

THE HELLER SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL POLICY AND MANAGEMENT
MA in COEXISTENCE AND CONFLICT

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT)

While planning your practicum/field project you need to consider whether or not you will need to go through the process of applying for CPT or OPT approval. The International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) – located in the Kutz building – is available to assist any international students on an F-1 Visa that may need to apply for OPT or CPT approval prior to beginning their practicum or internship. Ruth Brigham (rbrigham@brandeis.edu) in the International Student and Scholars Office can provide further information.

CPT

CPT allows eligible students to work off-campus. It is a type of employment authorization for an F-1 visa holder that enables a student to pursue work in his/her major field of study under certain circumstances. The experience must be an integral (earns academic credit for all students in the major) or required (fulfills a mandatory degree requirement) part of the student's degree program.

If you will be in an internship or job either here in the States or abroad you must have CPT Authorization BEFORE beginning work. Working without authorization is a violation of your Student Visa Status.

There are four stakeholders in this process: Your Employer, your Academic Advisor, Brandeis' Registrars Office and your ISSO Advisor.

For further information on CPT visit:

<http://www.brandeis.edu/acserv/isso/current/employment/cpt/index.html>

OPT

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is an extension of F-1 student status that allows international students to work in the United States in order to gain practical experience. **Any OPT employment must be directly related to the student's field of study and commensurate with his/her degree level.** The OPT must be recommended by the International Student Advisor, and it must be authorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (CIS – Division of the Department of Homeland Security).

Any student seeking to obtain OPT Authorization, should contact the [ISSO](#) to make an OPT appointment up to four months before the expected start date of the OPT employment.

For further information on OPT visit:

<http://www.brandeis.edu/acserv/isso/current/employment/opt/index.html>