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Cooperative Education Program

Practical Training Guidelines For International Students

As part of your educational experience at Pace University, you may be eligible for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) through the

Co-op Education Internship Program. You must adhere to the below guidelines to ensure compliance with the rules and regulations set forth by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). If you have any questions about your eligibility and/or visa status, please [visit the International Students and Scholars Office \(ISS\) website for more information](#).

Eligibility

- International students on an F-1 visa must be enrolled full-time for **one full academic year** (two consecutive academic semesters) before they are eligible for CPT.
- All students seeking an internship must first complete all required modules in the Career Services' [INSPIRE \(International Student Professional Readiness Education\) Program](#).
- Students will also be able to apply for internships online via [Handshake](#), Career Services' recruiting

portal.

- Once you complete the required INSPIRE module "**International Student Guide to Gaining Experience in the US,**" *your information will be submitted* to the University's ISS Designated School Official (DSO), who will determine student off – campus employment eligibility based on the length of time they have been in lawful F-1 status.
- Students' off-campus eligibility date will be saved on students' record.
- Students will be informed by ISS about their *eligibility* date and the next steps as follows:
- Once your off-campus employment eligibility is saved on your student record, you will have access to the **CPT Eligibility Checklist** through [ISS CONNECT](#). The checklist includes the mandatory ISS-Coop Online CPT Workshop, CPT Acknowledgement Form, and CPT Guidance.
- In addition, students must be fully matriculated in a degree program.
 - Undergraduate students must be enrolled in **12 credits**
 - Graduate and PhD students must be enrolled in **9 credits**

Limitations/Restrictions:

- Eligible students may intern up to 20 hours per week (part-time) during the academic year and up to 40 hours per week (full- time) over summer and winter break in a position that is related to the student's major area of study.
- Eligible students must commit to staying in the internship for a minimum of 12 weeks during the Spring or Fall term and 8 weeks over summer break.
- Students working on-campus in a Graduate Assistantship (GA) position for 20 hours a week cannot work during the academic year in an off-campus internship but may do so during the summer.
- Combination of Graduate Assistantship at 10 hours per week and CPT for 10 hours a week is allowed. Proof of limited hours for both – off- and on-campus employment is required and must be submitted to Career Services along with internship/employment offer.
- A combination of on-campus employment and off-campus CPT is allowed as long as it does exceed 20 h/w when school is in session. Proof of limited hours for both – off-and on-campus employment is required and must be submitted to Career Services along with internship/employment offer.
- 12 months of full-time CPT voids future OPT benefit. However, part-time CPT is unlimited.
- Remote CPT is prohibited in general.

- Given the post-pandemic recent trend for the availability of remote and/or hybrid work, hybrid or "work from home" internship is permitted; however, here is the **context*** of the CPT purpose:
 - *CPT requires **supervised training**, by definition. Hence, the Career Counselor will ask the employer to confirm the method and the frequency of training and supervision in writing.

Site Of Activity (School And Worksite):

- Regulations define "site of activity" as the physical, geographic location(s) where a non-immigrant student visa holder attends classes and participates in his or her approved internship (CPT).
 - Further, the regulations state that the site of activity, whether school or work, must match the student's U.S. address, the school's location, as it is listed in SEVIS. That said, employers' location is required to be within the geographic area of the academic institution as it is listed in SEVIS, and within the student's current local address.
 - The U.S. Department of State acknowledges the recent trend for widespread availability of remote and/or hybrid work, as a byproduct of COVID-19.
 - 1Given the trend, hybrid or 'working from home' is permitted but only in the context of Curricular Practical Training (CPT). For that reason, we will ask the employer to state the method and frequency of training and supervision],
 - Further to that, hybrid or 'working from home' is permitted as long as the worksite is located within the tri-state area.
 - Employers allowing hybrid or "work from home" must have a worksite listed in the business directory, whether physical or remote location, but in the tri-state area.

Authorization

Prior to beginning an internship:

- Students who are offered and want to accept an internship opportunity (paid* or unpaid) must contact their Career Counselor in order to process the required **CPT Employment Verification Form**.

- Upon completion of this form, the Career Counselor will create a **Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Confirmation Form** in ISS Connect.
- Based on the **CPT Confirmation Form** ISS will record CPT authorization in SEVIS and process a CPT I-20 for the student.
- The I-20 will be forwarded to the student electronically.
- Students **cannot** begin work until they have their new Form I-20 and have shown it to their supervisor.
- Students should allow up to 7 business days to process and issue the new Form I-20 once their CPT request has been submitted to ISS.
- Students will only be authorized for **one semester** (or school break) at a time. If a student plans on continuing their internship into the next semester or plans on securing a new internship, they must request from Coop a new **Curricular Practical Training Confirmation Form** and obtain a new **Form I-20**.
 - The new Form I-20 must be issued prior to the expiration date of the existing authorization.
 - ISS is legally restricted by F-1 visa applicable laws to backdate a CPT start date in SEVIS. If student did not request a CPT approval prior to the start employment date or did not renew CPTT authorization in timely manner they will jeopardize their legal status.
 - In the event that an internship ends prior to the authorized and SEVIS-recorded date, students must report in writing (via email) to both ISS and Career Services the last CPT employment date, so that the records can be adjusted accordingly. Students may NOT commence a new internship until this occurs.
 - **Students who fail to obtain proper authorization and who begin an internship without an updated Form I-20 (even if continuing in an internship) will be in violation of their visa status and we will inform the employer.**

*In order to work in a **paid internship** and pay taxes students will need a **Social Security Number (SSN)**.
[Information about applying for SSN is obtainable on our website.](#)

Finding An Internship

Students may apply for internships outside of Handshake. However, regardless of where or how a student finds an internship, it must (1) **be directly related to their major field of study** (2) **meet all CPT eligibility requirements** and (3) **must be reviewed and approved by a Career Counselor**. A Career Counselor will determine if an internship is study-related and meets the requirements.

In order for the Career Counselor to approve the placement, the employer must complete the **Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Employment Verification** form and provide the following information to be recorded in SEVIS:

- Name and address of the organization
- Position title and responsibilities
- Signature, name, phone number, and email of internship supervisor
- Number of hours the student will be interning per week as well as the length of assignment
- Start date and end date (if possible)
- Compensation (e.g., hourly wage/stipend) (if applicable)

The form **MUST** be completed by the employer and sent back to the counselor listed on the form via email. Students **cannot** formally accept an internship until they meet with their career counselor.

Important Reminder

Students MUST obtain a new Form I-20 BEFORE beginning ANY internship.

As mentioned above, students who fail to obtain proper authorization and who begin an internship without an updated Form I-20 (even if continuing in an internship) will have to meet with the Director of ISS to discuss next steps and Career Services will inform the employer.

In Conclusion

Our goal is to support you throughout your internship experience. To make the most of your internship, stay

in touch with your Career Counselor, keep your work authorization up-to-date and notify us if there are any changes in your internship assignment. Should you have any questions about your CPT eligibility please contact ISS at intlnyc@pace.edu before you commence any internship.