2017 Pre-departure Webinar Series – Employment

Originally aired on Friday, July 21, 2017

At the end of the webinar, in the chat function, we are going to put a link to a survey and we would really appreciate it if you could answer that survey. It helps us to decide what topics to cover in the future and what kind of topics you would like see in the future.

I guess I should introduce myself. I am Bob Gutwein. I am one of the assistant directors at the International Student and Scholar Services. And I am here with, I am Shuhui Lin, I go by Lin I am the international student support and retention coordinator.

And now we will let our host introduce yourself and get on the topic.

Okay, Hello everybody! Good morning or afternoon or evening depending on where you are. I am Lee. I am the senior associate director here at International Student and Scholar Services. I am going to talk to you today about employment issues because I know this is a topic of interest for many students. And yes, I do like Pokémon.

So during the webinar today, these are the things that we will go over. There is a lot more to this subject matter particularly when we talk about CPT/ OPT academic training and I am not going to go too in-depth. That is something that once you are here on campus you will get a lot more details from us but this is really meant to give you more of an overview on different types of employment. I will give you some statistics on the employment of University of Iowa international students so you can get some sense of how many students are doing these things and where they are working. We will talk about internships and working while you are still doing your program of study and how you can find those internships. We will talk about employment after graduation and what your options are. We will talk about the H-1B visa which is the special employment visa that many international students are interested in. And finally we will go over few details about the Social Security Number and how you apply for that and when you apply for it.

First of all, definitely it is possible to work during and after your studies. That is an option that is there for everybody in some respect. Today we are going to focus on F-1 and J-1 student visa regulations so just in case you don’t know you are in F-1 if you have the I-20 form, and you are J-1 if you have the DS-2019. You will notice at different parts of the presentation that some of the things I will say this is just for F-1 students and this part is just for J-1 students because the laws are actually quite different for people in each status so I am going to try my best so you don’t get confused when I am talking about F-1 and J-1 rules okay. And one of the things throughout this that I want to particularly emphasize is you’ve got to make sure you do not work illegally, because if you work illegally that is something that will cause you to lose you legal status meaning that you have to go home and leave the U.S. We don’t want that to happen to you and I know you don’t want that to happen neither so make sure you are following the rules that we are going to talk about today.

First, let’s talk about on-campus employment and by that I mean working for the University of Iowa. This part is for those of you in F-1 status. If you are in F-1 status you are eligible to work on campus for up to 20 hours a week during the fall and spring semesters. You can’t average that. It is strictly limited to 20
hours each week. You can’t work 25 one week and 15 the next. It has to be 20 only each week. If it is an official University break like the summer or the winter then you can actually work up to 40 hours a week, and for this on-campus employment as an F-1 you do not need any special permission from ISSS.

Just to give you an idea of the types of jobs available, it could include working on a laboratory on campus, it could include working in any of the campus libraries, administrative support, many departments and offices need clericals assistants, students come in and do secretarial type of things or clericals assistants. Even food service, there are lot of really fun food providers on campus, in the residence halls and the Iowa Memorial Union. Those are the positions we often see international students taking as well. One thing I want to highlight is our data shows that students who work on campus tend to have higher grade point averages. You might naturally assume that well you know I am here to study and that is my priority, I am not going to have time to work. In a way that is a good attitude to have but at the same time we do see those students who are both studying and working on campus, they develop good time management skills so that they are able to devote the appropriate attention to both things. It certainly helps you when it is time to build a resume when you start looking for other jobs and particularly for international students they get often a great opportunity for socializing, getting to know other people particularly domestic students and often staff and faculty on campus that in ways you may not otherwise have to interact with those individuals. So there are lot of benefits and I do encourage people to consider looking for on campus jobs once you arrive.

If you are in J-1 status, a lot is the same. You are still restricted to 20 hours a week during the fall and spring semesters. The primary difference for J-1 students if you want to work on campus you have to have a special authorization letter that is issued by ISSS actually it is Bob who creates that letter for you. And again, this is just because of the differences in the laws between J-1 and F-1. So if you are a J-1 that is the extra step you need to take. It is a very easy process using the iHawk system to get that letter from us and you are clear to work on campus as well. F-1 students you do not need that letter.

