

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: Employment Information

MANY INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS seek internships and jobs in the United States. While there are opportunities for interning and working in the U.S., there are also challenges. The current reality (based on labor market conditions, competition, employer-regulations and government guidelines) is that a small percentage of international students will secure U.S. employment upon graduation. To build experience, you should:

- > **KNOW THE IMMIGRATION LAWS** for work and internships for F-1 and J-1 students. Go to UW International Student Services website (<http://iss.washington.edu>) for information.
- > **KNOW AND ARTICULATE YOUR RELEVANT SKILLS AND STRENGTHS.** Effectively network, write resumes and cover letters, and interview well.
- > **CONSIDER A VARIETY OF CAREER PLANS**, which could include a strategic job search for opportunities in your home country or another country.
- > **SEEK OUT HUSKY OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD SKILLS & EXPERIENCE** like on-campus employment, undergrad research, clubs, competitions, etc.

Employment Options

This is a brief overview. For details, please (1) visit <http://iss.washington.edu/employment-options>, (2) attend an ISS Employment workshop, and (3) talk to an ISS adviser in Schmitz 459.

IF YOU WANT A JOB SO YOU CAN MAKE MONEY WHILE IN SCHOOL...

- > Your F-1 status permits you to work only "on-campus."
- > You can work up to 20 hours during your regular full-time quarters, but more than 20 hours during breaks and your annual vacation quarter.
- > NOTE – Jobs lasting only a few weeks are rarely available.

IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR AN INTERNSHIP...

- > Consult ISS about pre-authorization for unpaid internships.
- > If you want to get paid for your internship, you must:
 - Have attended UW for at least 3 quarters (transfer students - consult ISS for exceptions)
 - Be declared in a major
 - Find an internship related to your major
 - Prove that an internship is required for your major OR receive academic credit for your internship
 - Complete the Curricular Practical Training (CPT) authorization process

IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A JOB IN THE U.S. AFTER YOU GRADUATE...

- > Apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) authorization, preferably 3 months prior to finishing your UW degree program
- > Start looking for jobs related to your major before you graduate

KEY RESOURCES

- > **UW International Student Services:** advising, workshops, employment information.
- > **Myvisajobs.com:** a visa job info portal. Employment website for international students to research employers who have filed H1B visa applications.
- > **GradConnection:** a job board to connect international students to reputable global companies in students' home countries
- > **Going Global:** a provider of both country-specific and USA city-specific career and employment info. USA City Career Guides include H-1B visa employer listings.
- > **UW Career & Internship Center:** workshops and career counseling.
- > **LinkedIn:** the world's largest online professional network with members in 200 countries.
- > **The Seattle Networking Guide:** network based on fields, interests and goals.
- > **FIUTS:** career programming, social support, networking opportunities and more.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN F-1 STATUS WHO MEET CERTAIN ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS can participate in internships using a temporary work authorization called Curricular Practical Training (CPT). This handout provides an overview of CPT but there are many nuances and international students are strongly encouraged to speak with an International Student Services adviser before pursuing an internship.

WHAT IS CPT?

- > Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is temporary authorization for “practical training” directly related to one’s major field of study
- > “Practical training” can include internships (paid or unpaid), co-ops, practica, and employment

CPT ELIGIBILITY

- > Completion of 3 full-time quarters
- > Declared in a major
- > Enrolled “full-time”, except during:
 - Annual vacation quarter (typically summer)
 - Final quarter of study
- > Internship must be either:
 - A mandatory program requirement, OR
 - Tied to a credit-bearing course

CPT COURSE CREDIT

- > Must earn one academic credit for each quarter of internship participation (unless internship is required by academic department)
- > Cannot be enrolled only in CPT-related credits in final quarter of study
- > Must earn credit through your department
- > Policies for graduate students may be different; see an ISS adviser

CPT LIMITATIONS

- > Part-time CPT – 20 hours per week or less
 - Can apply for unlimited quarters of part-time CPT
 - Positions with widely varying hours each week are discouraged
- > Full-time CPT – more than 20 hours weekly
 - Use of 12 months full-time CPT eliminates OPT eligibility
- > May have CPT-authorized internship and campus job simultaneously

NOTE – This information is not legal advice and regulations periodically change. Please consult an ISS adviser.

CPT APPLICATION PROCESS

- > Review CPT information and instructions
 - Attend a CPT info session at ISS
 - Check with your academic department on their internship policies and course options
- > Apply for internships directly related to your major and secure an offer
- > Talk to your dept. adviser about your offer
- > Complete the student section of the online CPT application on the ISS website
 - It will then be routed to your academic department adviser for approval
 - The department will forward to ISS
 - ISS needs 7-10 business days for processing
- > If you qualify for CPT, your ISS adviser will issue a new Form I-20
- > Apply for a Social Security Number after receiving CPT I-20 (but no sooner than 30 days prior to starting internship)

KEY THINGS TO KNOW:

- > Internship must be directly related to major
- > Internship must be tied to either 1) departmental credit or 2) major requirement
- > You must receive an internship offer before applying for CPT
- > Speaking to an ISS adviser or attending a CPT info session is highly encouraged

KEY RESOURCES:

- > **International Student Services Office** – advisers, website, info sessions, application (iss.washington.edu)
- > **Internship website** – videos and handouts (careers.uw.edu/internships)
- > **Handshake**– 2,300 internships posted annually (careers.uw.edu/jobs)