

## **CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT)**

Curricular Practical Training or CPT is defined as “alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum that is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school.” Students can participate in CPT that is required by the academic program, or if not required, then the student must receive credit for the experience.

Not all degree programs include training or some type of work experience as a part of its curriculum and therefore, not all students will be eligible for CPT. Optional Practical Training (OPT) might be a more suitable option for students who do not qualify for CPT. OPT allows students to gain work experience related to their degree but is not required for the major. Students must plan at least 2-3 months ahead for this work option as it requires authorization from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Please read further for CPT eligibility requirements.

### **Eligibility Requirements & Conditions**

- Training must be required by the academic program, or if not required then the student must receive credit for the experience.
- Students must have been lawfully enrolled full-time for one full academic year.
  - **Exception: Students enrolled in a graduate program, which requires immediate participation in curricular practical training.**
- CPT is available only while students are in F-1 status, and before the degree or program is completed.
- Training may be full-time (more than 20 hours per week) or part-time (20 hours or less per week), granted in increments of no more than one year at a time.
  - **Students who have used 12 months or more of full-time CPT are not eligible for optional practical training (OPT). Part-time work does not count against eligibility for OPT.**
- Students must be enrolled in a full-time course load while using CPT during the fall or spring semester, unless the CPT is considered full-time enrollment.
- If the student is in a major or is taking a course which requires a work experience component, then the student must meet the eligibility of the course criteria for the major or class.
- Students must have an offer of employment which qualifies as CPT.
- Students CANNOT begin work until CPT has been authorized by an OIA advisor and they have received a new I-20 that reflects the CPT authorization.
- Student may only work for the employer approved for CPT. The employer information will be designated on page 2 of the new I-20.
- Changing employers while on CPT requires completion of a new application to be approved by OIA.

Please review this information together with your academic advisor. If after discussing the eligibility requirements with your academic advisor you believe you are eligible for CPT, you must submit an application for CPT authorization to OIA. Please review the following application procedures for further details.

### **Application Procedures for CPT Authorization**

Provide OIA with the following information:

- Letter of recommendation (see attached form) from your academic advisor which provides:
  - Verification that you are a full-time degree student;
  - Course name, course number, number of credits (listed in the College Catalog identifying the type of internship);
  - Verification on how the internship will fulfill the degree program.
- Letter from employer on company letterhead with original wet signature – which includes all of the following (no generic letters will be accepted):
  - Company name, company address and your name, job title, job description;
  - Start date and end date (month/day/year); and number of hours expected to work;
  - A statement that it agrees to cooperate with the school in achieving the curricular purposes of the employment/training.
- Proof of course registration during the semester/term of CPT employment or in the fall semester immediately following summer CPT employment.
- Unofficial transcript

**All documentation should be submitted to OIA a minimum of 10 days** before the start of employment, internship or practicum. If you are applying for CPT to take place during the summer outside of Durham, please make sure that you submit documentation well in advance of your leaving campus for the summer. If you are determined to be eligible, you will receive a new I-20 authorizing your CPT. The CPT authorization will be reflected on page 2 of the I-20. **You may not begin work before receiving this authorization from OIA.**

## **Curricular Practical Training (CPT)**

### **Important Points to Note Regarding CPT**

#### **Changes to your authorization**

You are only authorized to work with the company, at the location, during the dates stated on page 2 of your I-20. If anything should change in any of the details, the Office of International Affairs (OIA) will need to authorize such changes. For example, if you wish to work beyond the authorized period of employment, the employer is going to transfer you to another location or you are going to work full time instead of part time, OIA will need to make these alterations to your authorization.

Your academic advisor will need to put into writing any changes. If you wish to take part in a new period of CPT, you will need to submit a new Academic Advisor Recommendation Letter for CPT from your academic advisor. This written notification must be received by OIA prior to you starting work under the new parameters. Remember it may take several business days to process your request. Plan ahead.

#### **Immigration Status**

While on CPT you are still in F-1 status. Do not forget to send us notification of any changes of address (within 10 days) or any other information. Please send an email to [blewis@nccu.edu](mailto:blewis@nccu.edu) with this information.

#### **Travel**

You can travel in and out of the United States while on CPT provided you get your I-20 signed by an advisor in OIA.

#### **Registration Requirement**

You must be registered in a full-time course load or at least one credit hour of research credit (if a graduate student working on a thesis). Summer Session is the exception to this rule.

#### **Health Insurance**

You are still covered under University Student Health Insurance during your period of CPT. Your employer may need to know this if you wish to waive their health benefits.

