F-1 STUDENT: CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT)

**DEFINITION**
Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a type of work authorization for F-1 students to participate in paid positions off-campus. It is defined as any required or optional internship that is an integral part of the established curriculum for a program of study. Only internships that are directly related to the course curriculum qualify as CPT and can be either an optional or required part of the program. Unpaid or volunteer positions do not require work authorization.

Some ways CPT is considered:

1. **Degree Requirement:** CPT may be authorized when an internship is a requirement of the degree program (i.e. all students in the program must complete the internship to be eligible for the degree).
2. **Course Credit Requirement:** CPT may be authorized for students who are registered in a course offered through their major department for which employment is a requirement of the course. Authorization is granted on a quarter-by-quarter basis and cannot exceed the dates of the term in which the employment will occur. Extensions of authorization are possible. The following courses are eligible:
   a. Undergraduate course 197 Field Studies (preferred) or 199 Independent Study
   b. Graduate course 298 Independent Study
   c. Graduate course 299 Research
3. **Cooperative Education Agreement:** CPT may be authorized when an internship is part of an agreement between a UCSD academic department, an employer, and a student. Available only for graduate students participating in internships during the summer academic break. Students who participate in summer cooperative internships must intend to continue at UCSD during the following Fall quarter and submit a Post-Internship Report no later than the first day of Fall quarter.

**CPT REQUIREMENTS**
- The training must be an integral part of the curriculum. Your UCSD major department must verify this in writing.
- The training is only authorized during a course of study. It cannot be used after completing your program.
- Internships that are optional must be taken for credit units. Not all majors at UCSD offer courses that meet the CPT eligibility requirements. Students should check with their UCSD major department for more information.
- The training must be authorized for a specific job at a specific company.
- Students MUST be enrolled as a full-time student during the academic year while participating on CPT.
- Dates of employment must be within the dates of the quarter. Students who want to continue their employment during the academic break must discuss their plans with the International Student advisor. Summer session CPT employment dates must be between the end of Spring quarter and the beginning of Fall quarter.
- Employment is limited to part-time (20 hours or less) during the academic year. Full-time employment is very limited. For example, full-time employment is allowed during Summer session. Graduate students who want to do full-time employment during the academic year must have advanced to candidacy.
- There is no limit on the amount of time used for CPT. However, students who participate in full-time CPT for one year or more will NOT be eligible for Optional Practical Training.
ELIGIBILITY
- Student must have been in F-1 status for a minimum of one full academic year (or 3 consecutive quarters at UCSD).
- EAP Reciprocity Students are NOT eligible for CPT.

GETTING STARTED
To participate in CPT, you must receive work authorization from the UCSD International Center. CPT does not require an application to the USCIS or an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). The UCSD International Center will give you a new I-20 that includes the valid CPT training period.

APPLICATION PROCESS
There is no specific application period for CPT, but students must allow enough time to complete the application process. This process normally takes 3-4 weeks. The employment may not begin until the training has been authorized. Under no circumstances will CPT be backdated to include unauthorized work done before it was authorized.

Meet with your Faculty/Department Advisor
To begin the process, meet with your Faculty/Department Advisor to complete the attached CPT Recommendation Form. Undergraduate students should meet with their Major Advisor and graduate students should meet with their Faculty Advisor. Your advisor must determine whether your internship meets the requirements for CPT. Your training MUST be one of the following:
- **Degree Requirement**
  - Submit a copy of the page in the UCSD catalog outlining this degree requirement.
- **Course Credit Requirement**
  - Register for the course during the quarter of your internship. Submit a copy of your academic history in TritonLink (http://tritonlink.ucsd.edu) to verify enrollment.
- **Cooperative Education Agreement between your Department and your Employer** *(Only for graduate students participating in internships during the summer academic break)*
  - Obtain a Cooperative Education Agreement Form from the UCSD International Center. Meet with your advisor to discuss the conditions of the agreement. Submit the original Cooperative Education Agreement Form with signatures from your department and employer. NOTE: Graduate students must submit a copy of the agreement to your Graduate Coordinator.

