Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Policy Guide

WHAT IS CPT?

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is temporary employment authorization that is “an integral part of an established curriculum” and “directly related to an F1 student’s major area of study.” It is granted by the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) with the chief purpose of achieving a curricular objective. CPT includes alternate work/study, internship, or any other type of required internship or practicum.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR CPT?

- Students who have been in lawful F-1 status for one academic year (two consecutive full time semesters) and have a current active SEVIS record. Full-time enrollment as a student on a previous visa, such as H4 may count toward full-time enrollment.
- CPT opportunity MUST be directly related to a student’s declared major
- Students who has a job/internship/volunteer opportunity that is not employment driven.
- Students transitioning from the U Asia Campus (UAC) must have completed two consecutive semesters at the University of Utah main campus in F-1 status.
- Exception: An exception is allowed for graduate students in a degree program that requires immediate participation in an internship of all students in its program. Approval from ISSS to participate in the first academic year is still necessary and must be noted in the course catalog for the CPT course. If required by department, CPT may be full-time or part-time.
- Obtaining a grade below C-, NC grade, failure to enroll, or otherwise failing to complete a CPT course will disqualify a student to apply for CPT the following semester.
GENERAL CPT GUIDELINES

Part-Time vs. Full-Time
CPT may be authorized for either part-time or full-time, providing a student meets all eligibility requirements.

- **Part-time CPT**
  - Part-time CPT is defined as working 1-20 hours per week (not cumulative).
  - Students authorized for medical reduced course load: part-time employment may be approved if it is encouraged by the student’s physician in order to promote the student’s health and wellness.

- **Full-time CPT**
  - Full-time CPT is defined as working 21-40 hours per week.
  - F-1 students must have a cumulative 3.0 GPA for undergraduates, or 3.5 GPA for graduates, in the most recently reported semester prior to applying for full-time CPT in the fall, spring, or a student’s last semester. Exceptions may be available only for students whose programs require internship participation for completion of the program.
  - F-1 students are eligible for full-time CPT during the summer vacation semester regardless of GPA (unless it is their first semester).
  - Accumulating 12 months or more of full-time CPT will eliminate eligibility for post completion OPT. Part-time CPT does not affect OPT eligibility. **Students are responsible for tracking their own full-time CPT accumulation.**
  - Students authorized for medical reduced course load: full-time employment is not permitted.

CPT Location
CPT that is physically located outside of the state of Utah is allowed only when a student is on a summer vacation semester. Please note that if summer is your last semester, it is not considered a vacation semester.

Graduate and/or PhD students who are in a thesis or dissertation program: exceptions may be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

CPT is required:
- If the internship is off-campus, and the employer is affiliated with the university but does not provide direct services to student
If the internship is located on campus, but offered through a third party that does not provide direct student services

**CPT and On Campus Work**
Student may participate in part-time CPT and part-time on campus work simultaneously. Combined, these two work authorizations may not exceed 40 hours per week. On-campus work cannot exceed 20 hours per week except in a summer vacation semester, regardless of whether part-time CPT is also authorized.

**Employer**
CPT is employer specific. You may only work for the employer listed on the I-20. If you change employers while on CPT, or work for multiple employers during a semester, you will need to submit a separate CPT application for each request. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure your employment information is accurately reflected on your CPT I-20.

**Pay vs. No Pay**
If you are wishing to receive compensation for your volunteer experience, you will need to apply for and seek approval for CPT. Also, an unpaid position where the duties are similar to a paid position, or in which your function(s) are critical to the company's operation, should not be considered volunteer work and CPT is required.

- **Volunteer Work**
  - If volunteering in a “traditional volunteer position,” meaning that no one else that is performing the same duties is receiving compensation for his/her work/time, CPT is NOT required.
  - Volunteers, as defined by the Department of Labor Fair Labor Standards Act are “individuals who volunteer or donate their services, usually on a part time basis, for public service, religious or humanitarian objectives, not as employees and without contemplation of pay.”
  - Please review “Volunteering and Unpaid Internships” guide for more information.

**CPT Authorization Period**
CPT will only be authorized for one semester at a time. Students may not begin the internship prior to the authorized start date or work past the end date listed on the I-20. A need to work beyond the listed end date will require a new CPT authorization. Working outside of the
authorized dates may result in a loss of future immigration benefits. Please note that CPT with a start date in the past will not be authorized nor will CPT dates be retroactively changed.

**CPT Start and End Dates**

CPT will only be authorized for one semester at a time. Your start and the end date must be mentioned on the offer letter.

