

# Applying for Practical Training CPT and OPT

**Allison Foster**

**International Student Counselor II**

**International Student and Scholar Services Office**

# What is CPT? Who can participate?

Curricular practical training for authorized F1 students who have been full-time students in the US for at least one academic year. The job or internship must be directly related to the student's major area of study.





UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON**

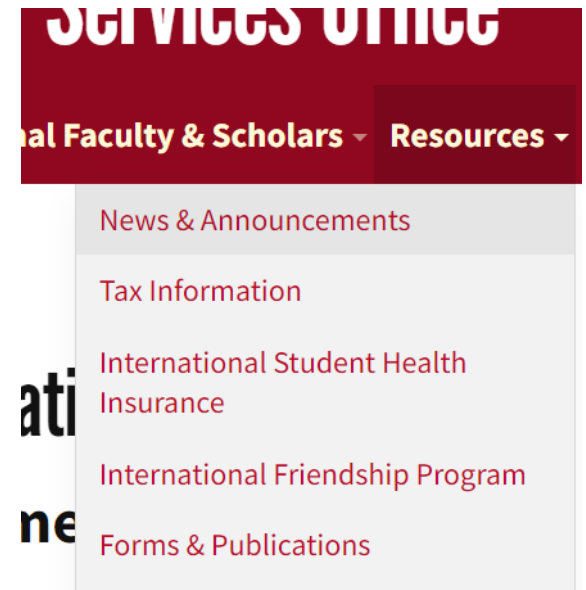
# How do I Apply for CPT?

Go to our website:

<https://www.uh.edu/oisss/>

Go to *Resources > Forms & Publications > CPT Application for Graduate or Undergraduate Student*

-  [CPT Application For Graduate Student](#)
-  [CPT Application For Undergraduate Student](#)



UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

# CPT Application Form

Student Center North, Room 203, Houston, TX 77204-3024 • Phone: (713) 743-5065 • Fax: (713) 743-5079 • <http://uh.edu/oiss>

## F-1 GRADUATE STUDENT CPT APPLICATION FORM

### Step 1: Student Information and statement

Family name:	Given name	Student ID:	
Major:	Degree: <input type="checkbox"/> Master's <input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate	Thesis/Dissertation: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Expected graduation:
Request effective for (semester/year):	Will you have a graduate assistantship during this semester? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Will you have a DSTF during this semester? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Email address:		

**Copy the statement in the space below:** I will not start CPT until I have received CPT authorization on my I-20 and I will only work during the authorized period on page 2 of the I-20.

Signature:	Date:	Phone:
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### Step 2: Student Request

**Curricular Practical Training (CPT):**  Part-time (20 hrs/week or less)  Full-time (summer only or authorized final semester)

Select one of the options:

- Option 1:** CPT is required for the academic curriculum for all students in the program. The student will not receive course credit. The student may register through UH COOP program. The "Experience Track" sub plan must be added to the student record in order to be eligible.
- Option 2:** CPT is required practicum or internship course.
- Option 3:** CPT is not required by the academic curriculum, but the student is registered in a credited course which requires CPT to complete the course.
- Option 4:** CPT is required research for thesis / dissertation (i.e. essential to completion of thesis or dissertation).

I am requesting a CPT start date of \_\_\_\_\_ AND I have registered for classes for the current or next semester, including summer, as applicable.

**Reduced Course Load (RCL) while participating in CPT in my final semester (\*All signatures are required for step 4) - I am requesting a:**

- Reduced course load for Non-Thesis Track:** I anticipate this is my final semester and I only need \_\_\_\_\_ hours of course work to complete my degree program. If I fail to complete my degree as expected, I understand that I maybe in violation of my legal status and may need to apply for reinstatement.
- Full-time equivalency for Thesis track:** I am expecting this semester to be my final semester. I have completed all course work and I am only working on my thesis or dissertation. I am allowed to take \_\_\_\_\_ hours of thesis or dissertation. If I fail to complete my thesis/dissertation I will be required to take 9 hours in subsequent main semesters.

