



F-1 CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING - CPT

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a form of employment authorization that offers F-1 students an opportunity to apply academic study to a structured work training experience prior to degree completion.

IMPORTANT: *You may engage in CPT only if you have already received written approval on your I-20 from an ISO advisor. Any off-campus employment undertaken prior to receiving written authorization or beyond the authorized dates violates F-1 immigration regulations and can lead to termination of your F-1 student status.*

WHAT QUALIFIES AS CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING?

CPT work training must be directly related to the field of study (major) and appropriate for the level of study

-AND-

Required Employment to Complete Degree Program - Internships, practicums and cooperative education (Co-op) opportunities that are an established part of a curriculum and required to meet the graduation requirements of a program meet the requirement for curricular practical training.

-OR-

An Integral Part of Curriculum - Internships, practicums and cooperative education (Co-op) opportunities which are not required by the degree program may meet the requirements if students receive academic credit or there is transcript documentation.

ELIGIBILITY

- You must have been enrolled consecutively, as a full-time student for the equivalent of one academic year (2 semesters)*
- You must be in valid F-1 status
- You must have completed at least 1 full academic semester at GW in the semester prior to proposed practical training*
- You must have already received an eligible job offer

DURING OFFICIAL VACATION PERIODS

- You are eligible to work full-time**
- You must be enrolled full-time in the next consecutive term at GW

DURING THE ACADEMIC SEMESTER

- You are eligible to work a maximum of 20 hours/week total (on- and off-campus combined) - *Per GW University Bulletin, University Regulations, Student Status*
- You must maintain full-time enrollment status at GW and make normal progress toward the completion of your degree, which means that in most cases you are only eligible to work in the DC Metro area or by working remotely

**Graduate students in programs that require an internship within the first year should see an ISO advisor about a possible exception. Students who have been enrolled full-time at a U.S. college/university in another status immediately before changing status to F-1 should consult with an ISO advisor.*

***If summer is your final term, it cannot be considered an official vacation period*

HOW CAN I FIND AN INTERNSHIP, PRACTICUM OR COOPERATIVE EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY?

Center for Career Services - gwired.gwu.edu/career

F. David Fowler Career Center (GWSB) - business.gwu.edu/careercenter/

Graduate Student Career Development (ESIA) - elliott.gwu.edu/gscd/index.cfm

Graduate School of Education & Human Development Career Services (GSEHD) - gsehd.gwu.edu/career-services

Center for Professional Development & Career Strategy (Law) - www.law.gwu.edu/Careers/

IMPORTANT NOTES

- If you engage in twelve or more months of **full-time** CPT at your **current** program level you will not be eligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT) when you complete your studies.
- CPT is authorized on a semester-by-semester basis, and therefore you need to apply for CPT authorization each semester.
- You must limit your employment to the specified employer, location and position authorized on your I-20
- For part-time training, you must be careful to limit your work to no more than 20 hours per week.
- CPT can be authorized for paid or unpaid positions

HOW DO I APPLY?

To apply you must submit the following documents to the ISO:

- **A proposal letter from you** describing the type of work training you would like to do and how the proposed training is directly related to your major field of study. If you are requesting an extension of an existing authorization, you should explain how your duties will change.
- **A letter (on letterhead) from your employer** clearly indicating:
 - Name and address of the employer issuing the paycheck
 - Note: If the location involves a second employer, that employer should be identified
 - Address where employment will take place
 - Title of your position and detailed description of your duties
 - Number of hours you will be working per week
 - Exact dates when your employment is expected to begin and end
- **A letter (on GW letterhead) from your academic advisor** containing the following information:
 - Indication that s/he has reviewed your proposal and employment letters
 - Brief description of your degree program and how the proposed training is directly related to your academic program (major)
 - Explanation of how the proposed employment is an integral part of your curriculum of study
 - Estimated date of graduation
 - Indication that you are making normal progress toward degree completion and that the proposed training will not interfere with continued satisfactory progress by the graduation date indicated on your I-20
- **Proof of enrollment** in the appropriate curricular course (unless required by program and no class is available)
 - ESIA Undergraduates, CCAS, SEAS – Please go to <http://careerservices.gwu.edu/cooperative-education-co-op> and follow the instructions to apply for enrollment in the co-op program, allow a minimum of 2-3 business days for processing. Co-Op course enrollment is required to receive authorization for internships, practicums and other employment opportunities.
 - ESIA Grad, GSEHD – See the career center specific to your program
 - GWSB Grad – See the International Student Liaison in GWSB to enroll in MBAD 6298
 - Law – See the Law School Career Services Office
 - GWSB Undergraduates (enroll in BAD 4950), CPS, SPHHS – See your academic advisor
- Legible photocopy of the **biographic (identification) page, expiration date page and U.S. visa page from your passport**
- Legible photocopy of your most recent **I-94** www.cbp.gov/I94

It is important that you submit a complete application according to the outlined requirements above. If an application does not meet the requirements, the processing of your paperwork may be delayed. Please allow a minimum of 10 business days for processing.