F-1 CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING
FOR THOSE ENROLLING IN CO-OP

I. EXPLANATION

As an F-1 student, you may only work off campus in the U.S. if you have received special written work authorization approved by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). This handout will explain one type of USCIS off-campus work authorization that can only be taken BEFORE COMPLETION OF STUDIES called, “curricular practical training,” or “CPT.”

USCIS defines “curricular practical training” as employment that is an integral or important part of your curriculum, including: alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required employment, internship or practicum. To be considered curricular practical training, the work must be related to your major field of study, and must also be an integral or important part of your studies. Training which is REQUIRED by your degree program always meets the requirements for curricular practical training, regardless of whether or not you receive academic credit for your work. Training which is NOT REQUIRED by your degree program may meet the requirements for curricular practical training if you receive academic credit for the employment experience through CO-OP or enrollment in an official internship or practicum course (as listed in the UNM course catalog – Independent Study does NOT qualify). If you have a training opportunity, which involves employment, check with the international advisor to determine if it qualifies as CPT. You must have a job to be authorized for this type of practical training.

II. HIGHLIGHTS

- A job offer is REQUIRED to be authorized for CPT
- The employment must be an integral or important part of your curriculum, but can occur anywhere in the U.S.
- Students must be enrolled in the CO-OP program OR in an official practicum/internship course, or the work must be a requirement for everyone in the degree program
- Changing employers is allowed only AFTER receiving additional approval and authorization for the new employer
- CPT authorization is granted by GEO. Students do not need to mail an application to CIS; however, students MUST apply within specific UNM deadlines (check well in advance of the date of work)
- During the period of CPT, students are in F-1 visa status since CPT is considered to be part of the program of study

III. CONDITIONS AND LIMITATIONS

1. You must have a specific position that is directly related to your major field of study and it must be appropriate for someone having your level of education
2. You must have been enrolled as a full-time student in legal non-immigrant status for at least 9 months before CPT begins (unless you are in a graduate program which requires internship participation of all students prior to the end of the second semester)
3. The training/internship must either be REQUIRED for completion of your degree program (i.e., ALL STUDENTS IN THE PROGRAM MUST COMPLETE AN INTERNSHIP TO RECEIVE THE DEGREE) or you must be officially enrolled in the CO-OP program or in an official internship or practicum course (as listed in the UNM course catalog AND be receiving academic credit for the degree at the time of the training)
4. There are restrictions on when students may apply for part or full-time CPT. Students can take CPT:
   a) Part-time (20 hours or less) or Full-time (more than 20 hours): during the summer vacation or between semesters
   b) Part-time: during the course of study provided the training does not exceed 20 hours per week total
   Note: You cannot apply for CPT at all once you have completed your program of study
5. Students authorized for part-time CPT cannot work more than 20 hours per week
6. There is no limitation upon the length of time you may participate in full-time CPT, but if you participate for 12 months or more, you will not be eligible for optional practical training (see below)
7. YOU CANNOT WORK OFF-CAMPUS UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES UNTIL YOU HAVE BEEN AUTHORIZED BY THE INTERNATIONAL ADVISOR!

IV. OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

A. Curricular Practical Training and Eligibility for Optional Practical Training

If you participate in 12 months or more of “full-time” CPT, you are not eligible to apply for optional practical training. However, if you participate in less than 12 months of full-time CPT, you will still get all 12 months of optional practical training. Participation in authorized “part-time” CPT does not “add up” and therefore, does not affect your eligibility for optional practical training.
B. Employment Eligibility Verification
When you begin work, you and your employer must complete a form entitled “Employment Eligibility Verification” (USCIS Form I-9), which the employer retains. The I-9 must be updated each time you receive a renewal of your work permission. This form requires you to document your identity and work authorization according to directions on the back of the form. The most convenient combinations of the various items acceptable as documentation include: your I-20 with the Curricular Practical Training work authorization, a valid passport, and an I-94 card marked for F-1 student status. Your employer, who keeps Form I-9, may make copies of the documents you submit, and return the originals to you. You will also need a social security card. If you do not already have a social security card, or if you have a card which is marked “not valid for employment” take your passport (if you are Canadian you may use another form of photo-bearing identification), I-94 Departure Record, form I-20, and letter from GEO to the office of Social Security Administration, and apply for a new Social Security card. Note that your number will remain the same if you already had one, but the notation on the card should change to indicate that employment is valid with authorization.