**Note: Taking a RCL or full-time equivalency for SEVIS tracking will disqualify you for any graduate assistantship position and DSTF.**

# CPT Options

- **Option 1:** Student participates in the UH COOP program. The student will not receive course credit.
- **Option 2:** Required practicum or internship course taken for course credit.
- **Option 3:** Not required by the academic curriculum, but the student is registered in a credited course which requires CPT to complete the course.
- **(Graduate Students Only) Option 4:** Required research for thesis/dissertation (i.e. essential to completion of thesis or dissertation).

# CPT Application Form (G)

Step 3: Employer Statement of Understanding (Please attach job offer letter)													
<p><b>Dear Employer:</b> The above named student is applying for employment under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security program called Curricular Practical Training (CPT). The application will be reviewed by a Designated School Official (DSO) at UH. Authorization will be made after review of the student's eligibility, your job offer letter, and this application. <u>Your job offer letter should contain the job title, a basic description of job duties, hours of employment per week, job location, the start date, and ending date (if known).</u> All CPT must be directly related to the student's major. <b>Work authorization for this student must be renewed each semester and no work can be done outside of the authorized work dates.</b> The proof of authorization will be a printed authorization on p. 2 of the student's SEVIS (Student &amp; Exchange Visitor Information System) form I-20. This I-20 information, including the employer name, will be in the SEVIS records (see page 31 of the I-9 Employer Handbook for a sample I-20). The signature below does not obligate the employer in anyway. It is a statement of understanding about the nature of the student's authorization to work. It may take 5-10 working days to complete the authorization process.</p> <p><b>"As the employer (or representative thereof), I understand that the authorization for this employment will be through the CPT program. I have provided a job offer letter with the required information. Employment will be contingent on the student producing proper work authorization each semester."</b></p> <p>Employer: _____ Employer Signature: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____</p>													
Step 4: Academic Certifying Signatures													
<p><b>Academic Approval: I have reviewed the student's job offer letter and believe that it represents a valid training opportunity that is related to the student's major. Please check "Approved."</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Approved</td> <td>Academic Advisor Name: Signature:</td> <td>Date:</td> <td rowspan="3">Comments:</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Approved</td> <td>Chair Name: Signature:</td> <td>Date:</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Approved</td> <td>College Dean Name: Signature:</td> <td>Date:</td> </tr> </table>				<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	Academic Advisor Name: Signature:	Date:	Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	Chair Name: Signature:	Date:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	College Dean Name: Signature:	Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	Academic Advisor Name: Signature:	Date:	Comments:										
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	Chair Name: Signature:	Date:											
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	College Dean Name: Signature:	Date:											
Step 5: Experience Sub Plan and Course Registration													
<p>Student has registered for the appropriate course for: <input type="checkbox"/> fall _____ <input type="checkbox"/> spring _____ <input type="checkbox"/> summer _____</p> <p>The student has requested employment to be: <input type="checkbox"/> Part-Time (&lt;=20hrs) or <input type="checkbox"/> F/T (&gt;20hrs) Total Hours of Enrollment for the Term: _____ hrs</p> <p><b>Option 1:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> The student's "Experience Track" sub plan has been updated in PeopleSoft; and  <input type="checkbox"/> The student is required to register through the UH COOP program. COOP Signature: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>For COOP registration, please visit the COOP Office website: <a href="http://career.egr.uh.edu/students/coop">http://career.egr.uh.edu/students/coop</a></p> <p><b>Option 2, 3 &amp; 4:</b> The student has registered for the credit course. Course Title: _____ Course number: _____</p> <p>Academic Department Signature (Required for Option 2, 3 &amp; 4 only): _____ Date: _____</p>													

## Job offer letter:

- job title
- responsibilities
- number of hours per week
- job location (full address)
- start date and end date if known
- on company letterhead start date

# CPT Application Form (UG)



International Student  
and Scholar Services Office  
Division of Student Affairs

Student Center North, N203, Houston, TX 77204-3024 ☎ Phone: (713) 743-5065 ✉ Email: [isssohlp@central.uh.edu](mailto:isssohlp@central.uh.edu) 🌐 <http://uh.edu/oisss>

## F-1 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT CPT APPLICATION

### Step 1: Student Information

Family name:	Given name	Student ID:
Major:	Degree:	Expected graduation:
Request effective for (semester/year):	Do you plan to have any on-campus job during your CPT?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Copy the statement in the space below:</b> I will not start CPT until I have received CPT authorization on my I-20 and I will only work during the authorized period on page 2 of the I-20.		
Signature:	Date:	Phone:

