Understanding CPT Workshop
CPT can be complicated. CPT applications are always evaluated on a **CASE-BY-CASE** basis. This presentation gives a general overview, but the specific details of your case may differ.
Disclaimer

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F-1 Student Work Authorization

1. **On-Campus**
   - F-1 students who are in status are eligible for on-campus employment up to 20 hours per week during the semester. Over the annual breaks (winter and summer), most UAlbany international students are eligible to work up to 25 hours per week (University regulation).

2. **Off-Campus: Curricular Practical Training**
   - Used while still a student (must be registered for courses)
   - May be full-time (20+ hours/week) or part time (less than 20 hours/week)

3. **Off-Campus: Optional Practical Training**
   - Most often used “post-completion” (after graduation)
   - F-1 students cannot work off-campus without work authorization. Do not begin any work off-campus, **paid or unpaid**, without consulting ISSS office first. Working without authorization is a violation of your F-1 status. Only an ISSS official can approve and sign an I-20 to authorize CPT.
What is CPT (Curricular Practical Training)?

Definition (from federal regulation 8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(i))

- An F-1 student may be authorized by the DSO to participate in a curricular practical training program that is an integral part of an established curriculum. Curricular practical training is defined to be alternative 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 who have received one year or more of full time curricular practical training are ineligible for post-completion academic training. Exceptions to the one academic year requirement are provided for students enrolled in graduate studies that require immediate participation in curricular practical training.

- A request for authorization for curricular practical training must be made to the DSO. A student may begin curricular practical training only after receiving his or her Form I-20 with the DSO endorsement.
What that Definition Means:

- To be eligible for CPT, you must meet the following general requirements:
  - You have been enrolled at least one full academic year (two semesters)
  - You must be currently registered for a class which requires an internship/opportunity for which you will receive academic credit or currently engaged in a non-credit, required practicum or field work placement (e.g. Master’s of Public Affairs or Master’s of Social Welfare programs), at the time of the internship
  - You must have an internship offer before applying for authorization with ISSS. This internship directly relates to your program of study.
  - ISSS must approve your CPT authorization before you can begin working
  - Full-time CPT (20 or more hours per week) is only authorized in specific circumstances and you are only allowed to use a limited amount of full-time CPT (12 month cumulative), otherwise you will be ineligible for OPT after-graduation
  - If you are working/engaged in an off-campus internship or employment opportunity, whether paid or unpaid, you must apply for CPT work authorization.
Before Requesting CPT, please have

1.) An official internship/employment offer for off-campus employment directly related to your degree

2.) To be registered in a course which requires an internship, or engaged in a non-credit, required practicum/field work placement. Your internship must meet the criteria for the course and your faculty/department must be in support of the internship opportunity.
First: Determine if you need CPT for this internship.

Is the job site “off-campus?”

No, it is on-campus → No CPT needed, you can work on-campus up to 20 hours per week

Yes → Does the employer have an MOU with the University?

Yes → Consult department, employer and ISSS. May be considered “on-campus,” allowing you to work up to 20 hours/week

No → I don’t know → See Next Slide

You will require CPT work authorization, if eligible
MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding)

- Disclaimer: This is intended as a general introduction. If you think your employment falls under a MOU, you should consult ISSS before beginning employment. MOUs are complicated and every agreement is different.
  - Your employer/faculty are experts in their field, but may not be familiar with immigration requirements. Check with ISSS advisors before beginning employment!

- Some state agencies or other approved organizations have a MOU with the University/departments. A MOU is a co-operative agreement. While your work location may be off-campus, the MOU may consider you as a “student worker” or “student assistant” employed by the University.

- If you are a student assistant working under a MOU, it might be “on-campus employment.” Students may work up to 20 hours per week on-campus during a regular semester. If the position requires more than 20 hours, you may need additional authorization if eligible.
Internship with International Organization

Full-time F-1 students who are accepted for an internship with a recognized international organization may apply for an EAD card through USCIS for Internship with an International Organization.

To qualify, you must:

- Have a written certification from the international organization that you are being offered employment within the scope of the organization.
- Apply for a new I-20 with ISSS recommending you for the international organization internship.
- Submit all materials, including an I-765 and filing fee to USCIS.

The average processing time for an I-765 with USCIS is 3 months, and you cannot begin work with the authorization until you have received an approved EAD card.

If you qualify, you would not need to use CPT. If interested, please speak to an ISSS advisor about how to apply.
Examples of Qualifying International Organizations

- Asian Development Bank
- Commission for Environmental Cooperation
- Commission for Labor Cooperation
- Commission for the Study of Alternatives to the Panama Canal
- Customs Cooperation Council
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- Great Lakes Fishery Commission
- Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices
- Inter-American Defense Board
- Inter-American Development Bank
- International Atomic Energy Agency
- International Committee of the Red Cross
- International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) (Limited Privileges)
- International Joint Commission - the United States and Canada
- International Maritime Organization (formerly the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization)
- International Monetary Fund
- Pan American Health Organization (including Pan American Sanitary Bureau)
- South Pacific Commission
- United International Bureau for the Protection of Intellectual Property (BIPRI)
- United Nations
- United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization
- Universal Postal Union
- World Health Organization
- World Intellectual Property Organization
- World Meteorological Organization
- World Tourism Organization
- World Trade Organization

See ISSS for a full list
Internship Requirements for CPT

- The position must be directly related to your degree program (i.e. “curricular,” related to your studies).
- You must have an offer in place before applying for CPT.
- The offer letter must include the following before ISSS can process your request for CPT:
  - A letter (on letterhead stationery) offering employment or an internship situation specifying the name and address of the employer or organization, the duties and responsibilities of the position, the number of hours per week the student will work, and the beginning and ending dates of the employment or internship.
Registration/Academic Requirements for CPT

- You must be **registered** for a course which requires an internship as part of the curriculum OR engaged in a required, non-credit placement/field work placement.

