

# HIRING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

## CONCORDIA ST. PAUL

**Concordia University, Saint Paul** typically enrolls over 150 international students from nearly 30 countries. The diverse global perspectives these students bring to Concordia and the surrounding communities provide an opportunity for cross-cultural learning. International students bring with them strengths that are beneficial for employers including:

- Varied thinking on global issues
- Cross-cultural market awareness
- Ability to adapt to new environments and cultures
- Ability to communicate in multiple languages
- International experience with a global perspective
- Potential relocation to home country provides a reliable international liaison

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# Hiring International Students FAQ

## **How can international students work in the US?**

International students with an F-1 student visa have employment benefits as part of their visa status. International students may work on-campus or off-campus in a position related to their major or field of study.

## **Do international students need work authorization before we can make an offer?**

No. They do not need work authorization to receive an offer. They just need it before they begin working. Their university immigration advisor will walk them through this process.

## **Is the hiring process more time intensive with international students?**

Employers do not need to complete any additional paperwork before making a job offer. The process is similar to hiring US students. International students are responsible for acquiring proper work authorization on their own. The authorization doesn't require extra steps from the employer.

## **How can international students work without a Green Card (permanent residency)?**

The F-1 student visa has work benefits that allow for off-campus work. International students are allowed to work in jobs or internships related to their field of study.

## **Do employers have to certify that international students haven't taken a job that a US citizen could've filled?**

No. This is only needed during employer-sponsored Green Card applications.

## **What are the work authorizations for international students?**

International students have a number of "Practical Training" options available to them. Their university immigration advisor will walk them through the CPT and OPT authorization processes.

- While in school: Curricular Practical Training (CPT) (Minimum of one semester. Confirm length of eligibility with student.)
- After graduation: Optional Practical Training (OPT) (12-month authorization)
- After OPT: STEM OPT (24-month extension) or employer sponsorship for H1-B temporary work visa

**What are the employment steps if an international student will use CPT?**

Treat the hiring process the same as it is for US students. If you would like to make a job offer, the student will need an offer letter for CPT authorization that includes title and duties, full or part-time, start date and end date (if known), and address of employment. CPT employment authorizations can be ready within five business days. Then the student can start their position with you!

**What are the employment steps if an international student will use OPT?**

Treat the hiring process the same as it is for US students and make the job offer. Talk to the student about acquiring OPT authorization in time for the target start date. Students do not need a job offer to apply for OPT. They may start working once they've applied for OPT and received their Employment Authorization Document (EAD).

**Is there a cost associated with hiring international students?**

It is free to hire international students for on-campus, off-campus, or post-program positions. There is no cost to the employer unless the employer chooses to sponsor their employee for an H-1B temporary work visa in the future.

**How do international students to adapt to the work environment in the United States?**

Making the decision to enroll in college in the United States and entering a new environment requires international students to adapt and integrate with their new surroundings. For this reason, international students are highly adaptable and flexible.

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## Work Authorization Information: On-Campus Work

F-1 students are eligible to work on-campus. At Concordia University, students are allowed to work on-campus up to 19 hours/week while classes are in session.

- **Employer's Role:** The employer will need to provide a signature on the on-campus employment verification letter that the student will need to give to the Social Security Administration (SSA) if they do not already have a social security number.
- **Student's Role:** Once a student receives a job offer, they will need to apply for a Social Security Number if they do not already have one. The

student should place a request with the Office of International Student Services for the on-campus employment verification letter. Once they have received their paper Social Security Card in the mail, they will need to complete hiring paperwork with CSP's HR office before starting work.

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## Work Authorization Information: Off-Campus Work | Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a work authorization that allows F-1 students to work off-campus in their academic field after their first academic school year (9 months). Through CPT, students are eligible to work in a part-time or full-time position that can be paid or unpaid. Please note that working full-time (more than 20 hours/week) for 12 months or more will cancel students' eligibility for Optional Practical Training (OPT).

- **Employer's Role:** Once the student is offered a position, the employer will need to provide the student an offer letter that includes the position title, brief description of the responsibilities, hours per week, start date and end date (if known) of employment, and address of employment.
  - **Student's Role:** After a student has been offered a position and obtained an offer letter, they will visit CSP's International Student Services Portal at [iss.csp.edu](http://iss.csp.edu) to apply for and begin the CPT process. This process will be facilitated between the student, the student's major department and advisor, and the ISS Office. The student will be issued a Form I-20 showing proof of their work authorization, and may then begin working.
  - **Duration:** Students can work 1 semester or up to 12 months. Certain programs may have a longer CPT eligibility. The student will be able to confirm this information.
  - **Cost and Processing Time:** There is no cost to the employer. The processing and approval time for CPT can take up to 5 business days. The student will be issued a Form I-20 showing proof of their work authorization, and may then begin working.
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# Work Authorization Information: Post-Graduation Work | Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is a work authorization that allows F-1 students who have graduated to work for 12 months in their major field of study to gain experiences.

- Employer's Role: There is little to no involvement to the OPT process as it is solely the student's responsibility to apply for OPT. However, students may need employment verification, which is when the employer can step in.

STEM OPT is a 24-month OPT extension available to students in certain STEM majors. STEM OPT requires employers to work with students to complete a training plan. More information on STEM OPT can be found at this [link](#). Overall, the STEM OPT employer will be responsible for the following:

- E-Verify: STEM OPT employers must be enrolled in the E-Verify program. E-Verify is a web-based system that allows enrolled employers to confirm the eligibility of their employees to work in the United States (<https://www.e-verify.gov/>).
- Compensation: STEM OPT students must be employed in a paid position.
- I-983 Training Plan and Changes: It is the responsibility of the student's direct supervisor to review and sign off on the student's I-983 training plan. Additionally, if there are changes to the student's position, the supervisor will need to update and sign off on their I-983 training plan.
- Student Self-Evaluations: The student's supervisor will need to review and sign off the student's self-evaluations on the I-983 Training Plan once at the mid-point of employment and again at the end of employment.
- Loss or Termination of Employment: Loss or termination of employment should be reported to Concordia's ISS Office within five business days of the end of the employment. The ISS Office's email is [iss@csp.edu](mailto:iss@csp.edu).
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Site Visits: DHS is authorized to visit the site where a student is working to confirm that the student is adhering to the I-983 training plan. DHS will notify the employer 48 hours before visiting.

Student's Role: Students are responsible for applying for STEM OPT if qualified. For STEM OPT, students are required to keep I-983 training plans

and evaluations up to date and comply with STEM OPT reporting requirements.

Cost and Processing Time: There are no costs for the employer. If you would like to retain your OPT employee longer, please see below section on Long-Term Work.

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## Work Authorization Information: Long Term Work

If the employer wishes to continue to temporarily hire an international student for a certain amount of years, they can apply for an H-1B temporary work visa. Applications for H-1B visas are submitted to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) by the sponsoring company on behalf of the international student.

- Employer's Role: The employer is responsible for filing the H-1B application on behalf of the international employee.
- Duration: H-1B visas are initially granted for three years but can be renewed for a total of six years. If an employer wishes to retain an employee beyond this period, the employer may go through the Green Card (permanent residency) sponsorship process.