

F-1 CPT and OPT Comparison Chart

	Curricular Practical Training (CPT)		Optional Practical Training (OPT)	
What is it?	Allows F-1 student to engage in paid off-campus internship/employment, which is integral to program completion.		Allows any eligible F-1 student to engage in internship/employment within major area of study, in most cases upon program completion.*	
Eligibility	Full-time enrollment under lawful F-1 status for one full academic year prior to training.			
	Grad students whose program requires immediate participation in training are exempt from the one-year requirement above.		Grad students who have completed all required courses are eligible to start OPT (pre-completion OPT*).	
	Requires a job offer.		Does not require a job offer.	
	12+ months of full-time CPT makes a student ineligible for OPT at the same educational level.			
Duration of Training (per degree level)	No maximum but should be limited to less than 12 months of full-time to be eligible for OPT.		Maximum of 12 months full-time.	
Granted by	International student advisor in the Student Affairs office; CPT I-20 issued.		U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services; Employment Authorization Document issued	
Application Fee	\$0.		\$180. (As of 10/26/05.)	
Processing Times	About 1-2 weeks.		Can take up to 3+ months.	
Employment Status	Part-time CPT	Full-time CPT	Pre-comp OPT	Post-comp OPT
	<20 hours/week.	>20 hours/week.	Can be part-time or full-time.	Full-time only.
	(Definitions of part-time/full-time same as for CPT.)			
Enrollment Requirements	Requires full-time enrollment during academic year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determined by the department. ▪ Part-time okay. 	Minimum 1 credit to maintain student status at WSU. (Part-time OPT requires Reduced Course Load authorization.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enrollment not required. ▪ Should be limited to part-time if enrolled.
Academic Department's Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determine whether CPT is appropriate. ▪ Determine enrollment requirements. (i.e. internship course, thesis credits) ▪ Recommend CPT. 		Verify completion of all required courses.	Verify expected program completion date.
International Student Advisor's Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Verify eligibility. ▪ Determine whether CPT is appropriate. (Decisions made on a case-by-case basis for grad students whose programs don't require internship.) ▪ Authorize CPT in SEVIS. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Verify eligibility. ▪ Recommend OPT in SEVIS. 	
Grounds for Denial	Failure to demonstrate CPT is an "integral" part of program of study.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Failure to apply prior to program completion. ▪ Incomplete application. 	

*Although they are not common at WSU, other types of pre-completion OPT can be used during annual vacation (part-time or full-time) and during academic year (part-time) by both undergrad and grad students who meet the eligibility. Contact your international student advisor for more information.

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