C. Social Security and Other Taxes
In general, F-1 students who have been in the US less than five years are “non-residents for tax purposes” and are exempt from Social Security (FICA) and Medicare taxes (see Internal Revenue Service Publication 519, “U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens”). However, your earnings are subject to applicable federal, state, and local taxes. Tax returns must be filed on or before April 15 each year for the previous calendar year, which will determine if any of the withheld taxes can be refunded.

V. APPLICATION PROCESS
Provided you meet all the requirements, an advisor in the Global Education Office will authorize the CPT. You do not need to apply through the U.S. CIS. However, it is recommended that you apply as soon as you receive the job offer, or AT LEAST two weeks before you plan to begin employment. Also, PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU CANNOT ENROLL IN CO-OP AFTER THE SIXTH WEEK OF FALL OR SPRING SEMESTER. To apply, follow the steps below.

STEP 1: Be Informed
Read this entire handout thoroughly and carefully.

STEP 2: Complete the Co-op process with the Career Services Office, Student Services, Room 220:
To get the approval you will need to complete an Educational Agreement that includes your prospective job duties and learning objectives. You, your employer, your academic advisor, an GEO advisor and a career development facilitator (CDF) from Career Services Office will need to sign this form.

STEP 3: Once your Co-op is approved, enroll for E Co-op 105 class (Career Services will give you a course number to enroll)
Register for the Co-op 105 Work Phase for the semester in which you are working (Note that if your Co-op is approved after the official add/drop class deadline, you will need to wait until Career Services registers you for the Co-op 105 and it appears on your transcript in order for you to be authorized for the training)

STEP 4: Obtain a copy of your Education Agreement from the Co-op office

STEP 5: Bring the completed Education Agreement form to GEO and submit your documents to an International Advisor during walk-in hours (1-3pm daily)
Call 277-4032 and speak to an advisor if you cannot come to walk-in hours You will need to bring:
➢ Completed CO-OP Learning Agreement
➢ Current passport
➢ Current I-94
The international advisor will review the paperwork, and if everything is in order authorize the training in SEVIS.

STEP 6: Pick up your SEVIS I-20 at GEO
You will have to come back within 5 business days to pick up your new I-20 with the CPT authorization. When you come to pick up your new I-20, please check to make sure that your CPT authorization is properly recorded on page 3 of the I-20. Also, please sign your new I-20 on p.1 in #11.

STEP 7: Work Start and End Dates
Once you have received the authorization from the International Advisor, you can work between the dates specified in the authorization and for the number of hours authorized. You must be careful not to continue employment beyond the completion date authorized on p. 3 of your I-20 form unless you apply for and are granted another period of work permission. You must reapply EACH semester for both CO-OP and CPT if you want to continue your internship.

STEP 8: Complete Co-op E 105 work phase and receive credit for the class

REMEMBER: AS AN F-1 STUDENT, YOU CANNOT WORK OFF-CAMPUS UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES UNTIL YOU HAVE BEEN AUTHORIZED TO DO SO BY THE INTERNATIONAL ADVISOR. WORKING IMPROPERLY OR WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION IS A SERIOUS VIOLATION OF YOUR STATUS AND COULD LEAD TO DEPORTATION FROM THE US.
# CO-OP AGREEMENT FORM

## STUDENT INFORMATION

- **Co-op Term:** □ Fall  □ Spring  □ Summer  
  **PLEASE SELECT ONE**  
  **Year:** 20  
- **UNM Student I.D.:** ________________  
- **First Name:** ____________________  
  **Middle Int.:** ________________  
- **Last Name:** ____________________  
  **Sex:** □ F  □ M  
- **Phone #:** ( ____ ) _______ - ________________  
- **Email:** ____________________

