

## F-1 Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Information & Request

The US Department of Homeland Security regulations state that Curricular Practical Training (CPT) must be "an integral part of an established curriculum." They define curricular practical training as "alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum which is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school." Thus, CPT for F-1 students is intended to provide work experience in situations where the work serves as an integral part of an established curriculum or in the student's course of study.

### Eligibility

The student must have been legally enrolled on a full-time basis for one full academic year before being eligible for CPT. It is available only while the student is in valid F-1 status and before the completion of his/her program. If the student had a gap in study or a status violation, the one academic year waiting period may need to be recalculated once the student has again obtained valid F-1 status.

### Criteria

Office of International Relations (OIR) can authorize CPT if it can be clearly documented that the proposed work experience meets one of the three conditions below.

- **The work experience is required of all degree candidates in the program and is necessary for the awarding of the degree.** Included in this category is required employment for an internship or practicum. There are only a few academic programs at UAFS which require a period of off-campus employment for all degree candidates. This requirement must be formally documented in school publications.
- **The work experience will result in the awarding of academic credit.** Included in this category is training for a course specifically designed to award academic credit for an employment experience. You must register and complete the CPT related course during the period that you are working under CPT authorization, even in the summer.
- **The work experience must be an integral part of the current field of study.** A department chair or dean approves employment as a work experience within the field of study. Work experience needs to have a defined limited period of time for completion.

If CPT is during your last semester, you must have at least one other remaining degree-required course in your program in addition to the CPT course, unless the CPT course is a degree-required course.

### Part-time vs. Full-time CPT

#### Part-Time Training

During the school year while classes are in session, students can engage in CPT on a part-time basis, limited to no more than 20 hours per week. If eligible, there is no limitation on the length of time you may participate in part-time curricular practical training, and it will not count toward the 12 months that eliminate eligibility for OPT. You must maintain legal F-1 status at all times.

#### Full-Time Training

A student can engage in full-time CPT only during official university breaks and vacation. Full-time CPT allows the student to work more than 20 hours per week. A student during his/her last semester may be authorized for full-time CPT if the student has been authorized for Reduced Course Load by OIR. There is no limitation upon the length of time you may participate in full-time CPT. However, **if you participate in 12 months or more of full-time curricular practical training, you will not be eligible for post-completion optional practical training (OPT).**



## Application and Documentation Requirements

If you are unsure about your eligibility for CPT, you should first meet with an OIR advisor (if possible, please bring any of the documents listed below to the initial consultation). If applicable, you should register for the CPT course prior to seeing an OIR advisor. To apply for CPT, you must meet with an OIR advisor and bring the following documents with you:

- Student must have an offer of employment from an employer offering work that qualifies as curricular practical training. Provide a copy of your official offer letter on company letterhead that is signed by the prospective employer. A photocopy is acceptable. The letter should include the employer's name, address, dates of employment and job description.
- A CPT Recommendation Form completed by your academic advisor.
- Proof of registration for CPT course if you are earning academic credit for the training. Note: you must be registered for CPT course in the same semester during which the work will be done. (i.e. You must be registered for CPT course in the summer if you will be working in the summer.)
- Copies of your current immigration documents: passport (biographical data, photo, & expiration date pages), front and back of I-94 card, and I-20(s)

## Authorization Procedures

If you are eligible and have the documentation required for CPT, an OIR advisor will authorize CPT by issuing a new I-20. Processing time is 7 business days. You may engage in CPT employment only after you have received the I-20 with your CPT authorization from OIR. **This work authorization is valid only for the specific employer, location, time period and on a part-time or full-time basis as approved and recorded by an OIR advisor** as evidenced on your I-20 issued for CPT. You may not continue employment beyond the date authorized unless you apply and are granted an extension of your permission to work from OIR. To do so would be a violation of your nonimmigrant student status, and such violation would jeopardize your ability to remain in the US.

## Social Security Number

If you do not have a Social Security Number (your UA Fort Smith Student ID number is not a valid Social Security Number), you should apply for a Social Security Number based on the CPT authorization. For more information, please visit <http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10181.html>.

## Taxes

In general, F-1 students who have been in the US for no more than five different calendar years are exempt from social security taxes. You should be sure to bring this to the attention of your employer because many employers are not familiar with this provision of the tax laws. Students in F-1 status are subject to all other taxes that may apply, including federal, state and local. For more information, please consult with a tax professional and/or Publication 519 of the Internal Revenue Service ([www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)).

## Failure to Comply with Regulations

It is **your responsibility** to comply with all immigration regulations which apply to F-1 students, including employment regulations. **Working without the proper authorization is a serious violation of your nonimmigrant status in the US.** If you fail to comply with your responsibilities, you may not be eligible for benefits normally granted to F-1 students and may jeopardize your stay in the US. Prior to accepting any employment in the US, we advise you to consult with OIR.

## Curricular Practical Training Recommendation and Request Form

Note: Bring this form and required supporting documentation to meet with an OIR advisor.

### A: Request to be completed by Student

Family/Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Given/ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: Month: \_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_ UAFS Student ID: @ \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you currently employed on campus? NO YES Are you currently employed off campus? NO YES

List all periods of previously authorized CPT (*indicate full or part time – attach separate sheet if needed*):

|  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Full- Time CPT                         | Part- Time CPT                       |
| FROM: Month: ____ Day: ____ Year: ____ | TO: Month: ____ Day: ____ Year: ____ |
| Full- Time CPT                         | Part- Time CPT                       |
| FROM: Month: ____ Day: ____ Year: ____ | TO: Month: ____ Day: ____ Year: ____ |

If applicable, I have registered for the course related to this CPT request for the applicable semester and understand that CPT authorization will be voided if I drop the course. If CPT authorization is voided, I understand that I may not be eligible for further F-1 benefits. I have maintained valid immigration status since I began my study at the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### B. Recommendation to be completed by Academic Advisor or Instructor of Record (Not by Student)

Student's Major: \_\_\_\_\_ Degree: Associate's Bachelor's

Employer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of work hours per week: \_\_\_\_\_ Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Employment- FROM: Month: \_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_ TO: Month: \_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_

Description of proposed employment relating to curriculum: \_\_\_\_\_

CPT Recommendation is based on the following (check only one):

**The work experience is required of all degree candidates in the program and is necessary for the awarding of the degree.** Included in this category is required employment for an internship or practicum. There are only a few academic programs at UAFS which require a period of off-campus employment for all degree candidates. This requirement must be formally documented in school publications.

**The work experience will result in the awarding of academic credit.** Included in this category is training for a course specifically designed to award academic credit for an employment experience. You must register and complete the CPT-related course during the period that you are working under CPT authorization, even in the summer.

**The work experience must be integral part of the current field of study.** A department chair or dean approves employment as a work experience within the field of study. Work experience needs to have a defined limited period of time for completion.

Course Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Term: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Recommending Academic Advisor/ Instructor of Record: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_