



CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT) for F-1 Students

International students are restricted from working in the United States based on the type of visa they are utilizing to be in the country. However, students often times want to engage in internship and research opportunities for a more well-rounded educational experience. These internship and research opportunities may be paid or unpaid but require permission from a DSO and follow the process for Curricular Practical Training (CPT).

Eligibility Requirements for CPT at Austin College

Austin College Requirements for Independent Study

Students must be able to meet the grade point average (gpa) requirement set by Austin College policy (as well as any other internship or research program requirements) to engage in an independent study which is a 3.0 cumulative gpa. Students will also have to pay for the tuition for the 1 course credit at Austin College to gain this experience for the term in which the student is working.

Independent Study Course for the major or minor

In order for a student to be able to take advantage of CPT to engage in these potential work opportunities, the academic department of a student's major or minor must be willing to sponsor the student for independent study credit equivalent to 1 course credit unit, typically a 490 or 491 course number within the department, for work that is relevant to the discipline. For instance, a Computer Science student could not get a job working in a theatre as a set designer and receive CS 491 credit. However, if the student were completing work related to computer science for the theatre manager and the Math and CS Department was willing to sponsor the independent study that could be acceptable work for CPT with documentation of the nature of the work. **CSOC credit cannot be granted for CPT; it must be course credit within the department of the major or minor.** The student is then eligible to work only during the term in which the credit is earned: Fall term, Spring Term, or Summer Term.

Limitation to Hours Working

During the Fall and Spring terms students are only allowed to work a maximum of 20 hours per week. During the Summer term, in which the student is taking only the independent study course, the student can work full-time. If the student is taking other summer courses at Austin College or at another institution, only 20 hours a week can be worked.

Process

1. Seek advisement from a Designated School Official (DSO), currently the Registrar, to determine if you are eligible for CPT.
2. The student should secure a commitment from a faculty member in the academic department of the major or minor to sponsor the independent study.

3. Once the commitment has been secured, the student can work with that faculty member or Career Services to investigate options for internships or research opportunities.
4. When a student has been accepted to an internship or research opportunity for a future term, he/she needs to complete the following tasks:
 - a. Notify the DSO of acceptance of the offer. The documentation must include information about how many hours a week the student will be working, if the work is for pay and the nature of the work. That information can be provided in the acceptance letter and program materials or utilizing the Austin College **Employment Offer Form**. The student is then issued a CPT I-20 provided that the student will be working within the CPT requirements.
 - b. If the internship or research experience is paid, the student must apply for a Social Security Number. The DSO will need documentation from item 4. Item a. The DSO will then write a letter of support that is needed to accompany the **Social Security Number Application FORM SS-5**.
 - c. The student must complete with the faculty sponsor the **Student Proposal for Directed or Independent Study or Honors Project Form** and submit it to the Registrar's Office.
5. Once the course has been in WebHopper, the student will have to enroll for that course for the appropriate term. If the student is not enrolled in the course, the student cannot work for that organization/program.
6. If the student has to drop the course during the term, the work for that program/organization must end as well. Premature exit from the work situation must be reported to the DSO for SEVIS reporting.
7. Any change in the work setting, organization/program, or hours should be reported to the DSO immediately for advisement.

Other Important Issues to Consider

- The student cannot begin working until the first day of the term in which course credit will be granted. The student is then eligible to work until the last day of the term, which is the last day of the final exam period for the term.
- If the internship/research experience is for pay, the student cannot begin working until the Social Security Number has been received.
- If the student is working for the organization/program and is not enrolled in the independent study course, the student must be reported as out of status to SEVIS.