- CPT authorizations cannot be made before the first day of the semester for which they are authorized. For example, if the summer term begins on May 13, this is the earliest date that CPT can be authorized.
- CPT can be authorized through the break following a semester and must end no later than the day before the next semester begins. For example, if the fall term begins on August 19, this means that August 18 is the final date that a summer CPT can be authorized.
- If you wish to pursue a CPT opportunity that spans more than one semester, you must submit a CPT request for each semester. You must also be enrolled in a CPT-eligible course for each semester that you are requesting CPT.
- Approved CPT Start and End Dates for upcoming semesters:
  - Spring 2020: January 6, 2020 – May 10, 2020
  - Summer 2020: May 11, 2020 – August 23, 2020
  - Fall 2020: August 24, 2020 – January 10, 2021

**Offer Letter**

Your offer must contain all the information requested below. Any incomplete offer letter will result in denial and the student will be asked to resubmit the CPT request with an updated offer letter.

- The letter should be written on company letterhead
- Student’s official name
- Job title
- Job description
- The number of hours per week
- The physical work location
- Employment start date
- Employment end date
- Immediate supervisor information (name, phone number/email address)
- Signed by a representative of the company with physical signature in ink
**Learning Objectives**

All students are required to provide 3 (three) personal learning objectives to ISSS with their CPT E-form.

Example:

“During the internship, I will gain a deeper understanding of principles learned in MKTG XXXX Marketing through Interactive Media by improving the company's social media presence. I will be responsible for creating content and analyzing traffic on social media platforms.

- Learning objectives must be related to the courses they are taking on the semester they are applying for CPT and/or 1 (one) previous semester.
- If a student is requesting multiple periods of CPT, the curricular objectives of the next CPT occurrence cannot be the same as the previous CPT. Multiple attempts of the course will require a new, university-level learning experience.

**Required Course Enrollment**

Students must enroll in a CPT approved course that is taken for academic credit. The minimum credits accepted for an elective internship course will be one (1) credit hour and registration in an authorized course will be required. The CPT course will count toward the immigration full-time requirement.

CPT will not be granted to students that have completed their program requirements and are graduating or eligible to graduate. This is considered delaying graduation in order to participate in CPT. Additionally, CPT will not be granted if a student has a pending reinstatement request or a hold that prevents registration.

For graduate students (Masters and Ph.D.) in a thesis program, enrollment in thesis credits will be accepted for CPT authorization as long as the internship is directly related to a student’s thesis/dissertation research project. In this situation, enrollment in thesis credits may take the place of the internship course.

Students who fail to enroll in the required CPT course may have their CPT authorization discontinued as well as become ineligible to apply for CPT the following semester.

- The internship course you wish to take must be listed on the Approval Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Courses list on the ISSS website. If your chosen course in
not included in this list, please contact ISSS and be aware this may delay the review of your CPT application.

- If the CPT internship is a part of the established curriculum and required of all students in the program to graduate, an internship course is not required. An internship must be listed in the university’s catalog as required of all students in the program for graduation and document as such in any published program materials (i.e. website, program brochures, etc.). A department letter is not necessary if the above requirements are met.

For CPT Students in the Chemical Engineering program, student must sign up for CPT credit courses: CH EN 4977 or 4978 (undergrads); CH EN 6877 (grads). Students enrolled in these courses may choose to enroll in the CPT credit course the same semester as CPT employment, or the semester following CPT employment.

**BSIP/CSIP Course Options**

If you are planning to use one of these courses for your internship, you **must** speak with the BSIP or CSIP advisor before submitting your CPT request.

**CSIP:** If an internship course is not part of your curriculum, there still may be an opportunity to participate in CPT by scheduling an internship course through Career Services. If you are wishing to participate in the Career Services internship Program (CSIP), you must make an appointment with a Career Services Counselor. The following link can be used to find a counselor based on major ([http://careers.utah.edu/students/research/major/find-your-counselor.php](http://careers.utah.edu/students/research/major/find-your-counselor.php)).

**BSIP:** For business students, registration in the Business Student Internship Program (BSIP) will occur automatically.

Please note that this option will be considered on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Office in International Student and Scholar Services. The course SHOULD NOT be used as a means to simply get CPT employment.

**Required Course Grade**

Student must earn one of the following grade for their CPT course:

- a C- grade or higher
- a Credit if a student elected to take an internship credit for NC/CR
Student will not be eligible for CPT the next semester if:
  o a student elects to take an internship credit for NC/CR and an NC grade is earned
  o Students who officially withdraw or earn an unofficial withdrawal (EU) without the consent of ISSS

A student who fail to enroll in the required CPT course may have their CPT authorization discontinued as well as become ineligible to apply for CPT the following semester.

**Repeating CPT**

Students may repeat CPT up to 3 (three) times if they have same position/employer and same course. Please keep in mind that any opportunities that are employment driven are not eligible for CPT.

  o A C- grade or better in their previous CPT course is required.
  o Accumulating 12 months or more of full-time CPT will eliminate eligibility for post completion OPT. Part-time CPT does not affect OPT eligibility. Students are responsible for tracking their own full-time CPT accumulation.
  o Please be aware that some departments may have restrictions on repeating particular courses. Students should consult with their academic advisor prior to re-enrolling in a CPT course.
  o Each CPT request will be evaluated separately to ensure it is integral to the program, and not for employment purposes.
  o Students are responsible to understand that repeat CPT with the same employer may be closely reviewed by USCIS to ensure it is an internship with academic purpose. Please meet with ISSS advisor if you have any concerns.