#### **Social Security**

You must apply for a Social Security number before beginning employment. To apply, you must take the following documents to the local Social Security office:

- Social Security application (See their website at <http://www.ssa.gov/>)
- I-94 with unexpired passport
- I-20 endorsed on page 2 by an OIA international student advisor for CPT
- Letter of verification from OIA
- Offer letter from your employer

#### **Form I-9**

This is a form that your employer will complete with you on your first day of work. It is a form that certifies how you are authorized to work in the US for this particular employer. The two most common questions are answered below:

Under Section I, what box should be checked on Form I-9?

-- An alien authorized to work until (date of CPT expiration)

Admission Number is your I-94 card number.

Under Section II of Form I-9, what "list" does CPT fall under?

-- List A document -- (#5) Unexpired foreign passport, with Form I-94 indicating unexpired employment authorization.

#### **Social Security and Medicare Taxes**

If you are an F-1 student and have not been in the US for 5 years you should not pay Social Security or Medicare Taxes until year 6. Your employer should refer to IRS Publication 519 <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p519.pdf>. They should in particular read the section for "exempt individuals" under Non-resident Aliens. After reading that, they will want to know what is the difference between a Resident Alien and Non-Resident Alien and how to calculate this. This can also be found in Publication 519 under the section that explains the standard Substantial Presence Test. Your earnings are subject to applicable federal, state and local taxes. You must file a tax return on or before April 15 each year, which will determine if any of the withheld taxes can be refunded.

**ACADEMIC ADVISOR RECOMMENDATION LETTER FOR CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING**

Curricular Practical Training or CPT is defined as “alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum that is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school.” Students can participate in CPT that is required by the academic program, or if not required, then the student must receive credit for the experience. **Students must apply for CPT authorization through the Office of International Affairs and be approved before participating in any type of off-campus training, internship, practicum, etc.**

CPT is available only to students maintaining F-1 status and are lawfully enrolled full time for one full academic year. An exception to the rule is graduate students who require immediate participation in CPT.

Not all degree programs include training or some type of work experience as a part of its curriculum and therefore, not all students will be eligible for CPT. Optional Practical Training (OPT) might be a more suitable option for students who do not qualify for CPT. OPT allows students to gain work experience related to their degree but is not required for the major. Students must plan at least 2-3 months ahead for this work option as it requires authorization from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

**To Be Completed By Student:** You must complete the top portion of this form and the bottom portion must be completed by your academic advisor in order for OIA to determine your eligibility for CPT.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name NCCU Student ID Number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Degree Level Major Email \_\_\_\_\_

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**To Be Completed By Student Academic Advisor:** Please answer each question below as clearly and concisely as possible. Attach any supporting documentation as appropriate such as information from school catalog or list of course offerings. Please sign and date at the bottom of the form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Remaining Number of Credits Necessary to Graduate Degree/Program Completion Date \_\_\_\_\_

Has this student maintained full-time enrollment at NCCU and is the student making good academic progress? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Dates for Proposed Employment (mm/dd/yyyy): From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please make sure that dates of practical training requested in this letter match dates on the employer’s letter.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of the Proposed Employer Proposed Position Title \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address of Proposed Place of Employment

Check the type of proposed employment: \_\_\_\_ Full-time \_\_\_\_ Part-time (20 hrs/week or less)

Please check the most appropriate criteria for CPT below and attach any supporting documentation as appropriate such as information from the course catalog:

- (1) Is the proposed employment fulfilling a program/degree requirement? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No  
(i.e. a student studying in any program that requires a co-op/practicum/internship).  
If yes, list the Number of Work Hours per week \_\_\_\_\_, Number of Weeks/Months needed to fulfill degree and curriculum requirements.
- (2) Is the proposed employment fulfilling a class/course requirement? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No  
If yes, list the Course Name \_\_\_\_\_, Course Number \_\_\_\_\_, and Number of Credits \_\_\_\_\_.
- (3) Is the proposed employment integral to the completion of a graduate project/thesis/dissertation? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No  
If yes, please indicate the date all required coursework was completed: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year  
If yes, please indicate the title and/or focus of the student’s thesis/dissertation: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the work involved in the proposed employment (attach a separate sheet if needed): \_\_\_\_\_

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If proposed employment is for completion of a graduate project/thesis/dissertation, explain how the work will be incorporated into the student's thesis/dissertation in the form of data/results and how the work is integral to the completion of the thesis/dissertation (attach a separate sheet if needed): \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Typed/Printed Name of Academic Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Academic Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Campus Telephone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Campus Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address