- You must be registered/placed **at the time of employment** (i.e. for the term during which the employment will occur).

- You must be **recommended to participate** in CPT by the academic advisor and department chair.

- CPT will only be authorized on a **semester-by-semester basis**. If your internship lasts longer than the semester, you will need to apply for an extension to your CPT for the next semester.
Types of Courses for CPT Credit

- An internship, or other program related course, for at least 1 credit which is used towards completion of your academic program (degree)

- A **required**, non-credit practicum or field work placement. This course must be required for all students in your program. **It cannot be optional.**

- Master’s/Doctorate students: **research opportunities directly related to thesis or dissertation.** Must be registered for the appropriate course credit (such as 899, other dissertation courses, or a thesis course).
CPT Between Terms

- International students with approved CPT for a regular academic term (i.e. fall, spring or summer) **may** qualify for an extension of CPT, including permission for full-time employment, between terms (note: this is the time frame between the official end of one term and the official beginning of another term).

- During these between term periods, eligible international students do not need to enroll for additional academic credit *in most cases*, but they **must be registered for the following semester and receive additional authorization from the ISSS Office.**
CPT During Summer Term

For the purpose of CPT, summer is regarded as an academic term. **Students must register for acceptable academic credit in the summer session for which they are requesting CPT to begin.** This credit will cover the CPT period through the remainder of the summer term. Exceptions to the summer registration rule include:

- If your academic program **requires** an internship for graduation but **does not** provide credit for that internship, you may still be eligible.

- Students registered with an eligible **dissertation or thesis credit(s)** in the spring and fall semesters between the summer term in question may dedicate such academic credit(s) toward summer CPT if the respective CPT activity is related to the student’s thesis/dissertation and the student has academic department support.

- Students whose academic programs do not offer appropriate academic credit for summer CPT should **consult ISSS and their academic department.**
Full-Time CPT

- Students in their **thesis or dissertation** period *may* be eligible for full-time CPT if their work is directly related to their thesis/dissertation and the student has academic department support.

- Students in their **final semester** of coursework who have an approved **RCL** may be eligible (you must be registered for 9 credits or less to do full-time CPT).

- Use of full-time CPT for more than 12 months eliminates eligibility for Optional Practical Training (OPT). Use of part-time CPT does not generally affect eligibility for OPT.
Authorization Period for CPT

- The start and end dates of the authorized CPT period will print on page 2 of the I-20. Students are only authorized to work during this authorized period.

- If your CPT period will be continuing past the authorized period, you must submit a new CPT application to ISSS at least 5-7 business days prior to the expiration of the authorized CPT period. You must be re-authorized by ISSS for additional CPT time in order to continue working.

- If you are using CPT in your last semester, please remember that OPT is a different form of work authorization and requires additional USCIS approval. There may be a gap between any CPT authorization and OPT authorization (you must physically have an approved OPT EAD to work after the program completion date on the I-20).
Computer Science Graduate Students

- The only courses in the Computer Science graduate program that may be used to meet the CPT requirement are 698 and 698C.
- 698/698C must be required for you to complete your degree (with departmental support) in order to be eligible for CPT.
- Up to two consecutive terms only of CPT using required courses 698 and 698C in sequence are allowed.
- If 698C is used, the student must also graduate at the end of the term it is used (including the summer semester).
CPT Application Checklist

Please submit the following materials to ISSS. Only complete applications will be accepted. Please allow 5-7 business days for processing (remember, you cannot start work until your new I-20 with CPT authorization has been processed)

1.) CPT Application Form
2.) Advisor’s Authorization Form
3.) Official Offer Letter from supervisor
4.) Copies of all I-20s, current and previous
5.) Must already be registered for the course indicated on the forms
6.) If you do not have an SSN, submit a request for an SSN letter at the time you submit the CPT request
You complete this

Where you will be working

We only authorize CPT on a semester-by-semester basis

Must relate to your degree

If you are full-time, you need to be registered for 9 credits or less and have an RCL on file
This form should be completed by your advisor, not you.

One option must be indicated. Please make sure that the course name and number are listed. You must be registered for the course listed at the time you submit the application.

All approvals and signatures must be obtained before you submit your application to ISSS.
Please allow **5-7 business days** for processing.

**Do not** start working until your CPT authorization has been **processed and approved** by the ISSS Office.

You will get a **new I-20** with CPT authorization printed on page 2 (under “Employment Authorizations”) once it is processed and approved.
REMINDER

CPT can be complicated. CPT applications are always evaluated on a **CASE-BY-CASE** basis. This presentation gives a general overview, but the specific details of your case may differ.
Questions? Comments? Concerns?

- ISSS Office: G-40, Science Library
- Phone #: 518-591-8171
- Email: ISSS@albany.edu
- Office Hours: 9am-5pm, Monday-Friday
- Walk-In Advisement Hours: 9am-4pm, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

Thank you for attending this Workshop! Please remember to sign-in.