How do you find on-campus jobs? There is a system on campus called Hireahawk. You also use this when you are looking for internships which I will talk about in just a minute but even for on campus students’ employment jobs. Hireahawk is the place where you will go and you see the URL right there you can visit it any time as long as you have a HawkID and password. What you want to look for are the hourly wage positions and not anything that is marked as work study. The reason for that is that work study is actually US government financial aid program that is only for US citizens and green card holders, so you would not be eligible for work study jobs as an F-1 student but you can take hourly wage positions so make sure you are paying attention to the type of the position when you are looking for jobs on Hireahawk.

Okay so what about working off-campus in internships that are in places and business that are not the University of Iowa. First of all, I am going to talk about if you are F-1 student what you do for that. It is called Curricular Practical Training or CPT. For CPT it is a process where F-1 students can get authorization from our office to engage in an internship off-campus. There are several rules that dictated how you qualify for CPT. One is you have to have been enrolled for one full academic year so for those of you who are coming in as brand new student this fall semester you need to be here throughout the entire fall semester and then register again full time for the spring semester then next summer if you do want to do an internship in the U.S. that is when you will be eligible for CPT. You won’t be able to do it this fall or this spring but as soon as the spring semester ends if you do want an
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Internship through CPT you will be able to do that. The internship has to and this is always the case it has to be related to your major area of study. If you are Biology major you are not going to get CPT internship at a poetry journal. It has to be arguably related to the particular major that you are in or majors if you have a double major or even triple major. And you do still have to be enrolled full time so if you are an undergraduate student that means 12 semester hours each fall and spring, if you are a graduate or a professional student that means 9 semester hours. There could be exceptions for graduate and professional students if you are enrolled less than that if you are working on a thesis or dissertation or research for you thesis then you may not have to take 9 hours in a semester. You do have to receive credits for the internship and the process here on our campus the way that it happens is we work very closely with different Career Centers on our campus where you will actually register your internship through those offices so that it appears on your transcript, it may be 0 credit hours for the internship or 1 or 2 hours depending on the situation but that puts in on your transcript and satisfies the U.S. government requirements. So you need to make sure that is always part of the process whenever you are doing an internship or employment off campus. This is also something that is authorized by hour office which is nice because it makes it a fast process once you submit all of your application and materials we usually have the authorization done within a day or two as opposed to you having to mail the application to Homeland Security which is what happens with OPT which I will talk about in a minute. CPT can be a very fast process to get the authorization and you want to make sure that you’ve got that authorization before you ever begin off campus employment.

This gives you an idea of how many students engage in CPT each year and the different type of places where they are working and this number is actually low because I gathered this number in the middle of the spring semester so since then there have been even more people participating in CPT this year. But these businesses and I imagine you have heard some of these are great examples of the top quality employers where students gets their internships. Within the state of Iowa and within our local area here of Iowa City and Cedar Rapids and Des Moines, AEGON is a frequent employer of international students, a lot of the schools and colleges in our area, ACT (the American college testing program) and many would have taken their tests to apply to get admitted to the University of Iowa, Whirlpool Corporation, a lot of pharmacies even symphony orchestras for people who are in the art they can do CPT as well. Outside the state of Iowa, you really see students getting placements in very well-known companies like Amazon and Apple, General Motors, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Siemens, Deloitte, as well as major universities and hospitals.

Next for those of you in J-1 status, I want to cover what you need to do if you are going to be working off-campus in an internship situation because it is an entirely different sets of rules of you and in fact for the J-1 it is a little bit easier. You will applying for something called Academic Training instead of CPT. For J-1 Academic Training this is actually something you can use both during your programs of studies while you are still a student enrolled in classes and you can also use this as after graduation whereas for F-1 OPT is what they are going to use after graduation and I will talk about OPT in a minute. For J-1 this is a good thing for you. Like I said it is a little easier application process, you work entirely with ISSS to get this authorization. If you are going to use it for after graduation, if you are an undergraduate or a Master student your maximum time period is up to 18 months, if you are a PhD student if you want to use academic training after graduation you can have a maximum of 36 months and that authorization starts on the day right after graduation which is something to be aware of.
For F-1 Optional Practical Training, this is what F-1 students are going to use to work off-campus after you graduate. At least for the most part this is after graduation. For some of you who are PhD students and you are in the final semester or a couple of semesters of your program or all what you are doing is finishing your dissertation you may be able to apply for OPT at that time but you may also still be eligible for CPT and that is something that ISSS will work with you as a PhD student to determine what you qualify for and which one may be your best option but in this context today I am going to talk about OPT specifically for after graduation employment. So the basic OPT that you apply for gives you 12 months of post-graduation employment authorization in the U.S. That can be anywhere in the U.S whether it is here in Iowa, California, Alaska, there is no restriction within the US as to where the employment has to happen.

