

# Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Requirements for Classes

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## St. Olaf College

St. Olaf class offerings that have a practical training component are the topic of this document. Due to federal law, St. Olaf strongly recommends that international students consider obtaining authorization on their F-1 visa in order to protect themselves for future employment within the United States when taking courses that have a community-based practical training component. This document describes Curricular Practical Training (CPT) as it applies to classes—what it is, why it's important—and explains related roles and responsibilities.

**What is Curricular Practical Training (CPT)?** Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is defined as “alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum which is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school” that is an integral part of an established curriculum. Source: [8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(i)]. In a nutshell, CPT is an authorization on an F-1 visa that international students may opt to obtain when enrolled in classes offering certain types of practical training in order to remain eligible for future employment within the United States.

**Who does this apply to?** International students with an F-1 Visa who have had at least one year of academic training in the U.S. are eligible to apply for CPT authorization. While first year international students are not eligible for CPT, they are still eligible to participate in ACE courses. First year students should meet with Claudia Perez to discuss individual courses and their ACE assignments.

**Which classes does this apply to?** Depending on the details of the ACE assignment, classes that have an Academic Civic Engagement (ACE) component may be included. Any class that has a practical component may be included, not just ACE classes. It is the duration, who directs the work, and other assignment details that matter in determining whether CPT is advised or not. Examples of types of courses where CPT may be advised include: Academic Civic Engagement (community-based learning, service-learning, public scholarship), practicums, clinical experiences, student teaching, course-based internships, etc.

**Who will determine if Curricular Practical Training authorization is required?**

St. Olaf's International Coordinator, Claudia Perez (perez14[AT]stolaf.edu), is responsible for making this determination, in conversation with the ACE Office.

**Why do we want to authorize Curricular Practical Training?**

- Protects the international student from being out of compliance. If a student 'falls out of status' they must leave the US and can have difficulties reentering the US in the future.
- Protects St. Olaf College, we want to be able to recruit and host international students. If we do not follow regulations we can lose the ability to sponsor international students.
- Protects the employer/outside entity from being accused of unauthorized workers on-site or breaking labor laws.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### International Students

If you think that you should have CPT authorization for a course, contact the International Coordinator, Claudia Perez, as soon as possible. The CPT authorization should be obtained prior to beginning the work being authorized. Students are encouraged to begin the process of obtaining CPT authorization at least two weeks prior to the start of the class, if at all possible. This allows time to collect the necessary paperwork and for the CPT authorization to be properly authorized before the ACE assignment begins. You will be asked to provide proof of registration in the course and other documentation, including a letter from the community partner. Claudia Perez will provide consultation and help you complete the necessary paperwork.

### Faculty members

If you are teaching a course with an Academic Civic Engagement component you should include the following text or similar wording in your course syllabus.

*Suggested text to add to ACE course syllabi:* If you are an international student, the Academic Civic Engagement component of this course may require Curricular Practical Training (CPT) visa authorization. You should bring this syllabus to Claudia Perez to discuss whether CPT is necessary.

If international students in your class require CPT authorization, you may be requested to send your syllabus to the International Coordinator, which will be included in the documentation showing that this was a required component of the course and what the assignment entailed. In addition, community partners will be asked to provide a letter verifying the students' involvement and providing some details. Claudia Perez will let you know that she will be contacting the community partner and will provide the student with a standard letter requesting the information needed. Faculty may reach out to the community partner about the letter.

### International Coordinator

Claudia Perez is responsible for coordinating the CPT authorization process and for approving applications. Prior to the start of the term, Claudia will ask the Registrar for a list of international students registered for ACE courses and other courses with a practical training component. Claudia will reach out to these students and counsel them about CPT authorization.

### Community Partner

Community partners may be asked to provide a letter in support of the international students' application for CPT authorization. The letter will verify the students' involvement. The letter must be on letterhead and will include: student's name, dates on the site, paid or unpaid, number of hours per week, brief description of responsibilities, and address where the work will happen.

### Academic Civic Engagement

Help spread the word to faculty teaching ACE courses about CPT authorization. Recommend inclusion of suggested text for syllabi for ACE courses. ACE office will communicate with faculty if an international student will require CPT for their course and mention that the student will be asking the site for a letter. ACE office will provide students with a standardized letter that provides a list of needed documentation and explains why this is being requested. ACE office will keep a directory of courses that have required CPT in the past.