Applying for F-1 Curricular Practical Training

REQUIREMENTS FOR CPT

- Must have been enrolled full-time for two full semesters (Fall & Spring) *immediately* prior to your CPT request
  - **NOTE:** NIU does not authorize CPT for students beginning a new degree program following OPT.
- You must be in good F-1 status.
- You must be enrolled full-time for the semester requesting CPT and you must be registered in major related classes (internship credit preferred).
- Students can only work during the period specified by the employer in CPT authorization letter.
- Employment must be directly related to a student’s field of study.
- CPT is authorized on a semester basis – if a job offer is for a full year, it is the responsibility of the student to reapply for CPT the next semester.
- Full-time CPT is only authorized in the summer term (must be enrolled for at least 1 credit hour).
- If you do more than 12 months of *full-time* CPT, you will NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR ANY OPT.
  - If you choose to work more than 12 months of full-time CPT you will be required to sign a waiver at ISFO confirming that you know you are losing the OPT immigration benefit.
  
*Final Semester Underload*

- If you have been granted an underload for completing program requirements in the current term, in some circumstances a full-time CPT can be authorized.

HOW TO APPLY

**STEP ONE**

- Find a job or internship in your field.
- Ask the potential employer for an offer letter which includes
  - The company’s address – where you will be working
  - The beginning and end dates of employment
  - Number of hours a week you will be working
  - Description of duties
- Complete a CPT application

**STEP TWO**

- Bring the CPT application and job offer letter to your academic or graduate advisor for their support and endorsement.

**STEP THREE**

- Bring the completed documents to ISFO for review by an ISFO advisor
- If it is confirmed you are eligible, the advisor will authorize you for CPT by issuing a new I-20.
- Give a copy of the I-20 to your employer.

**IMPORTANT!!!!!!**

NEVER WORK before your CPT authorization begins or after it ends! If you do you will go out of status. It is the student’s responsibility to track these dates and if necessary obtain a new offer letter and start the application process over again.