Unlike CPT which ISSS authorize for you this does have to be mailed to Department of Homeland Security. As you probably guessed that does mean it can take a little bit longer for this process to follow through. There is a fee that Homeland Security assesses. I think right now it is around $400 they do increase it every few years; that is part of the application that you mail them. Once they receive your application it takes on average 2 to 3 months to get the approval and there is no control that we have over that and there is no control that you have over that which is why we really encourage students to think ahead when it is your last semester or next semester that you graduate be thinking when it is time to apply for OPT and get that process started, don’t wait until the last minute.

Students who graduate but they haven’t applied for OPT can still stay in the U.S. while waiting for approval you just cannot start working until you get your OPT approval; and that comes in the form of a little plastic card that looks like a driver’s license or the same size as a credit card, that would be what your OPT authorization looks like, that is what you will show to your employer so that they know you have got the legal authorization to start working. ISSS will help you with the process. We actually have to update your I-20 form, we will also tell you what other documents you need to fill out, we will review all your application materials and then you go ahead and mail the application to Homeland Security and then wait 2 to 3 months for them to approve it.

There is a second type of OPT that some students are eligible for. For the 12 months OPT that I was talking about before that is for any major no matter what field you are in if it is Humanity or Sciences everybody is eligible for the 12 months OPT, you could be a Music major, you could be a major in Physics, it doesn’t matter, everybody can apply for 12 months OPT. But this other type of OPT which actually gives an additional 2 years of extension time is only for those who are in what we call STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics). It is unfortunate for Humanities and some of the Social Sciences in those areas right now who are not eligible for this. This is again federal law it is not something that ISSS has any control over it or the University can change for you. In fact, this is based on a specific lists of majors that U.S. government keeps. In the U.S. every college major has a number assigned to it which is the CIP code and that number is what the U.S government uses to determine and creates this list saying if this major is number 42.9999 then they are eligible maybe for a STEM extension or if it is 42.1212 then maybe they are not eligible for the STEM extension so your major even it may seem like oh this is definitely a STEM major! It still has to be on that government’s list. So how do you know what the CIP code for your major is? If you look at your I-20 there is an area somewhere in the middle that talks about the name of your major maybe Biology for example and then beside that it gives a 6 digit number it is something like I said 42.9999 as an example of a CIP code. Those are the numbers that have to appear on the federal governments OPT STEM extension list in order to get that additional
2 years of OPT. They do update the list from time to time, they even talked about adding Humanities and other Social Sciences in the future, I would not wait around for that to happen or expect it to happen, it may never happen, it is hard to say but at this point of time it is only very specific Science, Technology and Mathematics majors that are eligible for this.

Again, this STEM extension gives you an additional 2 years so you could have a total of 3 years actually working on OPT. Unlike the 12 months OPT application, your employers also have to take a role in the application for the 2 year extension. There is an agreement that they have to sign where they are saying that they are going to pay you what is called a fair wage, it is a good protection for students because they can try to take advantage of you being an international student who really wants employment experience in the U.S. and say sure I am going to employ you but I am going to pay you $2 an hour or something like that. They have to pay you what they would pay other U.S. workers in the same type of job so that is a good thing. And they also have to sign and agree that they are able and will provide you professional mentoring during your internship employment. That means that the intention of OPT is not just you get a job and work which is good but the whole point and why they call it Practical Training is it is meant to give you professional experience in your field so that when you go to permanent job someday you will have the opportunity to get good jobs and show that you have experience, so all OPT is meant to not just doing the work but being mentored by your employer so that they can help you develop professional skills and awareness that go along with that type of job. The application process for this is basically the same as the 12 months OPT so again that means you are going to have to pay a new fee at some point, you mail the application to Homeland Security and then it is another wait for 2 or 3 months while they approve that and most of the OPT applications do end up being approved, it is very rare that we see anything be denied, if there is a denial it is usually because a student has some other immigration problems that came during the application process. While we never promise you are definitely going to get your OPT like I said it is rare to see it denied.

