

Carnegie Mellon University

Office of International Education

5000 Forbes Ave, Warner Hall 3rd Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Phone: (412) 268-5231 • Email: oie@andrew.cmu.edu • Web: www.cmu.edu/oie

Curricular Practical Training

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is F-1 work authorization for off-campus employment opportunities that are an integral part of your curriculum. CPT employment must be directly related to your major field of study. It is only available to F-1 students who have not graduated and who have been enrolled on a full-time basis in the US for one full academic year (i.e., fall and spring.) Full-time is at least 36 units per semester. Degree programs requiring off-campus employment before meeting this one academic year requirement may be eligible for CPT.

FIRST STEPS:

- ☐ Read this application packet.
- ☐ Understand CPT requirements, restrictions, and limitations.
- ☐ Obtain a job offer letter with the required information (see below).
- ☐ Enroll in a credit-bearing internship or practicum course during the term in which you are seeking CPT.
- ☐ Have your academic advisor complete page 2 of the "Advisor Recommendation for CPT."

NEXT STEPS:

- ☐ Register on the Bridge (<http://bit.ly/OIE-CPTsessions>) for a CPT application session for summer employment. At the session, you will submit your complete application and be provided with important information for your internship (including travel, Social Security and more!) If not residing in Pittsburgh, or for fall and spring CPT, contact your OIE Advisor.
- ☐ Submit your complete CPT application packet (see below) at the session.
- ☐ OIE will issue a new I-20 for you in 5 business days which will include our approval of your CPT on page 3. **YOU CANNOT BEGIN WORKING UNTIL YOUR CPT IS AUTHORIZED BY OIE AND YOU HAVE YOUR CPT I-20.**

You must submit ALL 3 of the following items at a CPT application session:

YOU CANNOT ATTEND AN APPLICATION SESSION WITHOUT A COMPLETE APPLICATION

1. EMPLOYER LETTER : *With the following information underlined:*

- number of hours per week OR if the job is full-time or part-time
- complete employer/company address including zip code (no P.O. Box)
 - if work location is different from parent/headquarter company location, the letter must indicate both addresses
- start date of employment (must be a date in the future)
- end date of employment
 - Offer letter doesn't include required CPT information? Request a new letter from your employer OR an email to supplement the letter with missing information.
 - Only have one letter for yourself? Make a copy for OIE prior to coming to a CPT session.

2. ADVISOR RECOMMENDATION FORM (attached) completed by academic advisor.

3. PROOF OF ENROLLMENT FROM SIO (unless the internship is required for all students in the program). In SIO: Click Course Schedule ➡ Semester Schedule ➡ select Correct term (ex: summer) for the Correct year ➡ Print the List version that shows BOTH the course name and number.

CPT End Date

CPT can only be authorized between the start and end date of one academic term. While you must abide by your employer's specified end date, you may (with your department's approval) request authorization through the end of an academic term to avoid the need for an extension if your employer later extends your employment through the end of the academic term.

Sample Application Documents

Employer offer letter:

Company Letterhead

Robotics Institute
5000 Forbes Avenue, NSH 4521
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Phone: (412) 268-1724
Fax: (412) 268-6436
hgeyer@cs.cmu.edu

October 9, 2013

Dear [REDACTED]

The Legged Dynamic Systems group within The Robotics Institute is pleased to offer you an internship with the following terms:

Start and end dates: 11/1/2013 to 12/19/2013

Number of hours per week: 40

Job location address: The Robotics Institute
5000 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Job title: Research Assistant

Brief position description: The position is offered within an NIH funded project on robotic leg testbed development and research. The position focuses on the development of a slider mount system for a robotic leg aimed at investigating stance phase controls in rehabilitation robotics. Responsibilities include conducting research on existing slider mount systems, designing and prototyping a new slider mount system, and testing the system performance. Further, the position includes helping to manage the development of the system from initial conception to actual prototype, participating in and presenting at group meetings, and providing technical progress reports to the supervisor.

I look forward to working with you. If you have any questions or need any further information please don't hesitate to contact me (phone: 412-268-1724, email hgeyer@cs.cmu.edu).

