

**Summer Internships and Curricular Practical Training (CPT) -
OVERVIEW**

This overview contains important information about the process to enroll in the fieldwork course and to obtain CPT authorization for international students in F-1 status for summer internships.

- The [Middlebury Institute Fieldwork \(IPMG8650-M\) Course Listing](#) is on the CCI website. *This course listing is from 2021, but the 2022 course will operate under a similar structure.*
- Instructions regarding the course registration process are located on the Center for Careers and Internships (CCI) website under [Summer Internships for Credit \(via the Institute\)](#). Apply to register for the course once you secure your internship, and at least 14 days before your intended start date.
- CCI also has information about [funding for unpaid internships](#). CCI makes decisions on a rolling basis—so, apply early! (The deadline for funding requests is usually in early April.)
- ISSS also provides relevant information on [Curricular Practical Training \(CPT\)](#) on our website.

1. Details about the Fieldwork course:

- As an integral part of an established curriculum, the Middlebury Institute Fieldwork Course provides students with a way to pursue U.S.-based internships that require students to earn academic credit (i.e. with organizations that require credit, or to qualify for CPT authorization).
- The fieldwork course requires approval from the instructor for students to enroll in the course.
- Course registration begins in late April. (Students initiate the process through CCI.)
- Students should complete the CCI Fieldwork Application as soon as they have their offer letter, and [no later than 4 weeks prior to their intended start date to ensure sufficient time for processing](#).
- The fieldwork/internship must take place within the course dates of the undergraduate section (IPMG8650-M). These dates will vary by year so consult the CCI website.
- Students participate in the summer course remotely from their internship site or another location.
- There is no additional cost to the student for this course.
- Grading for the course is on a pass/fail basis.
- Students will be required to submit academic deliverables while enrolled in the course.
- Students who successfully complete this course will earn an Institute credit, which will appear on the student's Institute transcript (and not on their transcript from Middlebury College).
- This credit is not transferrable to their College transcript.

Student eligibility requirements to enroll in the course for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) approval:

- Students must have completed at least one full academic year in continuous F-1 status at Middlebury by the start of their summer fieldwork opportunity or internship. An academic year is defined as fall/winter/spring or spring/fall/winter.
- Students must be enrolled during the spring semester and must be intending to enroll at Middlebury for at least one academic term of study (usually fall) after summer to qualify.
- Students studying abroad during the spring semester and maintaining their F-1 student status while abroad are eligible to apply.
- Students must secure an internship before they are eligible to apply to enroll in the course.
- The internship must relate *directly* to the student's academic major.
- Students must complete all the necessary steps to enroll in (and complete) the course, including submission of required documents in a timely way.

See next page for CPT details→

2. Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

- International Student & Scholar Service (ISSS) has the authority to approve Curricular Practical Training (CPT), which authorizes international students in the U.S. in F-1 status to pursue full- or part-time, paid or unpaid, off-campus applied learning experiences that are an integral part of an established curriculum.
 - CPT is granted by ISSS and does not involve a government agency.
 - There is no cost to apply for CPT.
 - CPT provides an alternate authorization to *pre-completion* Optional Practical Training (OPT), provided an internship organization/sponsor is willing to accept it. (If not, eligible international students may consider pursuing pre-completion OPT, which requires an application to USCIS, a filing fee, and may take 3-4 months for USCIS to process and approve.)
- **Internship Scenarios and CPT:**
 - Internships in the U.S. for a U.S. employer—on site or at another U.S. location—**eligible for CPT**.
 - Internships abroad for a non-U.S. employer **do not need CPT**.
 - Internships abroad for a U.S. employer **do not need CPT** and may require employment authorization for the country where the experience will take place.

3. Course Registration/CPT Approval Process:

- Fieldwork instructor will notify ISSS when students are approved for enrollment in the summer course.
- For students who qualify, ISSS will authorize Curricular Practical Training (CPT). ISSS will update the student's SEVIS record with the necessary information and will produce an updated Form I-20, showing the dates of authorization and details about the internship sponsor.
- The updated I-20 can be used to satisfy I-9 requirements at the internship organization.
- **Students may only begin the internship on or after the CPT start date on their updated I-20.**

We know this is a lot of information to process, so take your time, and read it carefully. Then, your next step will be to visit the CCI summer internship site for information about getting started. If you have read all the available information and still have questions about the CPT process, email iss@middlebury.edu .

Additional Information for Consideration:

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a type of work-authorization used for F-1 students to complete off-campus training experiences. The primary purpose of CPT is to gain practical experience in the student's field of study. The training experience must be an integral part of an established curriculum and directly related to the student's major area of study. Since CPT is curricular in nature, CPT can be a required experience towards the degree/program or can be an elective or required course where the applied learning aspect of the experience or the off-campus training must be required of the course.

CPT is not possible for all F-1 students because it is dependent on the requirements of a specific course or academic program. Please note that "employment" can be defined as any type of service for which a benefit is received. Therefore, even if the student will not be paid for the internship, it is recommended that they obtain CPT authorization, if they are eligible, to protect their status.

If the internship, work, or volunteer opportunity is related to your major field of study and you are eligible for CPT, we recommend that you apply for the authorization even if you will not receive payment. The definition of "employment" in immigration terms does not necessarily equate with being paid. Even when international students engage in unpaid internships, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security expects F-1 students to be authorized for CPT, if eligible. So, it is a good way to protect yourself and your status.