Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Information for F-1 Student
Authorization Based Date-Specific, Employer/Location-Specific Work Experience

DEFINITION
Curricular Practical Training (or CPT) is a benefit of being an F-1 student, and your Designated School Official (as known as International Student Advisor) may authorize it as a part of the student’s academic curriculum. CPT is a required or integral part of an academic program. Its purpose is to allow the student to gain practical experience directly related to the student’s major field of study prior to their academic completion. It can be paid or unpaid. But, authorization prior to the CPT start date is required regardless of compensation.

At Fletcher, international students who study at the two-year degree or Ph.D. program are eligible to utilize their Spring or Fall semester for part-time based CPT and Summer break time for full-time CPT opportunities.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS – all must meet prior to CPT Application

[Immigration and Academic Status Requirements]
1. Student must currently be in F-1 status and must have been in lawful student status (i.e. enrolled full-time) for at least one academic year (at the Fletcher, minimum 2 semesters) by the CPT application time and making reasonable academic progress towards fulfillment of degree requirements
2. Student must be studying in our two-year program (MALD, MIB) or Ph.D. program unless studying at MATA program
3. Student must complete the Professional Development Program (PDP) prior to the CPT application
4. Student must register for the IR CPT Curricular Practical Training Course (0.60 credit, this credit will not be cumulated into the graduation requirements credit). [NOTE] Reiko Ohmura registers the authorized students for this class
5. Student needs to submit the CPT Summary paper after the internship for getting a grade for the CPT course

[CPT Condition Requirements]
1. Student’s internship must be related to his/her Fletcher academic coursework and its academic interest
2. Student needs to have a specific job offer at the time of CPT application
3. If engaging an academic year CPT (during the Fall or Spring semester), he/she must register courses in a full-time load (minimum 9CR) without exception. [SPECIAL NOTE] If the student extends Capstone submission and have his/her I-20 duration to be extended, CPT authorization cannot be granted for the “extended” duration based on the US immigration regulation.
4. Academic year CPT (during Fall or Spring semester) jobs must be a minimum of 26 hours and a maximum of 260 hours throughout the semester
5. The student must apply for CPT application regardless of compensation of the internship – both paid and unpaid internship
6. Total CPT hours during the regular academic semester (Fall or Spring) must be a part-time internship (less than 20 hours/week). For CPTs during the school’s annual break time, the authorized student can work up to 40 hours/week
7. If the student has an on-campus job and will do a CPT at the same time, total work hours per week cannot exceed 20 hours per week (during the regular academic semester) or 40 hours per week (during summer or winter break)

DURATION AND NUMBER OF WORK HOURS
Students can engage in CPT during the Spring or Fall semester for a part-time internship (up to 20 hours/week) while attending full-time load courses. If a student would like to pursue a full-time (up to 40 hours/week) internship, it needs to be during their Summer break period; between Summer break start date to one day prior to Fall class start date in the Fletcher School academic calendar.

CPT authorization is required only for internship/work experience activity within the United States. If students wish to pursue multiple CPT activities, each CPT activity must be authorized by Fletcher School’s Designated School Official. Authorization must be granted even if CPT is uncompensated work.
NOTE  CPT is date-specific, location-specific work experience. You cannot exceed CPT activity beyond the authorization date, even for an uncompensated CPT. If you need to request CPT duration extension, you need to contact Reiko Ohmura as soon as possible. Any unauthorized CPT activities may compromise your immigration status as an international student in the United States or your future visa application eligibility, such as H-1B.

ATTENTION  If you have an on-campus job and would like to take CPT opportunity simultaneously, you need to be very mindful how many total hours of the week you would work: it cannot be exceeded for more than 20 hours/week during the regular academic semester and no more than 40 hours/week during the break period. 

CPT cannot be authorized in anyways for the extended I-20/Capstone period.

SPECIAL ISSUE OF CPT AND POST-COMPLETION OPT

Students who have been authorized for 52 weeks or more (in total) of Curricular Practical Training in the same academic level (with same SEVIS record) are not eligible for OPT (either pre-OPT or post-OPT.) If you have transferred to the Fletcher School from another US graduate school, please be mindful of this regulation.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Complete the Professional Development Program (PDP) prior to CPT application
2. Obtain a job offer letter (email or a hard copy) from your prospective employer. The letter must be on the employer’s letterhead and must include the following:
   + name, address and phone number of employer
   + employment start and end date
   + number of work hours per week
   + amount of compensation (if paid job)
   + job description
   + supervisor’s name and contact information (phone number and email address)

*If you have questions and concerns about obtaining the employment statement, you need to contact Reiko Ohmura prior to your CPT application.


4. Fill out the form online and send an Electronic Recommendation Request to the Fletcher Registrar (Mary Dulatre) so that she can evaluate your CPT application. [IMPORTANT] Without sending the recommendation, she will never know that you applied for CPT authorization!

5. Once approved, Reiko issues a “CPT authorized” I-20.

PARTICIPATE SUMMER INTERNSHIP AT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

If you are giving an opportunity to participate Summer internship at one of the international organizations, such as the United Nations or World Bank, that may require you to obtain a different nonimmigrant visa status, such as G-4. As an F-1 visa status holder, you then need to file a change of (visa) status request to the USCIS for an internship. Please directly seek advice to your internship site’s advisor/supervisor regarding the change of status application. Once finishing Summer internship, you then need to request an F-1 visa status again to come back to your Fletcher program in Fall semester. The organization should be able to help you with that request as well.

APPLYING FOR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER FOR CPT

If you do not have a social security number (SSN) prior to CPT, you need to apply for one as soon as you are authorized to pursue CPT. You will be stated your SSN application from her regarding your eligibility to apply for an SSN. You are not eligible to apply for an SSN more than 30 days prior to your CPT start date. In general, it may take 10 to 14 days for you to be issued an SSN after the application at a local SSN office.

TAXES

All international students must file taxes, regardless of income in the US. Please refer to the Internal Revenue Services (IRS) website: http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/International-Taxpayers/Foreign-Students-and-Scholars