Sincerely,
[Signature]
Assistant Professor
The Robotics Institute

Specific start and end date

Number of hours per week or full or part-time

Name and complete address of the employer and physical address, if different
Note: no P.O. Box

Proof of enrollment in an internship or practicum course- printout from SIO:

CarnegieMellon SIO [REDACTED] Logout | Feedback

Academic Info Course Schedule Finances My Info Campus Life Resources

Semester Schedule

View the term Summer 1/All 2012

TITLE / NUMBER & SECTION	INSTRUCTOR	DATES	TIMES	BLDG/ROOM
INTERNSHIP 95900 M	Sean Beggs sbeggs@andrew.cmu.edu	T		DNM DNM

Upcoming Academic Dates

November 26-December 18 Semester & Mini-2 FCEs
November 26- December 18th Semester & Mini-2 Faculty Course Evaluations

December 7 Semester & Mini-2 Course Drop Deadline
December 7 Semester & Mini-2 Course Drop Deadline to Receive a Withdrawal Grade (except MBA/Tepper)

Note - Departmental Waitlist Processing
If you are waitlisted for courses during registration please consult this guide to determine how to resolve your status as policies vary by department.

It is recommended that you wait at least two weeks following registration to allow teaching departments the opportunity to lower their initial reservations and take a first pass at shrinking the waitlists themselves.

» Departmental Waitlist Policy Guide

Tip - Academic Audit
As a student, you can check your progress towards your degree by using academic audit.

Bring copies of the above documents with the attached “Advisor Recommendation for Curricular Practical Training” to a CPT application session (see www.cmu.edu/oie for session dates and times).

Incomplete applications will not be accepted for CPT processing.

If not residing in Pittsburgh, or for fall and spring CPT, contact your OIE Advisor.

Curricular Practical Training – Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can I get CPT authorization first and then register for the internship course and/or find a job?

No. CPT work authorization is granted for a specific employer and for a specific period of time, usually corresponding to a semester.

2. Do I need to be enrolled while doing my CPT?

Your program must require an internship/practicum OR you MUST earn academic credit for your CPT, even during summer term.

3. Can I be employed full-time while on CPT?

You can apply for full-time CPT during vacation periods and part-time CPT (20 hours or less per week) during an academic term.

4. Do I have to pay for CPT work authorization?

If approved, CPT work authorization is free and only requires a new I-20. However, you may be charged tuition for enrolling in an internship or practicum course. Please see your department for further information.

5. I heard that Curricular Practical Training is for any off-campus job. Is that true?

No. CPT is employment that *is an integral part of an established curriculum and is directly related to the student's major area of study. CPT is not meant to facilitate the creation of a special employment opportunity or for employment unrelated to the major field of study.* If the primary goal is practical work experience rather than an academic pursuit, apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT). CPT opportunities include internship or cooperative education arranged with the approval of your academic program that will be part of your program's curriculum.

6. I have a great internship opportunity. Can I start working tomorrow?

No. You must have authorization from OIE before you begin a paid internship or any other form of CPT. You need to get a new I-20 issued by an OIE advisor which is endorsed with CPT authorization before your start working on your internship. New I-20s are processed in 5 business days after the receipt of all required CPT documentation.

7. I am working this summer at "Company X," and OIE approved my CPT until the end of the summer term. How can I get it approved so that I can work through the end of Fall semester?

Students may be authorized for CPT only one semester at a time. Students should consult with their OIE advisor to determine if CPT is possible in a subsequent semester, or if other authorization is required, such as OPT. CPT is not allowed in the final semester.

8. The company where I will be doing my summer internship wants me to turn in the CPT approval ASAP. I am not enrolled for summer yet. Can you approve my summer CPT?

No. It is a requirement to be enrolled in the internship/practicum course during the semester of the CPT experience *prior* to CPT authorization.

9. Do I need an I-94 Arrival/Departure Record?

Yes. Your employer will need to see either your I-94 record from www.cbp.gov/i94 or paper I-94. If you are unable to find your I-94, please email OIE: oie@andrew.cmu.edu.

10. My academic department does not want to recommend CPT. In this case, can I still apply?

No. CPT is only authorized for employment that is an integral part of your curriculum. Therefore, your academic department and advisor must approve this CPT and your advisor, department head or dean must complete the recommendation form to determine your eligibility for CPT. You must be enrolled for at least a 3 unit course that requires a work experience (such as co-op, internship or practicum) OR be enrolled in a degree program that requires an internship/practicum for all students in the program. This type of training requires supervision by a faculty member and must be listed in the university course catalog.

11. My professor got me a job with "Company X." It is a good opportunity for me to do research there. It will give me experience for after graduation. Can I use CPT for this?

No. CPT cannot be approved based on it being a good opportunity alone. CPT is only authorized when the employment is part of the curriculum for your program. OIE will recommend and you should apply for OPT. It can take 2-3 months to receive OPT authorization. Note: Both CPT and OPT are for jobs in your major field of study.

