

# Hiring an International Student as a Co-op or Intern:

## *A Guide for Employers Hiring UMD Engineering Students on F-1 Visas*

If you would like to hire an intern or co-op student who is an international student from the University of Maryland's School of Engineering, you may be concerned about how the student will receive work authorization, and about the complexity of the process. The student may be eligible for work authorization called Curricular Practical Training, and if so, the process is much less complex and time consuming than you may think.

In order to work off-campus in the U.S., international students on F-1 visas at The University of Maryland must receive work authorization from International Education Services (IES) located on campus in 3117 Mitchell Building. If an international student is offered a **co-op or internship position** by your organization, he/she may be eligible for a type of work authorization called Curricular Practical Training (CPT) that can be authorized by IES. Federal Regulations permit certain Designated School Officials (Designated by the Immigration and Naturalization Service) to authorize employment for foreign students when the employment is integral to the student's program of study [8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(i)]. CPT may not be used for full-time permanent positions; rather, it is specifically for internship or co-op positions offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the University. *For a student to be eligible for CPT, the co-op or intern position must be directly related to the student's major field of study, the student must be enrolled in the Engineering Co-op Program, and the student must have been in lawful F-1 status for nine (9) consecutive months.* Eligibility for CPT may also be affected by a student's point of completion in their academic program.

### **Here are the steps that you and the student need to take *BEFORE* the student can begin working:**

1. Provide the student with an offer letter on your company letterhead that states the following:
  - The student's name and that he/she is being hired as a co-op or intern student
  - Job title and a 2-3 sentence job description that makes it apparent that the position relates to the student's major and/or curriculum
  - Name of student's supervisor
  - Exact start and end dates of the work assignment
  - Number of hours per week the student will work
  - Salary

You will also be asked to sign a copy of our **Cooperative Education/Internship & Supervisor Agreement** form.

2. The student then needs to bring the offer letter to the Engineering Co-op Office and meet with a staff member to enroll in the Co-op Program. The student will register for a course called "ENCO" for the semester(s) he/she will be working. ENCO is a zero credit course that is required for all co-op students.
3. Next the student will take his/her offer letter and original I-20 to International Education Services (IES) on campus. If everything is in order, IES will grant the student permission to work at your organization. This permission will be in writing on the back of the I-20 for the exact dates of employment. ***NOTE: If you and the student decide to extend the dates of employment, the student must receive an extension of work permission from IES before he/she can continue working. You may need to submit another letter with the new dates of employment for this to occur.***

If you have questions about the Engineering Co-op Program, please contact The Engineering Co-op & Career Services Office at (301) 405-3863 or [coop@eng.umd.edu](mailto:coop@eng.umd.edu). If you have questions about Curricular Practical Training, please contact the International Education Services Office at (301) 314-7737 and ask to speak to an advisor, or email [iesadv@deans.umd.edu](mailto:iesadv@deans.umd.edu).