

## **CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT) INFORMATION, FAQ, AND INSTRUCTIONS**

Geneva College – International Student Services

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Please read **all** information and instructions before moving forward with your authorization request.

**Definition of CPT:** CPT is defined as employment which is an integral or important part of your curriculum, including: alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum which is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school. Training must be a required or integral part of a program of study.

**Job eligibility requirements:** At a minimum, qualifying CPT involves employment experience with courses that carry academic credit, are listed in Geneva College's regular course offerings, and have a faculty member assigned to the course. It is particularly important that any employment experience required by the course be instrumental to achieving a curricular academic objective. A course offered for the primary purpose of facilitating employment authorization does not qualify for CPT (i.e. independent study).

Another example of qualifying CPT would be an instance of a graduate student engaged in research that is integral to a thesis or dissertation. The research should involve innovative technology available only at a particular corporation's research facilities or to collect data or experience essential for completion of a thesis or dissertation. All required coursework for the degree must be completed to use this form of CPT. These students must be registered for at least 1 credit hour of thesis/dissertation research each semester (except summer) during the CPT authorization.

You must complete one academic year of study as a full-time student and hold F-1 status before you are eligible to start CPT. There is an exception for graduate students who are required by the program to start a co-op or internship during the first academic year of study.

**If you have a training opportunity that involves employment, check with Sarah in International Student Services to determine if it qualifies as CPT or not.**

### **Authorization**

In order to obtain employment authorization for CPT, you must:

1. Have completed **one full academic year in lawful F-1 status** – unless you are a graduate student who is required to complete a co-op or internship during the first year of study.
2. Completed the **Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Eligibility Form** (found in the ISS office) and returned it to Sarah.
3. Print off an unofficial transcript, or other form of **proof, that you are registered** for the course supporting your CPT.
4. Assuming you are determined eligible for CPT, **schedule an appointment with Bridget** to receive new I-20 showing CPT authorization.

**YOU ARE NOT ELIGIBLE TO WORK UNTIL YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO DO SO ON YOUR I-20.**

You are not limited in the amount of CPT you may utilize. However, students who have engaged in one year or more of full-time CPT are ineligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT).

**CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE FOR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

### **Do I have to report if the details of my CPT changes?**

YES. You are authorized to work with the company, at the location, during the dates stated clearly on your I-20. If anything should change in any of the details, Bridget or Dr. Cole will need to authorize such changes. For example, if you are going to work beyond the authorized period of employment, the employer is going to transfer you to another location, or if you are going to work full-time instead of part-time, those changes need to show in your authorization.

### **How do I change or extend my authorization?**

Your academic advisor will need to put into writing any changes. If you wish to take part in a new period of CPT, you will need to submit the CPT Eligibility Form or a letter from your academic advisor. This notification must be turned into the Crossroads/ISS office for review.

### **Am I still considered an F-1 status student while on CPT?**

Yes, while on CPT you are still in F-1 status.

### **Can I travel while on CPT?**

You can travel in and out of the USA while on CPT provided your I-20 has been signed by Bridget, Peggy or Dr. Cole.

### **Do I have to be registered for classes while on CPT?**

You must be registered for at least one credit hour of research credit (if you are a graduate student working on a thesis). If you are not a graduate student doing research for a thesis/dissertation, you must still be enrolled in a full-time course load to maintain eligibility as an F-1 student and for CPT. The only exception to this rule is during summer break.

### **What is a Form I-9? How do I fill it out?**

A Form I-9 is a form that your employer will complete with you on your first day of work. It is a form that certifies how you are authorized to work in the USA for this particular employer. The two most common questions about completion are:

Section 1 --                   An alien authorized to work until (date of CPT expiration)  
  Admission Number is your I-94 card number

What "list" does CPT fall under?

List A document --           (#4) Unexpired foreign passport, with Form I-94 indicating unexpired employment authorization

### **How do I fill out the tax form (W-4)?**

Your earnings are subject to applicable federal, state, and local taxes. You **MUST** file a tax return on or before April 15 of each year. For the W-4, most F-1 students should state:

In Box 3 --           "Single" (even if you are married)  
In Box 5 --           "1"

### **Do I have to pay Social Security and Medicare taxes?**

If you are an F-1 student and have not been in the USA for 5 years, you should NOT be paying Social Security or Medicare taxes until your 6<sup>th</sup> year in the country. Your employer should refer to IRS Publication 519 <https://www.irs.gov/uac/about-publication-519>. In particular, they should read page 6 for "exempt individuals" and pages 45-46 (Chapter 8). After reading that they will want to know what the difference is between a Resident Alien and a Non-Resident Alien and how to calculate this. This can also be found in Publication 519 on pages 4-5 with the standard Substantial Presence Test, but they should also look on page 6 for exempt individuals where they will find F's stated clearly and the five year rule.