



## **Office of International Students and Scholars Services (OISS)**

### Employment for F-1 Students

There are limited opportunities for F-1 students to work while studying. Students in F-1 status may only accept employment under certain conditions. This guide is provided for informational purposes only. If you have questions about or would like to determine your eligibility for F-1 employment, please contact OISS.

### On-Campus Employment

As a student in F-1 status, you may work on-campus part-time (up to 20 hours per week) during the academic year, and full-time (over 20 hours per week) during official school breaks. Thus, you may only work 20 hours per week if summer is your first or last semester of enrollment at the university. Please note that the university may have additional policies which limit the number of hours students may work on-campus during breaks - we recommend that you check with your supervisor if you have any questions about additional restrictions.

### Off-Campus Employment

#### *1. Financial Hardship Employment Authorization*

On occasion, students in F-1 status experience a sudden and unexpected change in their financial situation. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) may authorize off-campus employment to help alleviate the situation. In order to qualify for off-campus work, you must have been in F-1 status for at least nine months. You must also be able to document the nature of your financial problem so that the USCIS can decide if off-campus work permission is warranted. If permission is granted, you may still only work 20 hours per week during the academic year, and full-time during school vacations. Your total employment from all sources cannot exceed 20 hours during the academic year. Please make an appointment with OISS if you think that you qualify for off-campus work permission due to economic hardship.

#### *2. Special Student Relief (SSR)*

SSR is available to certain F-1 students experiencing severe economic hardship due to emergent conditions - such as civil unrest, economic crisis, natural disasters, or other circumstances - in their country of citizenship (or in certain cases, residence). If granted, SSR removes certain types of restrictions on F-1 employment, and may allow authorized students to reduce their course load below full-time. SSR benefits are only available to those F-1 students from countries or territories that have been designated by the Secretary of Homeland Security for Special Student Relief. SSR is currently available to eligible F-1 students from the countries listed on the [DHS website](#). The Special Student Relief information can be found halfway down the page. Please make an appointment with OISS if you think that you qualify.

#### *3. Practical Training*

Practical training authorization permits you to take a job that is directly related to your field of studies and commensurate with your educational level. In most cases, you must have been a full-time student for at



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least nine months prior to applying for practical training permission. You may work in practical training either prior to or after completion of studies. There are two types of practical training for F-1 students: Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT).

### Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

CPT may be authorized under certain circumstances to allow F-1 students temporary off-campus employment. Such employment must be directly related to a student's major field of study and an integral or important part of the program of study.

### Reasons For CPT

Training which is required by the degree program always meets the requirements for CPT, regardless of whether or not academic credit is received for the work. If your degree requires the following, then you must apply for CPT:

- Field Education
- Clinical Pastoral Education
- Teaching or Research Assistantship

To apply for CPT, you must email the following documents to OISS :

1. [CPT Agreement Form](#)
2. [Offer Letter from your Employer](#)

Note: Generally, students are limited to part-time CPT (20 hours or less per week); if a student will also hold on-campus employment while pursuing part-time CPT, the total combined hours cannot exceed 20 hours per week.

Also: If a student participates in twelve months or more of full-time CPT, they will lose eligibility to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) after completion of studies. Participation in part-time CPT does not affect eligibility for post-completion OPT.

### Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Please review the [OPT Handbook](#). OPT allows F-1 students to be employed in the United States for one year after completion of studies. Employment must be directly related to field of study and correspond with education level. Multiple employers are permitted; however, each position must be related to field of study and reported to OISS. No job offer is needed to apply. However, OPT applicants are only allowed a total of 90 days unemployment during their initial 12-month OPT period. To apply for OPT, please submit an [OPT Request](#). After your OPT has been approved, please have your employer submit an [OPT Letter](#). Lastly, please keep in mind the following [policy](#). Note: You will be recommended for employment based on the CIP codes (field of study) below:

- MAP: 30.0501 Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution
- MAIRS and Ph.D.: 38.0201 Religion/Religious Studies
- MAC: 39.0706 Chaplain/Chaplaincy Studies.