

F-1 Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Federal regulations permit a student to engage in Curricular Practical Training that is an integral part or planned option in the student's degree plan.

F-1 students in good academic standing and in legal status with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) may apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT).

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) should never be confused with Optional Practical Training (OPT).

The primary purpose of OPT is to facilitate employment, or simply for the student to gain experience in his/her major field of study. In contrast, Curricular Practical Training is training that is designed to achieve a curricular academic objective. It must be an academic requirement for a student's program.

The Curricular Practical Training (CPT) program/course must be an integral part of an established curriculum and listed in the school's catalogue with the assigned number of credits. There must be a faculty member teaching or supervising/monitoring the training program. Also, the employer, the student, and the Academic Advisor must agree on clearly defined course objectives for the program, as it must be done to satisfy degree requirements.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) must be taken for academic credit at ISU **unless it is a non-waivable requirement that earns no credit.**

Students are not limited in the amount of Curricular Practical Training (CPT) they may utilize, since it is a requirement of an academic program; however, students who engage in a full 12-months of full-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT) become ineligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT). Periods of part-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT) do not prevent the student from engaging in Optional Practical Training (OPT).

There are two types of Curricular Practical Training (CPT): (1) Required of all candidates for a particular degree program OR (2) Required of an individual student's program. *Explanations of each type follow:*

(1) Required Of All Candidates for A Particular Degree Program

Training that is required by every participant in the student's degree program, and is an invariable, formal and explicit requirement for everyone obtaining that degree at ISU. Graduate students may apply immediately after registering at ISU. Undergraduates may apply after maintaining student status for one academic year (completion of both a fall and spring semester).

An example of this type of CPT might be a semester of supervised fieldwork for a Master's of Social Work degree candidate, if the requirements listed in the school catalogue include the semester of fieldwork as a requirement for every candidate for the degree. In no case may the requirement be waived or another course or project substituted for it.

(2) Required Of A Particular Student's Degree Program

Training that is required of an individual student's academic program to satisfy the academic requirements for a particular degree plan. These may not be added on in addition to the requirements, such as courses added to gain a teaching certificate that is not an academic requirement for the degree or extra electives in addition to those listed in the catalog degree plan. Graduates and undergraduates may apply after maintaining student status for one academic year (completion of both a fall and spring semester).

An example of this type of CPT might be an internship for a student studying Marketing for an MBA program, if the degree requirements in the catalogue list several options to fulfill the concentration in Marketing, and the student and the Academic Advisor plan for the internship to satisfy the requirement instead of another option. It is therefore required of the student's degree, even though it is not required of all MBA candidates. Another example might be a Summer internship designed for a student to do research for his dissertation, if the research involves using innovative technology available only at a particular corporation's facilities. The student would be employed there to engage in essential data collection that is integral and necessary to his educational program.

Before beginning employment, an employer must complete the "Employment Eligibility Verification" Form I-9. Also, the employer and the employee must be aware of all U.S. laws concerning tax obligations.

F-1 CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT) DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO APPLY

Note: After gathering the following documents, a student must see an Advisor in the International Programs Office (IPO). The advisor will review the documents and verify eligibility. Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is considered to be an integral part of the student's degree plan (coursework) as a regular degree requirement not as an additional requirement. To engage in Curricular Practical Training (CPT) in a major semester (Fall/Spring) or the last semester of a degree program, a student must maintain a full course of study in F-1 status for the semester in which CPT will occur. The International Programs Office (IPO) grants the authorization for Curricular Practical Training (CPT). Students may begin employment after receiving authorization that will be recorded on a new I-20.

Documents to submit to an IPO Advisor:

1. **Copies of Official documents:** Valid passport, visa, I-94 card, most recently issued I-20 or DS-2019 for the student and their dependents.
2. **Employer's Letter:** Please ask the employer to write a letter on company letterhead that includes the following information:
 - a. Employer's address at which the student will be training;
 - b. Job title;
 - c. Specific job duties;
 - d. Exact dates (beginning and ending) of the training period;
 - e. Number of hours per week to be worked;
 - f. Statement that the employer is aware that the work will be training performed in satisfaction of degree requirements.
3. **Departmental Letter:** Please use the form available at http://www.isu.edu/iso/immigration/docs/CPT_Form.pdf OR use the guidelines below to compose a letter that begins, "To Whom It May Concern." For undergraduates, the letter must be written by the Undergraduate Advisor. For graduate students, the letter must be written by the academic advisor and also signed by the graduate faculty member identified by the Office of Graduate Studies as authorized to sign as Department Head (Departmental Graduate Advisor). The letter must state:
 - a. That the student is in good academic standing, and is meeting departmental expectations;
 - b. That the Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is either an invariable, non-waivable requirement for all degree candidates or that it is a degree requirement (i.e.: a planned option in the degree plan, and not added on in addition to academic requirements) for the individual student's academic program;
 - c. The specific academic requirements remaining in the student's degree plan, in addition to this training, and the expected date of graduation (month/year);
 - d. Whether or not this one period of training fulfills the student's training requirement or if a multiple work term schedule is anticipated;
 - e. That the Academic Advisor has met with the student to establish specific course objectives the student will be expected to achieve during the training
 - f. The catalogue name and course number of the ISU course for which the student will be earning credit, as well as the number of hours the student will register for at ISU during the training: (Note: At least one credit hour must be earned unless the training is a non-waivable requirement that earns no credit);
 - g. The name of the ISU faculty member monitoring the student's progress;
 - h. The name of the company/institution where the student will work, and the exact dates (beginning and ending) of the training period; and,
 - i. That there is an understanding between the employer and the department about the course objectives and an understanding that the employment will be done in satisfaction of degree requirements at Idaho State University.
 - j. If the student is enrolling in research credit, please explain how this course is a necessary and required part of the student's thesis/dissertation and that the CPT must be completed prior to the date of defense.
4. Students need to complete and sign the Student Section of the Department Letter form available at: http://www.isu.edu/iso/immigration/docs/CPT_Form.pdf.
5. Please submit an approved degree plan that indicates that the CPT is an integral part of the degree program before the end of the semester in which the CPT will occur.