SPECIAL NOTE: Graduate students, who work on-campus (i.e. TA, GSR, etc.) and participate on CPT for a combined total of more than 20 hours per week, may not be eligible to receive funding from their department to pay for tuition and fees. Please meet with your Graduate Coordinator to discuss the UCSD employment policy and how it may affect your situation.

HOW TO APPLY
All CPT applications must be submitted to the UCSD International Center. Please allow 10 working days to process the application. To apply, you will need to:
- Attend a Practical Training Information Session
- Obtain a job offer letter from the company
- Complete the F-1 Curricular Practical Training Request Form
- Enroll in the appropriate course, if necessary
- Gather all required documents
- Submit your complete CPT application package to the International Center

After 10 working days, the International Center will contact you via phone or e-mail. At that time, you can meet pick-up your documents and new I-20. You CANNOT work until you receive the new I-20 that includes the valid CPT training period.
Guidelines for the Job Offer Letter
You will need a job offer letter from your employer. The letter must be on original company letterhead and signed by your supervisor. It must include:

- Name and address of employer
- Position offered, including a description of the work
- Specific employment start and end date
- Hourly or weekly wage
- Supervisor’s name and title

Guidelines for the CPT Application Package
Gather all your documents. Submit your complete package to the UCSD International Center at least 15 working days before your employment start date. The package will include:

- Completed Curricular Practical Training Application form
- Original job offer letter from company
- Copy of complete Academic History from TritonLink
- Copy of the biographical information page of your passport
- Copy of your F-1 visa page
- Copy of your current I-20
- Copy of your I-94 (both the front and the back)
- Completed Cooperative Education/Internship Agreement (For graduate students applying for CPT authorization during summer session only.)

NOTE: All forms available at http://istudents.ucsd.edu/students/forms.html
Graduate students participating in summer cooperative education/internships must include enrollment verification for the following Fall quarter.

CPT APPROVAL
Summer Cooperative Education/Internship
Graduate students who participate in cooperative internships during the summer session must submit a Post-Internship Report no later than the first day of the following Fall quarter. The form is available at http://istudents.ucsd.edu/students/forms.html

Name and Address Changes
When your name or address changes, you must update UCSD TritonLink within 10 days of the change.

The UCSD International Center will notify USCIS and will update your SEVIS record. If you do not update TritonLink with your name and address changes, this could delay your CPT application.

Changes to Employer or Dates of Employment
Any changes in the CPT authorization require a new appointment with the International Student Advisor. For example, if your employer or dates of employment change, please meet with the International Student Advisor immediately. Changes to the employer will also require a new letter from the department advisor and a new appointment with the International Student Advisor.

Social Security Number
All persons must have a Social Security number to be employed in the US. This is not the Campus ID number assigned by UCSD. To apply for a Social Security number, you will need to present a valid passport, I-94, I-20, job offer letter from your employer, and an enrollment verification letter from the International Center to any local Social Security office. The nearest offices are located in Kearny Mesa or downtown San Diego. Visit http://www.ssa.gov to find the nearest Social Security office to you.
Taxes
Students in F-1 status are exempt from Social Security tax (FICA), however they are generally subject to federal and state income taxes. Tax forms are available from February through April of each year. Check the Internal Revenue Service website at www.irs.gov for federal tax information and the CA Franchise Tax Board at http://www.ftb.ca.gov for California tax information.

Renewal of CPT Authorization
Students who participate in full-time or part-time CPT for less than one year can renew their CPT authorization. CPT must be authorized every quarter. CPT Renewals require a new CPT application package. Renewal applications are available at http://icenter.ucsd.edu/_files/ispo/f-1/cpt_request.pdf

Before your current CPT authorization expires, allow yourself enough time to:

- Obtain an updated job offer letter from the company
- Obtain an updated letter from the department advisor, and
- Meet with the International Student Advisor

Do not procrastinate! CPT cannot be backdated.

QUESTIONS
Please contact the UCSD International Students and Programs Office at istudents@ucsd.edu or 858-534-3730.

(IC:201207)