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Internships

Internship/Cooperative Education is a structured educational program which combines classroom learning with productive work experience in a field related to a student's academic or career goals.

At UTD the term "Internship" includes co-ops, internships, and Curricular Practical Training (CPT). If students want an internship assignment reflected on their transcript they must report the assignment to their internship coordinator and complete the necessary paperwork.

There are three partners in the Internship experience: the employer, the student and the university. This three-way partnership benefits students by providing real-world experiences not otherwise available. It also allows employers to access highly qualified student workers and to develop a resource for future permanent hires.

If you are unable to attend an Internship Information Session, please review the [Internship/Cooperative Education Online Orientation Module](#) before setting an appointment with an Internship Coordinator.

Note to Engineering and Computer Science students interested in internships: The School of Engineering and Computer Science coordinates the [Industrial Practice Program](#) for your majors. You may contact Sharon Allen, Ann Willis, or Gary Steele for more information.

See Also...

These are a few examples of actual internships available in UTD CareerWorks 

Curricular Practical Training for Students on F1 Visas (CPT)

Associated Fees

There is a CPT Placement Fee (\$100 per semester placed). It is assessed ONLY to students on F1 Visas who receive and accept an offer of employment for the semester, and it covers processing costs related to securing the appropriate work authorizations in compliance with INS regulations.

Am I eligible for CPT?

In order to be eligible for participation in Curricular Practical Training, you must meet the following criteria:

- You must have been enrolled full-time in a US school for at least one academic year, and must currently be in F-1 status. This academic year requirement is waived for graduate students who are required to begin their training program immediately. The PhD program in Chemistry is the only program at UTD that has this requirement.
- You must be in good academic standing (above 3.0 GPA for graduate students, above 2.0 GPA for undergraduate students).
- You must meet the requirements of the UTD Internship office for an approved internship.

How do I apply?

Bring the following to the [UTD International Student Services Office](#). We will not accept incomplete applications.

1. Your original I-20.
2. Letter from the coordinator of the cooperative education program in the Career Center recommending you for CPT approval. The letter must include the following:
 - A description of the program (i.e. internship)
 - The name/number of the CPT course assigned
 - The name of the professor supervising the course
 - When course credit will be earned
 - The name and location of the company where you will be working
 - The beginning and ending dates of employment
 - The hours per week to be worked
3. Register for the CPT course listed on the Career Center letter. You must be registered for this course in order to receive authorization.
4. Pick up your endorsed I-20 the following business day. **YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO WORK UNTIL YOU HAVE YOUR ENDORSED I-20!** If you are not eligible for CPT, an International Student Advisor will attempt to contact you by phone or e-mail.

What is the difference between Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT)?

Curricular practical training provides employment or training opportunities for students while they work on a degree. It is an integral part of the curriculum, authorized by the [International Student Services Office](#), and is usually for a period of a semester.

Optional Practical Training provides employment or training opportunities for students after they complete a degree. It is authorized by the USCIS in the form of an EAD card, and lasts up to one year. For more information on OPT, attend one of the [International Student Services OPT workshops](#).

Will my CPT time affect my Optional Practical Training (OPT) after graduation?

Full-time curricular practical training may total one year without affecting optional practical training (OPT). Full-time curricular practical training that continues for more than 12 months makes the student ineligible for Optional Practical Training. Part-time Curricular Practical Training does not affect a student's Optional Practical Training.

When can I pick up my CPT authorization (on form I-20) and when can I start working?

You can turn in a complete CPT application at any time. If you turn in your application more than 1 working day before the beginning date of the CPT semester, your approvals can be picked up on the next day that grades are posted on the UTD computer system (see class schedule for the exact date). If you apply after this time, your authorization may be picked up one working day after turning in the application. You may work for the days authorized on your I-20. You may not begin working until your

I-20 has been authorized and picked up from the [International Student Services Office](#). Any work done before CPT is approved is unauthorized employment and a violation of your F-1 status.

If I am doing a CPT extension or a continuing CPT, do I need to be reauthorized?

Yes. You can pick up the continuation of your CPT at the same time that new CPT students do (see above).

Can CPT be authorized for either full-time or part-time?

Curricular Practical Training may be either full- or part-time. Part-time CPT is limited to 20 hours per week. Full-time CPT is anything more than 20 hours per week.

Do I have to register for a CPT course?

Your CPT authorization is based on course credit for your internship or internship program. If you withdraw from or do not pass your CPT course, you are not authorized to work and you may be in violation of your F-1 status.

Do I have to register for full-time classes when I do CPT?

Part-time Curricular Practical Training requires full-time enrollment at school.

Full-time Curricular Practical Training requires that you enroll in at least the CPT course as stated on your Internship CPT approval letter. For one semester, you may enroll in only this course and maintain full-time enrollment for immigration purposes. However, the next long semester you must enroll in 9 hours (graduate students) or 12 hours (undergraduate students) to maintain your F-1 immigration status.

Generally there is no restriction on being enrolled full-time at school while working full-time in CPT; however, the Internship program in which you participate may restrict your enrollment. Please see your Internship counselor for this information. (The Jonsson School of Engineering and Computer Science limits students on full-time IPP assignments to 6 credit hours).

Can I work on campus while doing a CPT? Can I keep my teaching or research assistantship?

No.

Can I get CPT authorization first and then find a job?

No. Work authorization is granted for a specific employer and for a specific period of time, usually corresponding to a semester. You must have an offer of employment to apply for an internship approval letter.

For additional information contact the [UTD Career Center](#) (972-883-2943) and/or the [UTD International Student Services Office](#).

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