The USCIS recognizes that there are three possible ways a non-citizen international student on F-1 student visa may need to work in an off-campus location.

1. **Curricular Practical Training - Off Campus Internship**

Students who take a class that requires an internship in their field of study may apply to the International office for off-campus work authorization for Curricular Practical Training. The Designated School Official will check to be sure that the student is eligible.

**Eligibility:**

1. The student is in good academic standing
2. The student must be in lawful F-1 status, and have been in that status in the U.S. for the preceding nine consecutive months
3. Student must be enrolled full time as defined by the Department of Homeland Security to be eligible for CPT in Spring / Fall semester
4. Employment must be an integral part of an established curriculum.
   
   a. *Training required of all students*---Specific training that is required of all students is generally viewed as an acceptable basis for approving CPT. An example of curricular practical training required of all students might be supervised fieldwork for a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree in a program where all MSW candidates are required to work with a service agency.
   
   b. *Training required of a particular course or curricular track*--- An example of curricular practical training for a particular course or curricular track would be the case of a student studying marketing for his Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree who is offered several options to fulfill the concentration in marketing. For one of the options, a paid internship is required. In this case, the internship would qualify as curricular practical training because it is required for a particular course or track, even though it is not required of all MBA students.

The International Programs Office staff (any Designated School Official) can authorize Curricular Practical Training provided that the student submits documentation to prove eligibility. Authorization for CPT will appear on page 3 of the student’s Form I-20.

2. **Optional Practical Training**

The DHS and U.S. law permits international students to receive up to 12 months of full-time on-the-job training (paid) as a benefit of maintaining F-1 student status called Optional Practical Training (OPT). This can be taken part-time during classroom studies, or full-time after classroom studies are completed. The work must be in the student’s major or field of study. Attend one of our employment workshops to learn more about OPT.

**Eligibility:**

1. The student is in good academic standing
2. The student must be in lawful F-1 status, and have been in that status in the U.S. for the preceding nine consecutive months
3. Student must be enrolled full time as defined by the Department of Homeland Security to be eligible for CPT in Spring / Fall semester
3. Work Permission for Economic Hardship

If an international student experiences a sudden or unforeseen change in his or her economic "well-being," he or she may apply to the USCIS for permission to accept off-campus employment. The student must demonstrate the following in order to be eligible to apply:

- The economic hardship was due to circumstances that were unforeseen.
- The economic hardship may make it difficult to complete the educational program without the off-campus employment.
- On-campus employment is not sufficient for the student's needs.
- The student is in good academic standing
- The student must be in lawful F-1 status, and have been in that status in the U.S. for the preceding nine consecutive months
- Student must be enrolled full time as defined by the Department of Homeland Security to be eligible for CPT in Spring / Fall semester

Reasons why a student might need such employment vary widely, but here are some examples that our office has seen over the years:

- A sponsor withdraws sponsorship.
- Parents who were supporting the student have a medical, domestic, or financial crisis.
- The student experiences an economic crisis in the U.S. due to an accident or other mishap (e.g., fire in an apartment).

The application takes about 90 days to process and costs $380.00.

Please contact the Office of International Education and Services (international@semo.edu) to schedule an appointment with an advisor.