IN F-1 STATUS

The Basics of Curricular Practical Training (CPT): CPT is defined as an internship or practicum experience that is an *integral* part of an established curriculum. In basic terms this means the training is necessary to the completion of a degree program as reflected in the student's degree plan or graduation requirements. It must also be a particular course taken for credit through NDSU's Internship Program or the academic department. No CPT is available after any I-20 extension as extensions are for only academic reasons and cannot be granted for employment. CPT is considered to be practical training in your field that benefits you as an essential part of your academic program of study. It is intended as an option available to F-1 students should one choose to utilize it and is not intended to be a means towards pure off-campus employment or a future permanent position or immigrant status.

Students must have a job offer before applying. CPT is authorized for one specific employer, at a specific location and for specific dates as approved by the ISSAS office.

Students authorized for CPT will receive a new I-20 with CPT authorization indicated on the 3rd page. This is the student's work authorization for employment purposes. The student must not start working until they have the CPT I-20 authorized for those specific dates.

→ Knowing CPT procedures and regulations prior to applying is extremely important. Viewing the Practical Training Mandatory Reading Material (found on the ISSAS website) **and** reading this application in full is required prior to meeting with an international student advisor about CPT or before submitting an application for CPT.

A link to the Mandatory Reading Material is located at: https://www.ndsu.edu/international/iss/immigration/f1/off_campus.

Eligibility and Limitations

Students must maintain full-time status each term to comply with immigration requirements. Undergraduate students in their last semester are not allowed to do only CPT during their last term (including summer). Students are not limited in the amount of CPT they can use, but those who use one year or more of full-time CPT will be ineligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT). NDSU recommends students do not exceed approximately 11.5 months of full-time CPT so that they may retain the ability to apply for OPT in the future. Please note that any part-time CPT (20 hours or less per week) is not counted towards this one year threshold.

Practical training is limited to part time (20 hours per week or less) while school is in session and full-time during holidays or school vacations. Graduate students who have completed all course work may be eligible to work full-time (more than 20 hours) during the school terms.

However, please note that graduate students are no longer eligible for CPT once they have defended their thesis or dissertation and instead should apply for OPT if practical training in your program is desired.

Submitting an application for CPT does not automatically guarantee the granting of CPT. CPT opportunities are first approved by the student's department to ensure the position directly relates to and is necessary for their academic program of study. Because CPT is being done to satisfy a degree requirement, the employer, the student, the student's Academic Advisor, and the NDSU Career Center must agree upon the suitability of the employment and that the objectives for the program are clearly defined. Also note that if the student decides to change employers, they must stop working and apply for new CPT authorization, starting again with completing a new CPT application.

CPT Application – How to Apply

STEP 1: Fill out entire application and present the following forms to your academic advisor for their approval:

- Student Request for CPT form – located on our [Forms](#) page

STEP 2: After receiving forms back from your academic advisor, turn in all CPT documents to the front desk of the ISSAS OFFICE or by email at NDSU.International@ndsu.edu

1. Student Request for CPT
2. Curricular Practical Training Endorsement Form from your department
3. Letter on NDSU letterhead paper from your Academic Advisor/Department Chair (as described in the Endorsement Form).
4. Student Responsibility Statement
5. Practical Training Health Insurance Statement and Academic Progress Statement
6. A copy of your job offer letter. The letter must include at least the beginning date and ending date preferred and it must state that the student is being hired as an intern or to do a practicum or a co-op position.

It must be written on official letterhead, signed by the employer, include a position title, job description, and salary. In addition, the letter should also state how it is related to your degree program and is a necessary part of the completion of your degree.

→If the letter does not state that the position is an internship, practicum or co-op experience, you cannot apply for CPT.

STEP 3: After you submit your application, please be patient while your application is being reviewed.

- Your international student advisor will review your request and then be in contact with you about getting registered for your internship at the NDSU Career Center.

STEP 4: The Career Center will contact us when you have been registered, and your international student advisor will authorize your CPT in SEVIS.

STEP 5: A new I-20 will be printed for you. Your advisor will email you when you can come in and pick up the new CPT I-20.

→As you are waiting for your application process to be finished, keep in mind you must allow 7-10 days for CPT authorization to be completed. If your employer asks when you can begin, you must explain that you cannot start until approximately 7-10 days from the date you submit your complete CPT application. Submitting an incomplete application can delay processing if we must wait for you to submit additional documents.