### Step 2: Student Request

**Curricular Practical Training:**  Part-time (20 hrs/week or less)  Full-time (over 20 hrs/week)

Select one of the following two options:

- Option 1.** CPT is required for the academic curriculum for all students in the program. The student will not receive course credit. The student must register through UH COOP program. The "Experience Track" sub plan must be added to the student record in order to be eligible.
- Option 2.** CPT is for required practicum or internship course taken for course credit.
- Option 3.** CPT is not required by the academic curriculum, but the student is registered in a credited course which requires CPT to complete the course.

**I am requesting a CPT start date of \_\_\_\_\_ AND I have registered for classes for the next semester, including summer, if applicable.**

**I am also requesting to be below hours while participating in CPT. This is not the same as a final semester reduced course load.**

- Below full-time hours while doing my full-time CPT. I will take \_\_\_\_\_ hours during the semester of Full-Time CPT.



# CPT Application Form (UG)

Below full-time hours while doing my full-time CPT, I will take \_\_\_\_\_ hours during the semester or full-time CPT.

**Step 3 : Employer Statement of Understanding (Please attach job offer letter)**

**Dear Employer:** The above-named student is applying for employment under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security program called Curricular Practical Training (CPT). The application will be reviewed by a Designated School Official (DSO) at UH. Authorization will be made after review of the student's eligibility, your job offer letter, and this application. Your job offer letter should contain the job title, a basic description of job duties, hours of employment per week, job location, the start date, and ending date (if known). All CPT must be directly related to the student's major. **Work authorization for this student must be renewed each semester and no work can be done outside of the authorized work dates.** The proof of authorization will be a printed authorization on p. 2 of the student's SEVIS (Student & Exchange Visitor Information System) form I-20. This I-20 information, including the employer name, will be in the SEVIS records (see page 31 of the I-9 Employer Handbook for a sample I-20). The signature below does not obligate the employer in anyway. It is a statement of understanding about the nature of the student's authorization to work. It may take 5-10 working days to complete the authorization process.

***"As the employer (or representative thereof), I understand that the authorization for this employment will be through the CPT program. I have provided a job offer letter with the required information. Employment will be contingent on the student producing proper work authorization each semester."***

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Employer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 4 (For Option 1): Academic Approval for Non-Credit CPT (For Course Credit, Skip to Step 5 – Option 2 & 3)**

I certify that this student must participate in this non-course-credit CPT to fulfill his/her academic curriculum requirements. I believe that the attached job offer represents a valid training directly related to the student's major.

The student's "Experience Track" sub plan has been updated in PeopleSoft; and,

The student is required to register through UH COOP program.

Academic Advisor Signature (All students) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Chair Signature (Engineering majors only) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

College Associate Dean (Engineering majors only) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**If you are advised by your college that you need to register the non-course-credit CPT through UH COOP program (Option 1), please visit the COOP Office website for instructions: <http://career.cgr.uh.edu/students/coop>**

Note: Bauer students' COOP signature will be provided by the Rockwell Career Center (RCC) staff.

Student is approved for:  fall \_\_\_\_\_  spring \_\_\_\_\_  summer \_\_\_\_\_  part-time (≤ 20hrs) or  full-time (>20hrs)

*"As a COOP official, I believe that the student's job offer is directly related to his/her major."*

COOP Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 5 (For Options 2 & 3): Academic Approval for Course Required CPT**

**If you are taking a practicum or internship course which requires CPT authorization to complete the course, please have this section signed by your academic advisor.**

- Please list course and course number through which the practical training is required:  
Course Title \_\_\_\_\_ Course Number: \_\_\_\_\_
- Student is approved for:  part-time or  full-time
- Student is approved for a reduced course load while doing full-time CPT (Student is required to take at least one course if approved for full-time CPT.) The student is approved for \_\_\_\_\_ hours of course work for this main semester and will finish their degree in the required time left on their I-20.

