

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

University of West Florida
Diversity and International Education and Programs
11000 University Parkway, Bldg. 71, Pensacola, FL 32514
Tel: (850) 474-2479, Fax: (850) 474-2915

Definition:

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a type of employment option available to F-1 students where the practical training employment is an integral part of a student's established curriculum or academic program and which will be counted towards the completion of a degree. USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services – the branch of the Department of Homeland Security {DHS} that oversees F1 visa regulations) defines CPT 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.” Please note that according to USCIS regulations, CPT must never be used for the purpose of facilitating employment.

Conditions and Special Considerations

- To be eligible to apply, the student must be a degree candidate who has been lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis for at least nine consecutive months. The student must have a valid foreign passport and UWF I-20.
- F-1 students must be enrolled full-time if it is their first semester at UWF or if they are starting a new program at UWF and hence are NOT eligible for any form of full-time CPT during their first semester.
- **Students who have received one year or more of full-time CPT are ineligible for Optional Practical Training.**
- You must have a letter from the CPT employer that includes the employer's name, address, description of CPT employment, start and end date, number of hours per week and payment or other remuneration if any.
- The training must be directly related to the student's field of study and commensurate with the student's education level.
- The training is limited to the period of time required by the program of study as defined by the curriculum design (usually limited to a maximum of 364 days of full-time CPT).
- All CPT employment is usually limited to the start and end dates of a particular semester.
- The training may be full-time or part-time. If you are in CPT part-time, you must be enrolled in full-time coursework for the Fall or Spring Semester. If you are in CPT full-time, you may be enrolled part-time or have 0 hours for the Fall or Spring semester.

Four Types of CPT Approved at UWF

At UWF, there are four types of CPT:

- 1) Specific training that is required for all students in order to obtain a degree:
Specific training that is required for all students in a program and is necessary for the awarding of the degree. The requirement is stated in the catalog as a degree requirement for ALL students. Some examples at UWF are: clinical practica for Nursing majors, and ESOL/Reading Professional Practicum for Exceptional Student/ESOL Certification for Education Majors.
Enrollment: if required, you must be registered for the course during the period that you are working under CPT authorization.
- 2) An elective course that requires work experience:
Included in this category is employment for a course specifically designed to award academic credit for an employment experience. Such CPT requirement is listed and defined in the course's syllabus given to students at the beginning of the semester. For example, Business Practicum or Field Experience in certain courses.
Enrollment: You must be registered for the course during the period that you are working under CPT authorization.
- 3) For-credit elective field experience required and directly related to the production of Thesis or Dissertation **after** completion of all coursework (graduate students only):
Master's and PhD students (who have completed ALL their coursework) and are enrolled in Thesis or Dissertation hours respectively where the training opportunity is absolutely necessary component of the student's research – **without which the Thesis or Dissertation cannot be completed.**
Enrollment: You must be registered for the appropriate number of Thesis or Dissertation hours during the period that you are working under CPT authorization.
- 4) Cooperative Education Programs:
Assigned through UWF's Career Center. You can also contact the Career Center at UWF located in Building 19 North for detailed information or an application and instructions visit their website at <http://uwf.edu/career/>.
For more information on Cooperative Education as an International Student, please visit the International Student Office on Building 71, Room 146, or call (850) 474-2479.

Procedure

- Please call (850) 474 2479 in order to make an appointment with the International Student Advisor in order to submit ALL paperwork for your particular type of CPT **at least two weeks prior to your employment start date**. At the time of appointment please bring with you all the supporting documents listed in this handout according to your CPT category, your unexpired foreign passport and UWF I-20.
- You may engage in CPT only **after** your SEVIS record has been updated by the advisor at the International Student Office and a SEVIS I-20 has been printed, indicating the approved employment. The endorsement will indicate the precise details of the authorized training, including the name and location of the employer, the specific start date and end date of the authorization and whether it is full-time or part-time. No USCIS approval is required.

Support Documentation for Each Type of CPT

Please Submit the appropriate documents listed under each CPT request type.

CPT Type #1

Specific Training that is required for all students in order to obtain a degree:

Specific training that is required for all students in a program and is necessary for the awarding of the degree. The requirement is stated in the catalog as a degree requirement for ALL students. Some examples at UWF are: supervised field work required for a Master of Social Work degree in a program where all MSW students are required to work with a social service agency; clinical practica for Nursing majors, and advanced

Enrollment: if required, you must be registered for the course during the period that you are working under CPT authorization.

