

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS-- F-1 CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING**

Office of International Students and Scholars  
Eastern Illinois University

### **1. What is Curricular Practical Training?**

Curricular Practical Training is work authorization for employment that is either required by your curriculum, required for a credit-bearing course, or required for your degree.

### **2. What are the eligibility criteria for Curricular Practical Training?**

In addition to getting credit in a course for the work, you must have been enrolled in your program for a full academic year, and have maintained valid immigration status before you can apply for CPT. Graduate students whose degree curriculum requires immediate participation in an off campus work experience may be able to work before the academic year is completed **IF this requirement is CLEARLY stated in the published program description.**

### **3. Do I have to be registered while on Curricular Practical Training?**

You must be registered while on CPT. However, if you are registered as a full time student (both grad or undergrad) you can only work part time **INCLUDING** any time you already are working on-campus. Part time work is 20 hours or less per week.

### **4. Does Curricular Practical Training impact on the amount of allowed Optional Practical Training?**

If you participate in twelve months or more of full time CPT, you lose eligibility to apply for twelve months of optional practical training (OPT) after you complete your studies.

Participation in part time CPT does not affect your eligibility for post-completion OPT.

### **5. What is considered part-time training?**

Employment for 20 hours or less per week while you are enrolled for classes is considered part-time curricular practical training. The employment authorization written on the back of your I-20 copy will specify permission to engage in part-time training and you must limit your work to no more than 20 hours per week. You must be simultaneously enrolled as a full-time student in order to maintain lawful F-1 status.

### **6. What is considered full-time training?**

Employment for more than 20 hours per week is considered full-time curricular practical training, regardless of whether you are enrolled full-time or part-time for classes. The employment authorization on your I-20 copy will specify permission to participate in full-time training. There is no limitation upon the length of time you may participate in full-time curricular practical training; however, if you participate in twelve months or more of curricular practical training you will not be eligible for post-completion optional practical training.

### **7. Do I have to pay U.S. taxes on my salary?**

In general F-1 students who have been in the U.S. for **five years or less** are exempt from social security taxes (also known as F.I.C.A. tax). You should be sure to bring this to the attention of your employer because many employers are not familiar with this provision of the tax laws. Students in F-1 status are subject to all other taxes that may apply, including federal, state and local.

### **8. What proof of employment authorization can I give my employer?**

Your I-20 form authorized for curricular practical training is the document which indicates employment authorization. You should bring your I-20 form, passport and I-94 card to your employer. These documents will allow your employer to complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9. All employers are required to complete an I-9 form for every employee.