Curricular Practical Training (CPT) FAQ

What is CPT?
- Curricular Practical Training is authorization for employment that is an integral part of the established curriculum of your degree program.
- International students holding F-1 visas who enroll in Cross-Cultural Seminar can be authorized for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) provided they meet eligibility and procedural requirements.

What is the Cross-Cultural Seminar?
- The Cross-Cultural Seminar is an application-only course that is open to students who have experience working outside their country of residence.

Who is eligible for CPT?
- You must be:
  o In lawful F-1 status for one academic year (two consecutive full-time terms).
  o A degree candidate.
  o Have an appropriate job offer as part of the application.

What are the steps to obtain CPT?
1. Bring a completed F-1 Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Request Form, along with a letter from your employer confirming the exact start and end dates of the internship, to OSA in Uris Hall room 113.
2. After OSA has signed your application and registered you in the Seminar, submit the required documents to ISSO via Compass.
   a. The documents must be uploaded as one file only, in pdf format.
3. Wait for ISSO to contact you (within 10 business days).
4. Pick up your new I-20 with CPT authorization from ISSO.

What are the required documents for ISSO?
1. CPT Employer Letter
2. CPT Request Form (signed by an OSA officer)
3. Your most recent I-94 arrival record

What should the Employer Letter say?
- It must:
  o be on official company letterhead
  o have a specific start date and a specific end date
  o include the location where your work will be performed
  o include the number of hours per week you will work
  o include a description of your position duties
  o be signed and dated by your employer

Do you have an example of an employer letter?
- Yes, you can view one on ISSO’s website here, but do not submit this example – yours must be original from your employer.
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How do I determine the dates for my internship?
- The dates must fall within the current academic semester in which you are enrolled in the Cross-Cultural Seminar.

How many hours per week can I work at my internship?
- If you are enrolled in full-time courses during your internship, you can work up to 20 hours per week.
- If you are not required to enroll full-time during the summer term, then you may work full-time during the summer.

When can I apply for CPT?
- As early as 90 days before your internship, but no less than 10 days before you wish to begin employment.

Do I need a Social Security Number?
- Yes. If you already have an existing SSN, this number is valid for your lifetime.
- If you do not have a SSN, you must apply for one after you obtain your CPT I-20. For more information, click here.

Can my internship be paid or unpaid?
- Yes, either paid or unpaid internships are acceptable as long as you receive CPT authorization.

Is there a cost to apply for CPT?
- If you are enrolling in the Cross-Cultural Seminar in the summer term, you will be charged a $200 enrollment fee.
- If you are enrolling in the Cross-Cultural Seminar during any other term, there is no fee.

Can I get an unpaid internship without CPT authorization?
- As an F-1 student, the regulations surrounding work are tricky. It is illegal to volunteer for a position that should normally be a paid position, according to Department of Labor standards.
- F-1 students should always receive work authorization from ISSO before beginning any type of work, whether paid or unpaid.

How many times can I be authorized for CPT?
- You can register for the Cross-Cultural Seminar up to three (3) times.

Can I change employers or extend my CPT?
- No, you must submit a new application if you change internships or wish to extend for another term.