- **Student Status:** □ Soph/Junior (Undergrad.)  □ Senior (Undergrad.)  
  □ Masters’  □ Ph.D.  
- **Major:** ____________________  
- **Concentration:** ____________________  
- **Graduation Date:** ___________  
  **Month:** _______  
  **Year:** _______  
- **Current GPA:** _______  
- **Work Status:** □ U.S. Citizen  □ Perm. U.S. Resident  
  □ F-1 Student Visa  □ Other: ____________________

## EMPLOYER INFORMATION

- **Company:** ____________________  
- **Address:** ____________________  
- **City:** ________________  
  **State:** _______  
  **Zip:** _______  
- **Industry Sector:** □ Government  □ Non-Profit  □ Manufacturing  
  □ Service  □ Education  □ Research and Development  
  □ Other: ____________________  
- **Supervisor:** ____________________  
- **Title/Position:** ____________________  
- **Phone #:** ( ____ ) _______ - ________________  
- **Email:** ____________________

## POSITION INFORMATION

- **Position Title:** ____________________  
- **Work Hours:** _______ (per week)  
  _______ (semester total)  
- **Wage:** $ _______  
  □ Monthly  □ Hourly  □ Stipend  
- **Is this your first Co-op position?** □ Yes  □ No  
- **Is this a continuation of a previous Co-op position?** □ Yes  □ No  

## POSITION DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

(Highlight tasks and work activities or attach offer letter from the employer to this form.)

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

(Explain how duties and responsibilities directly relate to courses and UNM major/concentration. Specify at least three objectives.)

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*The University of New Mexico • MSC06 3710 • 1 University of New Mexico • Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001 • Phone 505.277.2531 • Fax 505.277.9285 Student Services Center, Rm. 220 • www.career.unm.edu*
## STUDENT

I understand that I will receive a "credit" or "no-credit" for the Co-op course and no semester hour. To get Co-op credit I will need to submit both the student and employer final evaluations.

I understand that receiving no credit can automatically prohibit me from participating in Co-op the following semester.

I agree to inform UNM Career Services in a prompt manner of any changes to my Co-op status, job duties, work hours, or anything that would alter this Agreement or would impede me in successfully completing the UNM Co-op Program. I understand that failure to do so will result in a "no credit" for the course and/or being prohibited to participate in Co-op the following semester.

I agree to inform UNM Career Services of any personnel problems during my Co-op that would impede me from completing my Co-op and/or cause.

I agree to follow my employer's job conduct rules, policies, procedures and agree to perform work assignments in a professional manner.

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## FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ONLY

I understand that I am NOT permitted to begin this work until I have completed both of the following:

1. I have enrolled for the Co-op course
2. I have received authorization on my I-20 from an international advisor in the Office of International Programs and Studies for each employer for the exact time period that I will work before I begin work (or in a letter from the J1 program sponsor if I am a J1 student.)

I further understand that failure to complete this process for each employer and all dates of employment will result in termination of my legal student status.

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<tr>
<th>Student Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Global Education Office (GEO) Advisor Signature</th>
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## ACADEMIC ADVISOR

I understand the requirements of the UNM Co-op Program as outlined above and verify that [Student Name] is in good academic standings.

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## ASSOCIATE DEAN / DIRECTOR (ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING STUDENTS ONLY)

I met with [Student Name] and verify that he/she understands and meets the additional program requirements set forth by the school.

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## EMPLOYER / SUPERVISOR

I understand that the procedures and requirements of the UNM Co-op Program and agree to complete an Evaluation Form a week prior to the end of the semester.

I agree to comply with Federal and State employment laws and regulations laws regarding workers compensation and liability insurance for student employment, ADA requirements, and equal opportunity employment.

I agree to inform UNM Career Services in a prompt manner of any changes to the student's Co-op status, job duties, work hours, or anything that would alter the Co-op Agreement or would impede in having the Co-op student successfully complete the Program.

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## UNM CO-OP COORDINATOR

I agree to provide the student with the 'Student Evaluation Form' and 'Employer Evaluation Form' towards the end of the semester and agree to document the student's Co-op experience and maintain information and records on the student and his/her Co-op responsibilities for future references.

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