12. Can I do full-time CPT and still be eligible for OPT?

Maybe. If you participate in 12 months or more of full-time CPT you are not eligible to apply for OPT. Participating in fewer than 12 months of full-time CPT, or in part-time (20 hours or less per week) CPT does not affect your eligibility for OPT.

13. Can I have CPT after I finish my studies and during my grace period?

No. You can only do a CPT while you are an enrolled student. Students are not eligible for CPT once they have completed all course requirements for the degree except in certain cases, for example PhD students who will be collecting data for a thesis or dissertation and are required to have work authorization to obtain necessary data.

14. Do I have to apply for CPT if I am offered volunteer work or an unpaid internship?

F-1 students may participate in volunteer internships without work authorization if doing so won't violate any labor laws. If you will be compensated in some way for the service you are providing, you must have employment authorization. Compensation includes money, lodging, meals, transportation, gift certificates, or other remuneration. OIE generally recommends that students obtain CPT authorization for all unpaid/volunteer internships in case funding becomes available later, to apply for a Social Security number, or to use the experience on a resume or CV. Please consult an OIE advisor before engaging in a volunteer or unpaid internship.

15. What do I show my employer so that they know that I have work authorization?

You will present your I-20 with the CPT authorization notation. The authorization can be found on page 3 of your I-20.

16. I'm finished with my thesis/dissertation. Can I have CPT while I wait to graduate?

No. CPT is not meant to serve as a means to facilitate an employment opportunity and it cannot delay graduation; therefore, CPT is not allowed in the final semester. Remember to apply for OPT 3 months prior to your completion of program (not graduation) to ensure that you receive your work authorization as soon as possible.

17. Will I get a new I-20 for CPT? If yes, which one (my original I-20 or new I-20) do I use for travel?

Yes, you will be issued a CPT I-20 including a new travel signature. Keep all previously-issued I-20s, but present the CPT I-20 if reentering the US after a trip abroad even beyond your internship end date. F-2 dependents will not receive a new I-20.

18. What if my CPT is not near campus?

Remember, enrolled students in F-1 status must keep permanent (address in home country) and local address (US residential address) information current through the HUB's Student Information On-Line (SIO) web site. If you will be moving for your internship, **you must update your local address in the off-campus address field in SIO.** You must remember to update your local address again when you return to CMU.

19. My major is "X," but my job offer is for a different field or is related to my minor. Can I get CPT or OPT?

No. CPT and OPT employment must be directly related to the major field of study.

20. Do I need CPT authorization for an internship outside of the United States?

No. CPT is U.S. work authorization and is not needed for internships outside of the U.S. However, you do want to ensure that you have work authorization for the country where you will be working. Visit the appropriate Embassy website for further information.

21. Do I need CPT authorization to work on-campus?

No. CPT is off-campus work authorization. As an F-1 student, you are permitted to work on-campus 20 hours per week during the academic year and full-time during official school breaks and vacations.

22. I started my program this January or I started by program in the fall outside of the U.S. Do I qualify for CPT?

No. Even though you may have been a CMU student, you must be a student in the U.S. for one academic year to qualify for CPT.

EMPLOYMENT RELATED INFORMATION

Employment Eligibility Verification

When you begin work, you and your employer must complete a form entitled "Employment Eligibility Verification" (Form I-9), which the employer retains. This form requires you to document your identity and work authorization according to directions on the back of the form. One acceptable combination of documentation is: valid passport, I-94 record marked for F-1 student status, Social Security Number, and a SEVIS I-20 with the CPT work authorization notation.

Social Security Number (SSN)

For payroll purposes, you will also need to provide your SSN. If you do not already have an SSN number or if you have lost your card, take your passport, I-94 record, and CPT I-20 to the Social Security Administration and apply for a Social Security card. Note that your number will remain the same if you already had one. Some Social Security offices may not accept applications until the start date of the CPT employment has been reached. You may begin work without a SSN, however you need one to meet payroll and tax requirements.

Social Security Withholding and Other Taxes:

In general, F-1 students who have been in the US fewer than five years are "non-residents for tax purposes" and are exempt from Social Security (FICA) and Medicare taxes. If you are a non-resident for tax purposes and your employer does withhold FICA, speak to your payroll office. You and your employer can refer to Internal Revenue Service Publication 519, "U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens" for additional information. Your earnings **are subject to applicable federal, state, and local taxes.** Tax returns must be filed on or before April 15 each year for the previous calendar year. The results of the filing will determine if any of the withheld income taxes can be refunded to you. Note that you may be subject to local and state tax filing for the state and municipality in which you are working on your CPT experience.

