

## A Faculty Guide to Curricular Practical Training (CPT) (For students on an F-1 visa)

### Note:

It is the *student's responsibility* to know F-1 student visa regulations, and it is the International Student Advisers' role to assist students in understanding these regulations. Please contact an International Student Adviser ([internationalstudentadviser@earlham.edu](mailto:internationalstudentadviser@earlham.edu)) for any questions you may have when completing the CPT Recommendation form.

### What is Curricular Practical Training?

- Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for F-1 students is authorization for off-campus work or volunteer experience that is an integral part of an established curriculum.

### Who Needs CPT?

- Anyone on an F-1 visa who wants to obtain **paid** or **compensated** off-campus work authorization while they are in the process of obtaining a degree.
  - ▶ To clarify, according to the federal government, compensation includes anything that an employer might give you in return for your services, including housing, food, transportation, etc.

### Student Eligibility for CPT

- Employment opportunities must:
  - ▶ Be directly related to the student's major
  - ▶ Fulfill a major, Off-campus Program, or General Education requirement
  - ▶ Count toward the completion of an Earlham degree (meaning the student **must** earn credit for it, usually through the internship course in their major).
    - A condition of being approved for CPT is that the internship must be in some way curricular.
    - At Earlham, we interpret this to mean that it must either be a requirement of the major or the student must be able to earn credit for it (towards fulfilling the graduation requirement of earning 120 credits).
    - If the internship is fulfilling a major requirement, the internship course can be taken for 0 credits.
      - ▶ This option can only be used once during the student's academic program. Any subsequent internships would need to earn credit.
    - If an internship is not a major requirement, then it must be taken for at least 1 credit (so as to meet the graduation requirements).
      - ▶ It was agreed in Faculty meeting, when the immersion experience was laid down, that all majors, regardless of whether the internship was a major requirement, would have

an available 481 course that students could take for this purpose.

- ▶ As the internship for CPT must be related to a student's major, we generally prefer that the student enroll in the 481 course in their major and work with their advisor on the internship petition, unless they are using their EPIC advantage to fund the opportunity and will be supervised by someone in the CGCE.
  - ▶ In some majors where fieldwork is required for a senior capstone, rising seniors might be able to use the capstone course as a means of earning credit for an experience if it will be used in their capstone, but this needs to be approved on a case-by-case basis through consultation with an international student adviser.
  - If the CPT occurs during Winter or Summer break and students listed a course (i.e. ECON 481) in the CPT Request
    - ▶ They **MUST** register for that course in the semester **immediately following** the internship/employment.
  - If the CPT occurs during a semester:
    - ▶ Students **MUST** make sure that they are registered for the appropriate course during that semester.
  - Failing to register for the appropriate credits during the appropriate academic term is a violation of F-1 visa regulations and will result in termination of a student's F-1 status.
- Employment opportunities may:
    - ▶ Be paid or volunteer
    - ▶ Be used during school vacations or while school is in session
      - May be part-time or full-time during school vacations
      - Can only be part-time (less than 20 hours/week) while school is in session unless it is an integral part of the academic program (we only approve full time CPT during the semester for students on off-campus programs where the internship is built into the experience).
  - To be approved for CPT, Students **must**:
    - ▶ Be in valid F-1 status (verified by international student advisers).
    - ▶ Have been enrolled for two consecutive semesters immediately prior to the proposed CPT period (verified by international student advisers).
    - ▶ Continue to be enrolled for a full course of study during CPT (or immediately following CPT, for employment during the Winter or Summer break).
    - ▶ Have an employment offer (letter) that includes:
      - (a) The employer's name, address, and contact information
      - (b) the job description
      - (c) the employment Start and End Date
      - (d) whether the employment is part time or full time

- ▶ Have a declared major on record with the Registrar's Office and any employment must be directly related to this major.

### **Academic Adviser Responsibilities for CPT**

- Complete a CPT Recommendation form (online) for the student when requested. The student is responsible for sending you a copy of their offer letter.
- A student's Academic Adviser or the CGCE **must approve and monitor** the employment/internship as agreed upon in the internship petition.
  - ▶ Each adviser and student are free to agree on a suitable project or assignment that will satisfy the internship petition requirements for earning credit for the internship.
    - In some cases, simply asking students to complete a reflection of their experience and how it relates to what they have learned may be considered sufficient.
  - ▶ The number of credits a student can earn for an internship are variable, but for federal purposes, we require at least one for internships that are not fulfilling a major requirement.
    - Each department/major may have different guidelines concerning the number of credits that can be earned for internship experiences (typically the minimum threshold for earning credit is 40 hours)

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## **CPT FAQ**

### **Who should complete the CPT Recommendation form?**

The Faculty Supervisor should complete the CPT Recommendation form with information provided by the student. The student should not complete the form on their own.

### **Why do I need to do the CPT Recommendation form?**

Students with F-1 visas are ineligible to work off-campus for any form of compensation unless they have approved work authorization. CPT (Curricular Practical Training) is one form of work authorization; it requires that the work be part of an established curriculum and directly related to the student's major.

### **What counts as compensation for employment?**

Anything the student receives in return for off-campus work is considered compensation and is illegal unless the student has previously received work authorization through the Center for Global and Career Education and/or USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services). Compensation can include, but is not limited to, payment,

lodging, transportation, meals, and discounts.

### **What if I have questions about completing the CPT Recommendation form?**

It is the ***student's responsibility*** to know F-1 student visa regulations, and it is the International Student Advisers' role to assist students in understanding these regulations. Please contact an International Student Adviser (by [email](#) or by calling x1424) for any questions you may have when completing the CPT Recommendation form.

### **What do I need before I can complete the CPT Recommendation form?**

The student will need to provide a letter outlining the offer of employment. This letter should contain a description of the work the student will be doing, dates of employment, whether it is full- or part-time, and the hiring organization's name and address. In addition to this information, you should discuss the ways this employment is related to the student's declared major and how this employment is related to their academic program.

### **What is the Internship Petition?**

The Internship Petition is a form from the Office of the Registrar that is used to grant academic credit for work done in an internship or employment opportunity. All Earlham College majors have 481 course designations (called Internships, Field Studies, Other Field Experiences, etc.) that work well for granting academic credit for work done through CPT employment authorization. In addition to completing the Internship Petition with their Academic Adviser, the student must be registered for the course indicated on both the Internship Petition and the CPT Recommendation form. If you would like more information or have questions about the Internship Petition, please [contact](#) the Office of the Registrar.