Document A:

Please attach a photocopy of the department's program description / catalog page that lists this mandatory requirement for ALL students in the program.

Document B:

The official letter must be on the department letterhead and issued by your academic advisor (undergraduate students) or graduate coordinator or chairperson (graduate students).

Since this is training that is required for **all** students in order to obtain a degree the letter should address the following points:

- i. Your name, SSN, level, major and expected graduation date.
- ii. Course name (e.g. required internship/practica/field experience), course duration (mm/dd/yy to mm/dd/yy), number of credit hours, name of faculty member assigned to the course.
- iii. Address of the employer, duration of the employment (mm/dd/yy to mm/dd/yy) and number of hours per week.

Document C:

Letter from employer on letterhead.

The letter must show the employer's full name, *where you will be employed*, [NOT a PO box], description of CPT employment, start and end date, number of hours per week, and the name of the supervisor at the employment site who will be in charge of monitoring your CPT experience and remuneration if any.

CPT Type #2

An elective course that requires work experience:

Included in this category is employment for a course specifically designed to award academic credit for an employment experience.

Such CPT requirement is listed and defined in the course's syllabus given to students at the beginning of the semester. For example, Business Practicum, Field Experience in certain courses.

Enrollment: You must be registered for the course during the period that you are working under CPT authorization.

Document A:

Photocopy of course listing in current UWF schedule of courses (or department website) and time schedule showing that the CPT course is offered during the semester in which you plan to work.

Document B:

The official letter must be on the department letterhead and issued by your academic advisor (undergraduate students) or graduate coordinator or chairperson (graduate students). You may also wish to attach a letter from the professor/instructor teaching this course whose name is listed on the syllabus you provided in Document A.

Since this is a for-credit field experience the letter should address the following points:

- i. Your name, SSN, level, major, and expected graduation date.
- ii. Course name, course duration (mm/dd/yy to mm/dd/yy), number of credit hours, name of faculty member assigned to the course.
- iii. The letter should have a statement describing the field experience, where it will occur (i.e. name and address of employer), start and end dates of CPT and number of hours per week and how the proposed field experience is integral to the student's course of study. (Please recall that CPT must never be used for the purpose of facilitating employment.)

Document C:

Letter from employer on letterhead.

The letter must show the employer's full name, *where you will be employed*, [NOT a PO box], description of CPT employment, start and end date, number of hours per week, and the name of the supervisor at the employment site who will be in charge of monitoring your CPT experience and remuneration if any.

CPT Type #3

For-credit elective field experience required and directly related to the production of Thesis or Dissertation **after** completion of all coursework (graduate students only):

Master's and PhD students (who have completed ALL their coursework) and are enrolled in Thesis or Dissertation hours respectively where the training opportunity is absolutely necessary component of the student's research – **without which the Thesis or Dissertation cannot be completed.**

Enrollment: You must be registered for the appropriate number of Thesis or Dissertation hours during the period that you are working under CPT authorization.

Document A:

This official letter must be on department letterhead and issued by your graduate coordinator or chairperson (in some cases, you might be required to submit a letter from your major professor before this letter is issued).

The letter should address the following points:

- i. Your name, SSN, level, major, and expected graduation date.
- ii. A statement that you have completed all of your coursework and will be registering for 'X' number of thesis or dissertation hours and will be engaging in CPT at X employer for X number of hours from mm/dd/yy to mm/dd/yy. Please remember that CPT authorization dates are always related to the start and end dates of a specific semester.
- iii. The letter should have a statement describing the field experience, where it will occur (i.e. name and address of the employer), start and end dates of CPT and number of hours per week and how the proposed field experience is integral to the student's course of study. (Please recall that CPT must never be used for the purpose of facilitating employment.)
- iv. How will the proposed field experience assist the student in the development and production of the thesis or dissertation? Specifically, what thesis or dissertation data is being produced, validated or confirmed by the proposed field experience.
- v. How will the academic advisor, relative to the production of the thesis or dissertation evaluate the student's progress and effectiveness in the field experience?
- vi. Where will the data that is produced, validated or confirmed by the proposed field experience appear in the thesis or dissertation?

Document B:

Letter from employer on letterhead.

The letter must show the employer's full name, *where you will be employed*, [NOT a PO box], description of CPT employment, start and end date, number of hours per week, and the name of the supervisor at the employment site who will be in charge of monitoring your CPT experience and remuneration if any.