

What type of work experience qualifies as CPT?

You may apply for CPT if the work experience is an **integral part of the degree program**. This includes any type of required internship or practicum, or any required work for which course credit is received. The internship must be directly related to your academic program.

Do I need to apply for CPT if ...

My internship is unpaid? It is recommended that you apply for CPT authorization for any off-campus internship in the U.S. You will not be eligible to receive any stipend, bonus or other compensation without prior authorization. Labor laws should also be taken into consideration. For further details, please refer to the [Department of Labor's Internships Under the Fair Labor Standards Act Fact Sheet](#).

My internship is on campus? No, you do not need to apply for CPT if you will be paid by UCR to work on campus. International students are allowed to work on campus up to 20 hours per week while courses are in session and up to 40 hours per week during break periods.

My internship is in my home country? No. CPT is authorization to work in the United States. You do not need to apply for CPT if your internship is in your home country.

Am I eligible to apply?

In order to apply, you must have completed one academic year as a full-time student. Students must also be in good standing with immigration when applying for CPT and while working, if approved for CPT. You must also be registered for a full-time course load (with the exception of summer). Students on filing fee status are not eligible for CPT.

How much CPT can I use? Will it affect my eligibility for OPT in the future?

Students are not limited to the amount of CPT they may utilize; however, students who have engaged in one year or more of full-time CPT are not eligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT). Part-time curricular practical training is not counted towards OPT eligibility. Generally, CPT is authorized as part-time during the academic year.

What is considered "full time" CPT? "part time" CPT?

Full-time CPT is over 20 hours per week. CPT is part-time if you are working 20 hours or less per week. Please note that during the academic year, students may only apply for part-time CPT (20 hours per week or less), unless the student has advanced to candidacy or is pursuing a program that requires full-time CPT. During the summer, students may apply for full-time CPT; however, students will be required to enroll for an approved internship course.

How do I apply?

1. Obtain an internship offer letter from your prospective employer on company letterhead specifying: your job title and responsibilities, whether the internship is full-time or part-time and the dates of employment.
2. **Graduate Students (excluding MBA students)** must obtain a letter of recommendation from their major professor. The letter should include the details of the training/work at the company and how it relates to the student's academic objective and/or degree and/or current coursework.

3. Enroll in the appropriate internship course. CPT is authorized for the period in which you are registered for the course, *with the exception of MBS students who may complete their internship in the summer and register for Fieldwork in Management in the subsequent fall term.*
4. Complete the CPT Certification Form at myforms.ucr.edu. Upload your offer letter and recommendation letter. (*Recommendation letter not required for undergraduates or MBA students.*)
5. After you submit your CPT Certification Form, the form will be routed for approval by your academic advisor, and for graduate students, the Graduate Division.
6. If approved, an email will be sent to your UCR webmail address. You may then pick up your new I-20 at the front desk of the International Students and Scholars office. The CPT authorization will be noted on page 2 of your new I-20 Form. Make sure to provide a copy of your CPT I-20 to your employer. You should keep all of your original I-20s.

What class do I enroll in?

Undergraduate students should consult their academic advisor and the UCR Career Center for guidance regarding internship course enrollment and procedures. Graduate students should consult their graduate advisor or student affairs officer for guidance regarding course enrollment.

Can I begin my internship while I'm waiting for authorization?

No. You MUST be approved for CPT before your internship begins and have a CPT I-20 issued from our office. We do not back-date CPT authorization, so make sure you plan early and submit an application well before your internship is scheduled to begin. You should allow at least two weeks for us to process the application.

May I change my employer, the dates, or my status as full-time or part-time once I've been approved?

No. You may only work for the employer listed on your I-20, for the specific dates listed, and only full-time or part-time as authorized. Any changes require an entire new application packet and would necessitate a new CPT I-20.

What do I need to do to renew my CPT authorization next quarter?

Extending your internship: You must submit all new documentation (including a new offer letter and a new recommendation letter) along with a new CPT certification form for each quarter in which you would like to work. **You must also continue to register for the internship course each quarter, as necessary.**

Continuing your internship: If you've already been pre-approved for a multiple-quarter internship, then you should contact the advisor who issued your earlier CPT I-20 once you are enrolled in internship units for the following term.

I'm a graduate student. What if I'm also working part-time on-campus as a TA or a GSR? What if I have a fellowship?

If the combined time you plan to work (both CPT and on-campus employment) exceeds 20 hours per week, you should contact the Graduate Division and/or your Departmental Advisor to discuss how this will affect your funding (fellowship, etc.) Working more than 20 hours total may be considered full-time employment by either your department or the Graduate Division and will affect your funding, so please check with them.

Can I apply for CPT in the summer if I've been on filing fee in the spring?

No. If you were on filing fee in the spring, you are not eligible for CPT during the summer.

What dates can I request for my CPT? Can I work during the breaks between quarters or after my program is finished?

The dates of your CPT authorization must match the dates of the quarter in which you will do your internship. If approved for CPT during the summer and will enroll in a full-time course load for the fall to continue in your program, you may be eligible to have your CPT extended to cover the break between summer and fall. If you will complete your program in the summer, your CPT must end by the last day of the summer quarter.