And this is just an example of some of the majors here on campus who are eligible for STEM extension: Biochemistry, Actuarial Science, Management Science which is one of the few business field that are eligible for STEM extension, Computer Science, Most of the Engineering majors, Biological Sciences, Pharmaceutics, Psychology and Education Statistics and there are certainly other majors that are eligible for the extension as well but these are some of the common ones.

And again some of the statistics in the past year, over 600 student participated in OPT and probably 700 at this point. Again businesses in Iowa, some of the same where people work under CPT they also work under OPT like AEGON but we have also people also working in places like Transamerica Life Insurance, Wells Fargo, Pearson, Rockwell Collins. And again outside Iowa, Amazon, Apple, Capital One, Citigroup, Fidelity Investments, General Electric, Intel, U.S. National Institute of Health, Tata are just a few examples of very well-known reputable companies.

Okay so next we are going to talk about the H-1B process particularly when you are moving from OPT to H-1B. I think most of you are probably aware that the H-1B visa that is the primary employment visa for internationals in the U.S. and it is what is called a specialty category employment visa meaning that it is only for people with high skills in certain areas that you can’t use it for somebody who wants to come in and be a waiter somewhere in a restaurant, that is not what the H-1B is for. Almost always the person has to have some type of higher education degree as well, and usually the H-1B visa is issued for up to 3 years with an option to extend for an additional 3 years, so you could have potentially a total of 6 years.
on the H-1B, no extensions beyond that. This is something that you cannot get on your own, there is no way for you to just go out and apply for an H-1B. It is something that your employer must sponsor you for meaning they have to file an application on your behalf, so there is no way for you to get an H-1B without doing it through your employer and it is tied specifically to the employer who is filing the application, meaning that you need to keep working for them or at least for a period of time. Sometimes there is a situation called H-1B portability where it can be transferred from one employer to another but we are not going into that level of detail as it is something that we don’t deal with in our office. This is something that a lot of our students on F-1 OPT use as sort of the next step after the OPT if they want to stay and continue working in the U.S. for a little bit longer.

With H-1B there are actually two different types. One is called Cap which means there is a limited number available versus Cap Exempt. Cap exempt that means it is reserved for places that are institutes of higher education like the University of Iowa and other colleges and universities, and also specific federal government nonprofit organizations or also what we call Cap Exempt. For those types of employers that means that they can file an H-1B petition for someone at any time of the year, it doesn’t matter which is a nice position to be in. But for everybody else which is the majority of H-1B cases there is a limit that the U.S. government puts on the numbers of the H-1Bs available each year and that 65,000 what was 80,000 but what they do is reserve 20,000 that specifically can only be used for people with a Master or higher, the remaining 65,000 would be for Bachelors level or it could be Master PhD. That means each year there is a certain number available but usually there are far more applications received then there are H-1Bs available so that it is going to mean not everyone who applies for one is going to get it. They use a lottery system to choose who might be eligible to select applications to consider for the H-1B.

When you are in a Cap subject employment situation, April 1st every year is the date that H-1B applications have to be or need to be submitted by your employers. If an employer wants to hire you in January and they are part of the Cap restricted employment group they are not going to be able to get anything for you, they need to wait until April 1st and submit your H-1B application at that time. You have to make sure that your employers are very well aware of this. Most employers are, although sometimes you may end up working for someone who has never done an H-1B for an employee before, you want to make sure that they are working with someone who knows what they are doing whether it an HR person experienced with it or an immigration attorney who is experienced with the H-1B because they don’t want to wait too long otherwise that would jeopardize you chances of getting the H-1B. In recent years that Cap or limit was reached within days or couple weeks and this year it took 4 days, so that shows you how quickly and how many applications are immediately submitted starting April 1st. If you wait until April 15 it would have been too late. For the last couple of years, people have had a one in three chance of getting their H-1B approved. It is not great odds, it is not horrible odds but it still means your chances of not getting the H-1B are higher than the chance that you will get it. Not what everybody want to hear but it still the reality that you should be aware of.

