

CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING FOR STUDENTS IN F-1 STATUS

PURPOSE

This handout is for students in F-1 status. It will provide you with information on a type of employment which the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) calls Curricular Practical Training (CPT).

DEFINITION

Curricular Practical Training, CPT, is an alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education (co-op), or any other type of required internship or practicum which is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the college. CPT must be an integral part of an established curriculum and directly related to the student's major area of study.

RESTRICTIONS

Curricular Practical Training is available to undergraduate International Students who have been lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis in a Service-approved college, university, conservatory, or seminary for one full academic year. CPT is **not** available to students in English as a Second Language (ESL), or students in the General Studies A.S. Degree.

PLEASE NOTE

You may not begin employment through your CPT until your request has been approved by International Student Affairs and authorization is noted on your I-20. Also, CPT must coincide with the academic semester (including summer term). Therefore, CPT may not begin until the start of the academic semester.

You may work up to 20 hours per week during the school year and during vacation periods. Curricular Practical Training must be renewed before each semester. Before beginning CPT you must receive authorization from the Designated School Official (DSO).

APPLICATION DEADLINE DATE

Students must apply for CPT through the office of Career and Student Employment, STC 002, prior to registration each semester and attend a required cooperative education orientation. (See Cooperative Education in the semester class schedule.) All documents must be received by International Student Affairs at least two weeks prior to the beginning date of CPT to allow for processing of the request.

PROCEDURES

1. Meet with a Designated School Official (DSO) in International Student Affairs (ISA) to see if you are "in-status" and eligible for CPT for immigration purposes. Students must have a 2.0 GPA or better, and maintained lawful F-1 presence in the U.S. for nine months or more. ISA will send an e-mail to the Career and Student Employment office.
2. Visit the Career and Student Employment office - STC 002 (801-957-4014) to verify if a co-op class is offered for your major.

3. Visit an academic or departmental advisor to verify your second year status. You must be in the second year of your degree program and have completed at least 24 credit hours towards your degree, not including developmental course work, to be eligible to participate in CPT. Use the “Checklist for Curricular Practical Training” (attached). Ask your academic advisor to write a letter on department letterhead to the DSO in International Student Affairs recommending you for CPT and indicating that the CPT is an integral part of an established curriculum and directly related to the student’s major area of study.
4. Obtain a letter from your potential employer outlining the specific job duties, dates of employment, and location of employment (see example).
5. Return to Career and Student Employment Services for enrollment in a cooperative education course through your major department. Sign up for the cooperative education orientation.
6. **The Final Step:** Return all documentation to International Student Affairs. The DSO will evaluate your eligibility, and if you qualify, a new I-20 will be prepared as quickly as possible. The DSO will recommend CPT officially on your SEVIS I-20.

EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION

If you do not have a Social Security Number (SSN) you can apply for one after the DSO has endorsed your I-20 form. It usually takes 3-4 weeks to receive a social security number. When you begin working, you and your employer must complete a form entitled “Eligibility Verification” (form I-9), which the employer retains. Your employer should also make a photocopy of your form I-20 for your employment record.

TAX CONCERNS

All international students are required to file a tax return. Your earnings are subject to applicable federal, state and local taxes. Students must file a tax return on or before April 15th of each year. Students may be entitled to a refund of taxes withheld from their wages if the amount of tax owed is less than the amount withheld.

A NOTE OF CAUTION

While USCIS regulations provide a variety of opportunities for you to be employed during your time in F-1 status, working improperly or without authorization is a serious violation of your status. You should always consult with the **Designated School Official** before accepting any employment. It is **your** responsibility to comply with all USCIS regulations that apply to F-1 status.

As an F-1 student you must do the following to maintain your lawful presence in the U.S.:

1. Attend the school on the I-20 you used to enter the U.S.
2. Maintain a full course of study (at least 12 credit hours) for both the Fall and Spring Semesters. You are not required to attend school in the Summer, unless that is your first semester after entering the U.S.

3. You may not enroll in more than the equivalent of ONE on-line or distance education course or three credits per semester as part of a full course of study.
4. You must consult with and get permission from the International Advisor before dropping below 12 credit hours. Failure to do so will result in a loss of status.
5. Maintain a valid passport. Start the renewal process six months before it expires.
6. Come to International Student Services at least 5 days before you plan to leave the U.S. so that your I-20 can be signed to allow you to re-enter the United States.
7. Obtain permission for International Student Services before accepting on or off campus employment.
8. Do not work more than 20 hours per week either on or off campus except during the summer and vacations.
9. Please update your address on your “MyPage” within 10 days of each move.
10. Make a copy of your I-20 and carry it with you at all times as this is your identification card in the U.S. Keep your original I-20, passport, and I-94 card in a safe place.

It is your responsibility to maintain your immigration status!

International Student Affairs provides advising and counseling for you regarding your responsibilities. If you fail to meet your responsibilities, you may not be eligible for benefits normally granted to F-1 students.

**International Student Affairs
4600 South Redwood Road
Student Center, Room 234
Salt Lake City, UT 84123
Phone: (801) 957-4528
Fax: (801) 957-4432
Website: www.slcc.edu/isa
E-mail: international.affairs@slcc.edu**

Checklist for Curricular Practical Training

Are you eligible to work?

Before applying for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) through the Cooperative Education program in Career and Student Employment, STC 002, you must meet with your Designated School Official at International Student Affairs to determine immigration and work eligibility.

The following checklist will help you.

Immigration Eligibility

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you in F-1 status? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have a 2.0 GPA? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have you received your new I-20? |

If yes, the DSO will send an e-mail to the Employment Specialist. Initial _____

Academic Eligibility

Meet with an academic advisor to certify that you have met pre-requisites for cooperative education and that you are in second year status within your declared major.

What is your declared major? _____

How many academic hours have you completed in your declared major, not including developmental coursework? _____

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have you transferred any credits to SLCC? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your major offer a Co-op class? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have you completed your declared major's prerequisite for Co-op? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has your academic advisor written a letter to the DSO recommending CPT (employment directly related to your area of study)? |

Academic Advisor's name _____ **Initial** _____

Please request the Academic Advisor send a recommendation letter to the ISA Designated School Official if you meet the above requirements.

**SAMPLE EMPLOYER’S LETTER
FOR F-1 “CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING”**

Company Letterhead Stationery

Today’s Date

Return Address

Dear International Student:

This is to confirm **(company name)** is offering you employment as a **(job title)** for **(number of)** months starting **(date/1st day of semester)**. The employment ending date will be **(date/last day of semester)**. This employment will serve as “Curricular Practical Training” and supplement your degree in **(degree)**. It is our understanding that you will be receiving academic credit for this experience and that it is an integral part of your academic program. As such, this company agrees to provide the necessary information and documentation to the Salt Lake Community College, International Student Affairs, in order to help evaluate your experience as regards to your academic course work.

The goals and objectives of your training with us will be **(blank)**. Specifically, you will be involved in **(blank etc)**.

The location of your experience will be **(current address of employer)**.

Your direct supervisor will be **(Mr. /Mrs., title)**. His/her address and telephone number appear **(above on the letter head or list appropriate information)**.

We recognize that under federal law your employment is limited to part-time employment, 20 hours per week or less, during an academic semester.

On behalf of the company, I welcome you to **(Name the company)**.

Sincerely,

Name, Title

cc: Salt Lake Community College
International Student Affairs