Academic Advisor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Job offer letter:

- job title
- responsibilities
- number of hours per week
- job location (full address)
- start date and end date if known
- on company letterhead start date



# Applying for CPT, continued

- After getting all necessary signatures, email your CPT application form and job offer letter to [ISSSOHLP@CENTRAL.UH.EDU](mailto:ISSSOHLP@CENTRAL.UH.EDU)
- Your request will be assigned to a counselor who will email your updated CPT I-20 to you
- Allow for 5-7 business days for our office to complete

# CPT Authorization

Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status  
OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: N0001234567

NAME: UH Cougar

## EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATIONS

TYPE	FULL/PART-TIME	STATUS	START DATE	END DATE
CPT	FULL TIME	APPROVED	19 SEPTEMBER 2016	15 DECEMBER 2016

## EMPLOYER INFORMATION

TYPE	AUTHORIZATION DATES			
CPT	19 SEPTEMBER 2016 - 15 DECEMBER 2016			
EMPLOYER NAME	START DATE	END DATE	CITY & STATE	
Borehole Seismic, LLC	19 SEPTEMBER 2016	15 DECEMBER 2016	HOUSTON, TX	

## CHANGE OF STATUS/CAP-GAP EXTENSION

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## AUTHORIZED REDUCED COURSE LOAD

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## CURRENT SESSION DATES

CURRENT SESSION START DATE	CURRENT SESSION END DATE
22 AUGUST 2016	15 DECEMBER 2016

## TRAVEL ENDORSEMENT

This page, when properly endorsed, may be used for re-entry of the student to attend the same school after a temporary absence from the United States. Each endorsement is valid for one year.

Designated School Official	TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE ISSUED	PLACE ISSUED
_____	_____	X	_____	_____
_____	_____	X	_____	_____
_____	_____	X	_____	_____
_____	_____	X	_____	_____

# Other Important Things to Know


- You may only participate in CPT for the specific employer and location that will be recorded on p.2 of the I-20.
- You may only work for the specific time period noted on p.2 of the I-20. CPT is typically authorized for one semester at a time.
- In most cases, part-time CPT only during fall and spring (unless you are in your final semester and authorized for a reduced course load.) You can do full-time CPT in summer and the winter break.
- If you do full-time CPT for 12 months or longer **you will no longer be eligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT)**. We recommend that you do no more than 11 months of full-time CPT. Part-time CPT has no impact on future OPT.

# What is OPT?

- Optional Practical Training is work permission available for eligible F-1 students. It allows students to have real-world work experience related to their major field of study.
- Designated School Official (DSO) recommends OPT in SEVIS
- Student must apply for the work permit with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).
- If approved, USCIS will issue an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). The student must not begin working before the start date on the EAD.

# What is OPT?

There are three general types of Optional Practical Training:

1.  Pre-completion OPT - only available during the degree program
2. **Post-completion OPT** - F-1 students must apply within 90 days prior to the date all degree requirements are met, or during the 60-days grace period.
3. **STEM OPT Extensions** - available for certain Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) students. F-1 students must apply within 90 days prior to the ending date of the current Post-Completion OPT.

# How do I Apply for OPT?

Go to our website:

<https://www.uh.edu/oisss/>

Scroll down and select Optional  
Practical Training > How to Apply for  
OPT



**Optional  
Practical  
Training**



# Download the Forms

## How to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT)

1. 📅 Schedule a OPT group appointment with ISSSO counselor
  - **DO NOT** submit and pay for an application online with USCIS at this time
  - You are required to be present in the U.S. in order to apply for OPT
2. Download the instructions and application forms
3. Join the virtual OPT group appointment with the completed forms and required items:
  - Current I-20
  - Passport(s) that is valid for six months into the future and most recent visa page
  - Your current I-94 or the change of status approval notice (I-797) if you changed your status in the U.S. and have not left the U.S.
  - Prior EAD card if you have any
  - Completed Academic Verification form signed by your academic advisor
  - Completed Student Responsibility form
  - 1 electronic color passport-type photo for filing online or 2 color passport-type photos if filing by paper. Has to be new and within six months.
4. Follow the instructions provided by the counselor during your virtual OPT workshop\*

