



Curricular vs. Optional Practical Training for F-1 Students

	Curricular Practical Training (CPT)	Optional Practical Training (OPT)
Who can apply?	Students in F-1 status who have completed one academic year and who have a declared major. Graduate students who are required to complete an internship within the first year may also be eligible.	Pre-Completion: Students in F-1 status who have completed one academic year. Post-Completion: Students in F-1 status can apply for OPT up to 90 days before the program end date and up to 60 days after the program end date.
How many hours can I work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part-time (less than 20 hours/week) while enrolled as full-time students. • Part-time or full-time during vacation periods. • Full-time while enrolled full-time (consult with an International Center advisor) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part-time (less than 20 hours/week) while enrolled full-time (pre-completion OPT) • Full-time (post-completion OPT)
What can I do?	Employment must be related to your academic program. You must earn academic credit for each semester of work. Please check with your academic advisor.	Employment must be directly related to your field of study.
Do I need to have a job before I apply?	Yes. CPT is authorized for a specific job related to the student's major.	No.
Are there any limitations?	There are no limitations for CPT. However, if you use more than 12 months of full-time CPT, you will be ineligible for OPT.	Yes. Students have 12 months of OPT per degree level; students in STEM fields are eligible for a 24 month extension. Part-time pre-completion OPT is accrued and deducted at a 50% rate (6 months Part-time = 3 months Full-time). Post-completion OPT should always be full-time. (20 hours or more)
How do I apply?	Applications are processed by the International Center; please allow 5-7 business days. For more details, please visit the CPT webpage or contact us to schedule an appointment.	Applications begin at International Center and are then sent to USCIS. Allow 3-4 months for processing. For more details, please visit the Employment Webpage and click on the type of OPT you are interested in or contact us to schedule an appointment.

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