

# Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Workshop

January 28th, 2026



# Presenters

## International Student & Scholar Office

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# Agenda

- CPT
  - What is it?
  - Eligibility
  - How to Apply
  - Semester Details
  - Important Reminders
- Q&A



# What is CPT?

- *Off-campus employment/training programs that are an integral part of an established curriculum; defined as alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education or any other type of required internship/practicum, which is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school*
- CPT is NOT just an opportunity to work off campus and must not be abused!!



# CPT Eligibility

- You must have been in lawful student status and enrolled full-time (or with an approved RCL) for 1 full academic year (the past 2 semesters, excluding summer) and currently hold valid F1 status.
  - No exception or discretion possible.
- Also must have good academic standing (i.e. making 'normal' course progress, maintaining appropriate GPA). ISSO may use discretion in this.



# CPT Eligibility, continued

- Regulations allow for DSO (university F-1 immigration advisor) discretion to approve or deny CPT applications based on student's academic progress, degree completion, and other considerations.



# How to Apply - University Career Center

- Via the University Career Center
  - ISSO Portal application **“Career Center Curricular Practical Training”**
  - 2 part approval process, 10 business day processing time (2 weeks)
    - Step 1 - Approval by the Career Center
    - Step 2 - Approval by ISSO
- **Fall/Spring** semester **part-time** internships require students to be enrolled full-time or have an approved RCL
- **Summer internships** may be **full or part-time**, as long as the student will continue to be enrolled the following fall semester or if the student is enrolled in summer coursework as the final term of study.



# How to Apply - Academic Department

- WHEN
  - If your work experience is for **course credit** (such as an internship course), it must go through the Academic Department
- WHO
  - **PhD students** must request CPT through the Academic Department
  - **PhD students** must either receive academic credit, or the academic advisor indicates that the CPT is required for developing the dissertation
- HOW
  - ISSO Portal application **“Academic Curricular Practical Training”**
    - Upload an unofficial Banner transcript
    - Upload your job offer letter
    - Request an electronic academic advisor recommendation (“Second Approver”)



# Semester Details

	<b>Summer 2026</b>	<b>Fall 2026</b>
Date application opens	Mar 13, 2026	TBD
Apply by this date to work on the FIRST day of the semester *Applications submitted after this date will still be accepted, but the CPT will begin after the start date of the semester.	Apr 24th, 2026	TBD
Semester CPT dates  **Students continuing studies through the next semester at the same edu level	May 11 - Aug 7, 2026*  May 11 - Aug 14, 2026**	Aug 17 - Dec 11, 2026*  Aug 17 - Jan 8, 2027**



# Can I do a remote internship/CPT for a company outside the U.S.?

- We highly recommend against this
- It does not count as CPT if the employer is not in the U.S.
- Lots of complicated tax issues for which you and your employer would be responsible.



# CPT after OPT policy

- Student must complete 1 semester at their new academic level after participating in OPT if the OPT created a semester or more 'gap' in enrollment.



# Important Reminders

- CPT must be authorized and performed **BEFORE** completion of studies.
- There are **NO EXCEPTIONS** with processing times!
- CPT authorization is not a sufficient reason to drop below the full-time study requirement for F1 students, nor delay graduation or interfere with normal academic progress.
- CPT employment authorization (combined with hours participating in on-campus employment) is restricted to part-time (20 hrs/week) during fall/spring semesters with very few exceptions:
  - Master's students who are enrolled in ONE final class (in final term) that also has a full time work requirement (i.e. an internship class)  
OR
  - Doctoral students in dissertation status who have successfully completed all coursework requirements, defended dissertation proposal, and require an internship to further their research toward dissertation defense



# Important Reminders Continued

- International students must receive CPT **work authorization BEFORE** participating in any form of **internship** or of off-campus employment
- Your CPT employment is valid **only for the dates of authorization**. CPT is approved per term by the University Career Center and authorized by the ISSO.
- CPT is not to be used as a way to secure permanent employment – must be a **temporary internship**. For more permanent work, consider applying for OPT.
- **Students with on campus employment – may not exceed 20 hrs/wk total (CPT + on campus) for Fall and Spring semesters.**
  - \*GA/TA contracts also prohibit students from working more than 20 hrs/week.



# Ethical Job Search Policy

- 'UNC Charlotte expects any student accepting a job offer to honor their commitment to the accepted position and company' by ceasing their job search upon accepting an offer.
- When faced with an offer you are not sure about:
  - Ask offering employer for 24 hours to consider.
  - Inform any 'first choice' employers of your offer and ask if they have made their hiring decision yet.
  - Based on what you learn, make the best decision you can and STICK WITH IT!
  - <http://career.uncc.edu/resources/policies>



# Frequently Asked Questions

Email case specific questions to [intlssso@charlotte.edu](mailto:intlssso@charlotte.edu)

# If I work on CPT am I still eligible to apply for OPT after I finish my program?

- If you do 12 months (365 days) of **full time** CPT you are no longer eligible to apply for OPT.
- Part time CPT does not count towards the 12 months.



# Can I participate in CPT remotely while outside the U.S.?

- **Example** - in a summer term
- **The ISSO requires written approval from your employer** - your job offer letter must include the statement
  - *"The student will participate in a remote internship while remaining outside the U.S. We acknowledge that it is up to the student and the employer to investigate and fulfill any taxation or U.S. or foreign country regulatory requirements due to the student's physical location."*



# Questions? Feedback?



**Please give us your feedback on this event  
anonymously by scanning this QR code with your  
smartphone and completing the program  
evaluation form. (Select “CPT Workshop”)**

