



Immigration Services
Office of Global Engagement
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Curricular Practical Training - Special Eligibility Considerations

Students may only be authorized for CPT during their degree program: F-1 students interested in working in the US after graduation may apply for post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT).

Exception to one academic year requirement: The one academic year waiting period can be waived for students enrolled in a graduate program that requires a CPT participation during their first year.

Leave of Absences and Other SEVIS Terminations: Students who have re-entered the US using a new SEVIS record after a previous record was terminated/completed will need to complete one academic year of full-time study under their new SEVIS record before becoming eligible for CPT. This rule applies to a student who was given an authorized early withdrawal for a leave of absence (gap semester/year) and returned to the US with a new SEVIS record.

Unpaid Internships: Financial compensation is not the only indicator of employment in the US. Immigration Services recommends that students obtain work authorization for any activities with non-UGA organizations. In the case of unpaid internships, the student should also obtain written verification from the organization's Human Resources confirming that the position does not violate the [Fair Labor Standards Act](#).

Part-time or Full-time CPT Authorizations:

- Part-time CPT (20 hours/week or less)
 - Students can participate in part-time CPT during the fall, spring, or summer semesters.
- Full-time (20+ hours/week)
 - A student may participate in full time CPT during the summer. Please see “CPT in Final/Graduation Semester section” to confirm eligibility for summer CPT authorization in the final academic term.
 - PhD students who have completed all coursework (excluding dissertation) can participate in CPT full-time during the fall and spring if it’s required to complete the dissertation.

Employment Dates: If the CPT eligibility is based on enrollment in a course, the CPT authorization must fall within the semester dates as listed on the [university academic calendar](#).

- In rare situations, the CPT authorization may extend beyond the semester dates if there are extenuating circumstances or programmatic reasons.
- Students requesting an exception should be prepared to provide documentation that explains the reason the position must end after the “End of Term” date as listed on the [university calendar](#). Documentation may include:
 - An offer letter, addendum/supplemental offer letter, or email from the hiring manager stating that the established internship program is cohort based for which all interns start and end on the same date
 - Official job posting that states the required start and end date for interns accepted into the program
 - Other documentation explaining the medical or other extenuating circumstance
- Please contact your [IS Advisor](#) to discuss your situation, determine if you qualify for an exception, and what type of documentation may be required.

Multiple CPT authorizations with the same employer: Students may be eligible for a second CPT authorization with the same employer, provided that the continued experience is required by the degree program and appropriate documentation provided. A new CPT application must be submitted in [Compass](#) for the new experience.

Impact on OPT: If you are approved for 12 months or more of full-time CPT, you will not be eligible to apply for [Optional Practical Training](#) (OPT) at your current degree level.

CPT in Final/Graduation Semester: CPT will not be approved during a student's final semester at UGA unless **all** of following conditions are met:

For Undergraduate and Graduate Students not approved for Thesis-Only/ABD status

- The practical training is part-time. Full-time CPT is not permitted in a student's final term unless the student is approved for a reduced course load.
- The location of final term CPT must be within a location commutable to campus or remote if the student demonstrates a clear trainer/trainee relationship with the employer.
- The student is enrolled in at least one other degree required course, and this course has a physical presence requirement on UGA's campus (i.e., class attendance is required).

For Graduate Students approved for ABD or Thesis-Only Status:

- Graduate level student approved for only ABD enrollment may be approved for CPT located away from campus if their thesis/dissertation requires the participation.
- **Post-Completion OPT** may be another option for Graduate Level students with a thesis/dissertation requirement. Students must be admitted to candidacy to explore this option.

Location of Training: CPT employers must be within the commutable area near the UGA

campus in fall, spring, and final terms. CPT may be approved for remote employment if the student demonstrates a clear trainer/trainee relationship with the employer.