



BASIC INFORMATION

Curricular Practical Training (“CPT”) is an authorization a student may pursue in order to engage in off-campus opportunities such as internships, research, clinical rotations (“off-campus experiences”). All off-campus experiences must directly relate to the student’s major program of study and must correspond to an academic component of the student’s established curriculum as reflected in the most up-to-date MCPHS Course Catalog (e.g. PPB 530, BIO 530, PSB 870, PSB.872, PBH.890, PPB.530, PEP.830, PEP.880, PSB.890, etc.).

F-1 students in both graduate and undergraduate programs may apply for CPT, as long as there is a required or elective academic component in the student’s curriculum that allows for off-campus experiences. The student can apply for part-time authorization or full-time authorization and may receive payment from the placement site, if applicable.

In very limited circumstances, students may engage in certain unpaid, volunteer experiences off-campus without authorization. F-1 students should contact our office before engaging in any off-campus experience, including those characterized as “volunteer” experiences.

CRITICAL POINTS TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT CPT

- CPT is not designed or intended for long-term, continuous employment.
- A student must receive CPT authorization before engaging in an off-campus experience or else they risk losing F-1 status.
- If any pertinent information relating to the student’s off-campus opportunity changes, the student should stop engaging in any authorized off-campus experience and contact Immigration & International Support Services (“IISS”) immediately.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Before IISS can approve CPT for an off-campus experience, the student must have:

- Completed one academic year as an F-1 student. *Note: If the off-campus experience is required in a graduate student’s first year of study, this requirement can be waived.*
- Has been offered a position and has received an appropriate offer letter for the off-campus experience.
- Otherwise maintained lawful F-1 status.

CPT REQUEST PROCESS

1. The student provides the appropriate faculty/staff member the offer letter provided by the off-campus site. The faculty/staff member verifies that the off-campus experience directly relates to the student’s major program of study and will fulfill an applicable academic component. Ideally, faculty/staff should review the letter before the student starts the official CPT request with IISS.
2. The faculty/staff member assists the student in enrolling in an appropriate, CPT-eligible course in the semester in which the student will engage in the off-campus opportunity.
3. The student contacts IISS regarding the CPT application process and the IISS provides the student with CPT request instructions.
4. The student completes all required sections of the CPT request in the IISS’ international request system, including uploading the offer letter and sending the appropriate faculty/staff member a CPT Recommendation request.
5. The appropriate faculty/staff member completes the recommendation request, which includes providing a brief explanation as to how the off-campus experience relates to the student’s major program of study.
6. The IISS reviews the request, processes the CPT authorization, and issues a new I-20 to the student with CPT authorization listed on page 2. The CPT authorization provides proof that the student has been granted authorization to engage in the off-campus experience and may report to the authorized placement site(s) during the authorized time period.
7. If needed, the student can apply for Social Security Number (“SSN”) as soon as 30 days prior to the approved CPT start date. The student should refer to the IISS website for SSN application instructions.
8. If the student would like to extend the approved CPT authorization, the student will need to complete this process again, as CPT authorization can only be granted one semester at a time.

All students, faculty, and staff should feel to visit the IISS website (global.mcphs.edu) or contact us at internationalservices@mcphs.edu with any questions.