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Application for Curricular Practical Training

To: Academic Advisor, Dean, or Department Head

Carefully review the information provided by the student on this recommendation form, and the offer letter from the employer. If you wish to approve the CPT request please complete the Advisor's Recommendation for Curricular Practical Training (page 2 of this form). The completed recommendation form should be returned to the student.

=====

CPT Applicant (student): Complete for CPT authorization

Name: _____
(Family) (First) (Middle)

Andrew ID: _____ Passport Expiration Date: ____/____/____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____
mm dd yyyy mm dd yyyy

U.S. address*: _____
(Street) (City) (State & Zip Code)

**Don't forget to update your address in SIO if you'll be relocating for your internship!!*

Employment Start Date: _____
(mm/dd/yyyy)

*Employment dates must correspond with the academic semester. If your employment end date is before the end of the semester, but you would like CPT authorization through the last day of the term, this can be authorized with your department's approval. **Please note that this will not provide you work authorization beyond your employer's specified end date, but will make it easier to extend if your end date is changed.***

☐ Employment End Date: _____ OR ☐ Authorize my CPT through the end of the specified term
(mm/dd/yyyy)

☐ Full-time (more than 20 hours per week) OR ☐ Part-time (20 hours or less)

Employer (Company) Name: _____

Employer Street Address (no P.O. Box): _____
(Street Address)

(City) (State) (Zip Code - required)

Physical site of employment (if different than above):

Company Name (if different than above): _____

Street Address (no P.O. Box): _____
(Street Address)

(City) (State) (Zip Code - required)

CHECK ONE: The work: ☐ IS ☐ IS NOT directly related to my major field of study/degree program.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Advisor Recommendation for Curricular Practical Training

CPT Applicant (student):

Name: _____
(Family) (First) (Middle)

Andrew ID: _____

To: Academic Advisor, Dean, or Department Head

The above-named student wishes to apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT). CPT is employment authorization for work that is an integral part of the established curriculum. Unless it is required for all students in the program, students must be enrolled in a credit-bearing course that requires employment (such as an internship, practicum or co-op course). That course must earn credit towards the degree, must have faculty oversight and must be directly related to the field of study. Carefully review the information provided by the student on this recommendation form, and the offer letter from the employer. **If the employment is part of the curriculum for this student's academic program AND the job is directly related to the major/field of study and you approve this request, complete the form below.** The completed recommendation form should be returned to the student.

NOTE: students often have great opportunities for employment related to the field that are not specifically tied to or an integral part of the curriculum. These valuable employment experiences that are related to, but not part of, the curriculum are possible when a student engages in Optional Practical Training (OPT) rather than CPT. If you have any questions about whether the employment opportunity being presented qualifies for CPT, call an OIE advisor with questions at 412-268-5231 or email oie@andrew.cmu.edu.

The information below must be completed and signed by an ACADEMIC ADVISOR, Dean or Department Head - NOT BY THE STUDENT.

1. **Approved Dates of Training Program:** from _____ to _____ OR ☐ End of term
(mm/dd/yyyy) (mm/dd/yyyy)

If the end date in the student's offer of employment is before the end of the semester, but you would like OIE to authorize CPT through the last day of the term in case the employer extends the job later, please indicate this above.

2. **In order to comply with federal regulations governing institutions that host students in F-1 status, confirm the following:**

☐ This internship/practicum is an integral part of the established curriculum in this student's major field of study and:

☐ The student will be enrolled in an academic course **for which he/she will receive academic credit:**

Course Number: _____ Course Title: _____

After completion of the course, this student will earn ____ academic units towards the degree during the _____ semester.
(number) (fall, spring, summer I, summer II, summer all)

- OR -

☐ This is a required component for every student in this degree program and no internship/practicum course is required.

3. **The department representative/faculty member listed here** will be monitor the student's progress/providing academic oversight during the internship: Name: _____ Title: _____

4. **This student is expected to complete all course requirements for the degree on:** _____, (date)

and will receive the degree of _____ in the field or major of _____.
(BS, BA, MS, MA, PhD) (Field of Study)

NOTE: If all degree requirements have been met, students are not eligible for CPT. Master's and PhD students who have completed all required coursework excluding the thesis or dissertation may be authorized for CPT.

Complete the following question ONLY for master's/PhD students who are working on their thesis/dissertation.

5. Students who have completed all course requirements may only receive CPT authorization if the employment is required for the student to collect data for the thesis or dissertation. **Students in this situation typically receive 1-2 semesters of CPT authorization maximum.**

☐ I certify that this employment experience is **required** for the student to collect data for his/her thesis or dissertation.

Name, title & email address of the advisor, dean, or department head who completed the above information (please print):

(Print Name)

(Title)

(Email)

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____