Curricular Practical Training  
Information and Application Workshop  
Office of International Programs  
San Francisco State University  

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What is Curricular Practical Training (CPT)?

- **Purpose:** Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a temporary employment authorization for International students in F-1 Student visa status. CPT allows students to take up an off-campus training/internship which is required by the major for a specific period of time.
- **Length:** CPT is semester based. CPT will begin no earlier than the first day of instruction and must end no later than the last day of final exams for the semester.
- **Internship:** Students must enroll in an internship course. The internship course should be an integral part of students' established curriculum. Please note not all majors at SF State have internship courses that corresponds to CPT. Therefore, not all F-1 students at SF State are eligible for CPT.
- **How to obtain CPT:** Students must request CPT authorization from the Office of International Programs (OIP). CPT is granted by F-1 International Student Advisors at OIP.
- **Types of CPT:** There are two types of CPT: part-time and full-Time. Part-time CPT authorization will allow you to work 20 hours or less per week, and full-time CPT authorization will allow you to work for more than 20 hours per week.

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Eligibility

You must meet the following criteria in order to be eligible to apply for CPT:

- **Be in valid F-1 status.**
- **Enrolled full-time.** Minimum 12 units for undergraduate students or 8 units for graduate students. You are also eligible to apply for CPT if you have approved Reduced Course Load (RCL). Waitlisted classes will not be counted towards full time requirement.
- **Fulfilled one year full-time requirement.** You must have been enrolled full-time for at least one full academic year prior to submitting an CPT application. One year enrollment may be fulfilled at SF State, a previous university, or between multiple universities.
- Internship offer letter IS required for CPT.
Eligibility - continued

- Enroll in an internship, fieldwork, practicum, cooperative education or other course specifically designed for experiential or practical learning and listed in the SF State Bulletin as such. To find out if your major have internship requirements and internship class, speak to an academic advisor in your major department. If you are an undergraduate student and your major is Business, speak to an academic advisor at Undergraduate Student Services Center, BUS 112.

Please note:

- This internship course must be used towards to your degree and graduation requirements. If you are a graduate student, this course must be on your Advancement To Candidacy (ATC) form
- CPT will not be granted for Independent Study and Special Study courses
- Although F1 immigration does not limit the numbers of semesters in which you can do internship, but your academic department may limit. Ask your academic advisor about how many internship classes you can take to satisfy your degree requirements
- The internship course must be in the same semester in which you are employed in the internship position
Eligibility - continued

Types of internship opportunities which are NOT qualified as CPT:

- Optional internship: internship that is not part of your degree requirements nor in your curriculum
- Full-time job or long term employment
- Self-employed positions/entrepreneurs

Compensation is not a consideration when determining whether an opportunity qualifies as CPT. Any off-campus internship positions, whether paid or unpaid, requires CPT before you begin the employment. Under no conditions can you begin working – not even as a volunteer – before your CPT is approved. Volunteering for a position which normally provides compensation is considered “employment” and is therefore not permitted without appropriate authorization.

Also, if you have already completed all of the required coursework and are in the process of completing your culminating experience, you are NOT eligible for CPT. You should consider to apply for Thesis OPT.
Steps to Apply for CPT

**Step 1: Understand CPT and how it works**
All applicants are required to review this CPT online information workshop to complete the necessary forms and put together the application.

**Step 2: Prepare and submit CPT materials to OIP**
Submit your completed application to OIP for an I-20 with CPT authorization.

**Step 3: Pick up your I-20**
An F-1 International Student Advisor will review your application materials and grant you CPT if you are eligible. A new I-20 will be issued and your CPT authorization will be printed on the 2nd page. Pick up your new I-20 at the OIP front desk once we contact you (within 5 business days, excluding weekends and holidays)

**Plan ahead! The processing time for CPT application is 5 business days. Do not wait until the last minute to submit your CPT application. You can only start your internship after you obtain the CPT authorization.**
CPT Application Checklist

Submit the following documents to OIP:

- CPT Application [Cover Sheet]
- Completed and signed [Curricular Practical Training Authorization Form (2 pages)]
- Original or photocopy of your most current I-20
- Photocopy of the identification page(s) in your passport (must include name, current expiration date, and photo)
- I-94. Print your I-94 from [https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/). If you entered the U.S. prior to April 30, 2013, provide a front and back copy of the I-94 card stapled to inside of your passport
- **Original and official** internship offer letter ([See sample](#)). The offer letter must be printed on the official company letterhead with your supervisor or hiring manager’s signature. The letter should provide the following information:
  - Your full name
  - Title of your internship position
  - Your internship start date and end date
  - The number of internship hours per week
  - Brief explanation of your tasks

We recommend you to use the internship offer letter sample provided by OIP, if possible.
Applying for CPT

- US Immigration allows students to have multiple internship positions at the same time. If your academic department is ok with you working for multiple internship positions, you may submit CPT Authorization Form and internship offer letter for each internship position.

- CPT is an employer specified authorization. This means if you have to change your internship to a different company you will have to change your CPT too. You will need submit a new CPT Authorization Form and internship offer letter to OIP.

- There is no fee to apply for CPT.
CPT Authorization Form
• Complete the “APPLICANT INFORMATION” and “APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES” on the 2nd page.

• “ACADEMIC INFORMATION” should be completed by your academic advisor from your major department.

If you are a business major: This form must be signed by the advisor in Student Services Center, College of Business (Room 112), not your faculty advisor.

If you are an MBA/MSA major: This form must be signed by Christopher Kingston, Director of Student Services, Business Graduate Programs, not your faculty advisor nor Thesis reader.
Read the “APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES” carefully, sign and date.
An F-1 International Student Advisor will review your application materials and grant you CPT if you are eligible. A new I-20 will be issued and your CPT authorization will be printed on the 2nd page. Pick up your new I-20 at the OIP front desk once we contact you (within 5 business days, excluding weekends and holidays).

- Do not start working before picking up the new I-20 with CPT authorization!!
  You will be considered working illegally if you do not have any work authorization in your hand!

- The I-20 with CPT authorization printed on the 2nd page is your official work authorization. You will not receive any other documents or employment authorization card from USCIS.

- You will be eligible to apply for a Social Security Number (SSN) at any Social Security Administration (SSA) office. SSA will not process your SSN application if it is more than 30 days in advance of the CPT start date.
The following is a list of common mistakes CPT applicants make which causes delays and frustration. Make sure your CPT request and supporting documentation are COMPLETED before submitting them to OIP.

1. **Incomplete internship offer letter**
   - Internship offer letter is not printed on company letterhead and/or is missing signature from the hiring manager.
   - Internship offer letter has no internship start and end date. OIP cannot grant CPT if there is no end date.

2. **Different internship start and end dates**
   - Internship start and end dates are different on the internship offer letter from CPT authorization form. The dates must match on all documents!
   - Internship start and end dates are beyond the semester start and end date posted on [http://oip.sfsu.edu/cpt](http://oip.sfsu.edu/cpt).

3. **Last minute request**
   - Do not submit CPT request the day before internship start date. The standard processing time for OIP to review and grant CPT is 5 business days. F-1 advisors cannot backdate the CPT authorization and we will not be able to accommodate your last minute request.
This is the end of the workshop.

Good luck and we wish you all the best!