**OPT Workshops are Virtual through BigMarker**



# Academic Verification Form

## Academic Verification

– College or Departmental Signature Required –

This section needs to be signed by the Dean, Dissertation/Thesis Advisor, or the student's Academic Advisor. The student is applying for Optional Practical Training (OPT), which is available through the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). It allows an F-1 international student to work for up to one year in their field of study. In order to recommend the student for this post-completion practical training, we need to know the expected completion date. A student is allowed to apply 90 days before the completion of studies. It is helpful for the student to apply as early as allowed under law, since it may take up to three months to process the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) Card from DHS. If the student does not complete the degree when expected, the EAD card may be cancelled as long as it has not been approved by USCIS. If the card is cancelled the student may reapply for OPT with the cancellation letter from USCIS. If you have any questions, please call #35065 and ask to speak to an International Student Counselor. **NOTE:** Engineering majors have additional steps to follow. Please check with your department before attending a group OPT appointment.

1. This student has applied for graduation at the following degree level (please circle one):

Bachelor

Masters

Doctorate

2. This student is expected to complete/has completed all degree requirements on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_.

*(This is usually the official closing of the semester or when the thesis/dissertation is/will be submitted. For Graduates: If enrolled in the 1 credit hour course for administrative purposes with an early submission deadline before the start of the next semester, a student will be in their 60 day grace period following this deadline, even if they do not apply for OPT, see below.)*

**Attention Advisors:** A student cannot prolong their stay in the U.S. by taking additional courses they do not need (because they failed to apply for graduation) or they are administratively enrolled. If the student has completed all degree requirements, they are required to take action to maintain status.

The federal regulations in 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(iii)(C) state:

*"If the student is not required to take any additional courses to satisfy the requirements for completion, but continues to be enrolled for administrative purposes, the student is considered to have completed the course of study and must take action to maintain status."*

Academic or Thesis Dissertation Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Associate Dean of College \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Engineering Only)



International Student  
and Scholar Services Office  
Division of Student Affairs

Student Center North, N203, Houston, TX 77204-3024 ☎ Phone: (713) 743-5065 ✉ Email: [isssohlp@central.uh.edu](mailto:isssohlp@central.uh.edu) 🌐 <http://uh.edu/oisss>

**My requested Post-Completion OPT start date is (mm/dd/yyyy):** \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

\*Post-Completion OPT may begin on any day between the date of completing your degree and up to 60 days later.

## F-1 Student Responsibility

*-As an F-1 student, you have the following responsibilities. Please read them carefully, initial each one, and signing below.-*

- \_\_\_ If I withdraw my OPT application, I must notify ISSSO first and then USCIS in writing. I am responsible for checking my OPT application status on the USCIS website: <http://www.uscis.gov/>, and to verify the information printed on my Employment Authorization Document (EAD).
- \_\_\_ If I do not finish the course work related to my degree in the expected final semester, I will check to see if I need a new I-20 to extend my program end date. This must be done before the I-20 expires! Failure to do so may require reinstatement.
- \_\_\_ I understand that my OPT application must be properly filed with USCIS within 30 days from requesting the OPT recommendation I-20 with ISSSO or before the last day of the grace period, whichever comes sooner.
- \_\_\_ I will **NOT work on CPT or in an on-campus job** after the completion of all my degree requirements. I understand that any work after the official closing date of the semester or term that I finish my degree would be considered as **unauthorized employment** unless authorized by USCIS with an approved EAD card (e.g. through OPT/-X).

# Schedule OPT Group Appointment

Scheduling is through the advising calendar in myUH for ISSSO.

Registration links will be sent by your advisor for the virtual session in Big Marker.

## UPCOMING SPRING 2024 OPT GROUPS

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Sign in to myUH to make an appointment online. (Visit our [guide](#) for instructions on how to schedule an appointment).

Please follow instructions on how to apply by visiting our webpage.

**Jin Zhang (50 students)**

02/23/2024

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

**Allison Foster (50 students)**

02/26/2024

9:30 am – 12:30 pm

**Jessika Jones (50 students)**

02/29/2024

1:30 pm – 4:00 pm

**Stefan Johnsson (50 students)**

03/06/2024

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

**Jin Zhang (50 students)**

03/08/2024

9:00 am – 12:00 pm


**Ida Thompson (50 students)**

03/12/2024

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

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## The OPT workshop will cover these topics:

- Understand OPT and your eligibility
  - Detail the OPT application procedures
  - Understand obligations during OPT and maintaining F-1 status
  - Essential resources and information
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Any Questions?