**CPT in the Last Semester**

**ISSS does not recommend that you bridge your CPT employment to OPT.** Please be aware that bridging may result in issues with your Post-Completion OPT application, STEM OPT, or H1B in the future as USCIS may interpret it as misuse of CPT. If your CPT internship unexpectedly becomes an offer for full-time OPT, we recommend getting separate and new offer letters for each stating how your position has changed.

Students are responsible for understanding the risks involved with CPT in a final semester and should consult with an ISSS advisor for any questions.
o Student may choose to participate in part-time or full-time CPT in their final semester. If approved, all general rules for part-time or full-time CPT apply.

o CPT may NOT be the only course taken in the final semester unless that specific CPT course is the only remaining requirement of the program for graduation. Please keep in mind; students must also have a course that requires physical presence in their last semester.

o CPT that is physically located outside of the state of Utah is allowed only when a student is on a summer vacation semester. Please note that if summer is your last semester, it is not considered a vacation semester. Exceptions may be made for Graduate and/or PhD students who are in a thesis or dissertation program on a case by case review.

o F-1 students must have a cumulative 3.0 GPA for undergraduates, or 3.5 GPA for graduates, in the most recently reported semester prior to applying for full-time CPT in the fall, spring, or a student’s last semester. Exceptions may be available only for students whose programs require internship participation for completion of the program.

Transfer Students or Students Returning to School from POST/STEM OPT

o Students returning from a period of OPT and participating in a new degree program must be enrolled in two semesters of full-time study before being eligible for CPT.

o Students transferring to the University of Utah may qualify for immediate CPT if they have met the full academic year requirement at the previous institution. A transfer student must provide a current I-20 and transcripts from the previous school to demonstrate policy compliance.

Applying for CPT

1. Attend a CPT workshop/meet with an ISSS Advisor to discuss CPT
2. Discuss employment opportunity with employer and obtain an offer letter
3. Meet with academic advisor to discuss the internship course and CPT process
4. Login to UAtlas and complete the CPT request uatlas.issss.utah.edu
5. The academic advisor reviews the CPT request, makes a recommendation, and submits the CPT “advisor form” through UAtlas (this can only submit this AFTER you have completed and submitted your portion of the CPT request).
6. ISSSS evaluates the CPT request for approval or denial. ISSSS will not receive your CPT application until you AND your advisor have completed their portion of the CPT form.
Please note that CPT processing time can take **up to 10 business days** the date the academic advisor submits the recommendation. If you have any holds, your request will not be processed until the hold has been released.

Students may not begin the internship prior to the authorized start date or work past the end date listed on the I-20. Working outside of the authorized dates may result in a loss of future immigration benefits.

**Note:** This policy guide provides general guidelines on CPT eligibility and application procedures. Each case will be reviewed on its own merits.

**Disclaimer:** International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) provides support and information related to U.S. immigration laws and regulations related to F and J status at the University of Utah. ISSS staff are not attorneys and any information provided by ISSS should not be construed as legal advice. Individuals are welcome to consult a qualified immigration attorney for specific legal advice, particularly in complicated cases. For a list of local Utah attorneys please visit our website [here](#).

**Employment:** ISSS reviews work related requests based upon the information provided to us by the student. If USCIS later determines that the student misused the work authorization or otherwise did not follow the required rules and regulations, additional immigration benefits could be denied by USCIS.
April 1, 2019

Odafin Tutuola  
1001 University Drive  
Salt Lake City, UT 84102

Dear Odafin,

We are very pleased to offer you the position of Intern this summer with Dolp Tech. Please find the following confirmation of the specifics of your internship:

**Job Title:** Software Development Intern  
**Job Duties:** Responsibilities will include developing and supporting applications using C#, JavaScript, HTML, CSS, ASP.Net, MS SQL with SQL Server databases and SSRS reporting services.  
**Start Date:** May 13, 2019  
**End Date:** August 18, 2019  
**Number of Work Hours Per Week:** 40 hours per week  
**Reporting Supervisor:** Amanda Rollins [arollins@dolptech.com](mailto:arollins@dolptech.com) or 609-348-7100 # 105  
**Office Location:** You will be working in our branch office at 28th East Bay Road Atlantic City, New Jersey 08403  
**Salary/Stipend:** $25.00 per hour

Should you have any questions regarding the specifics of your internship, please contact me by phone 609-348-7100 # 109 or by email [obenson@dolptech.com](mailto:obenson@dolptech.com).

Sincerely,

Olivia Benson  
Human Resources  
Dolp Tech