If your H-1B is approved, the H-1B actually does not become effective until October 1st. Again this is just for those who have that Cap or limit who are subject to the Cap. The H-1B does not start until October 1st. So for some people on OPT it is very possible that your OPT could end in June or July so what do you do between that time and October 1st? Fortunately, there is a process called the Cap GAP where you may be able to extend the OPT with our help through September 30th so that you can stay in the U.S. keep working until the OPT starts the next day on October 1st and again I am not going into details about
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that here because it is kind of a complicated thing but that is something that we will explain more to you when the time comes when you are on campus and you are doing your OPT application or you are on OPT and you are submitting that H-1B application but just something to be aware of.

If you are in J-1 status, things could be a little bit different for you because again for the different rules that applies to J-1s. It may or may not be possible for you to even get an H-1B. When you get on campus you are going to learn during orientation about different things that applies to your J-1 status that might say you have to go home for 2 years after you graduate before you can get an H-1B or green card. And again I am not going into those details right now because that is particularly a pretty complex issue but that is something that will be covered during orientation and J-1 immigration session so make sure absolutely make sure that you are attending that because that is when you learn the details and know if this is something that you need to plan ahead for and be aware of.

Basically, this is what the process looks like for students who want to work in the U.S. after graduation. You graduate with your U.S. degree. If you are in F-1 status you do your 12 months of OPT. If you are J-1 then that is when you will be doing Academic Training. If you are F-1 with specific STEM major that may qualify you for the additional 2 years of OPT extension then after that that is when you are hopefully applying and hopefully getting approved for H-1B to permit you to work for another 3 to 6 years and also during that time if your employer wants to sponsor you for the green card that would then become part of the process and we are not going to talk about green card today because that too is such a complicated and complex thing. We will cover that throughout the year during workshops here on campus.

This map is just to give you a good idea of particularly when you are still going to be in your program of study if you are interested in doing internships over the summer for example. Iowa City yes we are out in the middle of the county but in a fairly rural area but we are still within 2, 4, 6 hours of major metropolitan areas where a lot of students do get the opportunity to go interview for summer internships for example. We are nicely located for opportunities like that.

How do you find those internships or employments? I mean certainly you can find them on your own but a lot of our students use what is called the Pomerantz Career Center on our campus. This is the place that you really should start using their services within your first or second semester on campus, particularly if you know you want to get an internship later or get a job in the U.S. after you graduate. They provide a Hire-A-Hawk Database that I have mention earlier which is where you log on and find on campus jobs as well as off-campus internships. They have peer advisors who are other students who have gone through this and have done internships and can give you a lot of personalized advice on what to do as part of the process. They host career fairs on campus where many major employers come to talk about what they are looking for in employees, sometimes they will even do job interviews during these fairs. And they have a lot of great support services as part of your process in trying to find internships. They can help you write your resume and understand what U.S. employer is going to be looking for on that resume. They can help you practice job interviews which can be a scary time if it is your first time going to a job interview, they can practice it so that way you feel better when you are actually doing the real interview. They also help you network which is a big thing in the U.S. in terms of employment. Networking to help promote yourself and promote your chances of finding a position. They also have a service that can help you find international jobs, not just jobs in the U.S. And finally, they can even help if you feel like you have your major but you don’t know what to do with it after you
graduate, like anthropology, what do you do with that? They can help you find ideas and find jobs and internships that will take advantage whatever your major is.

And last, I am going to talk about the Social Security Number. We know that this is most if not all of you are going to want while you are here. Unfortunately, not everyone is going to be able to get it. You can only get a Social Security Number if you are working, if you have a job. You can’t get it even if you want to use it to open a utilities account or open a credit card or things like that. The only way you get it is if you are working. Technically, you really don’t need it for other purposes. You can open bank accounts, you can open credit card account, and you can do everything other than work without a Social Security Number. There is a very specific process. Once you arrive on campus, we are going to talk about this during orientation so make sure that you attend orientation, the immigration sessions for F-1 or J-1 status, that is when we are going to give you step by step and the dates that you need to know in order to get the Social Security Number. You cannot get it as soon as you arrive in the U.S. so please don’t try to do that, don’t go to the Social Security office because they will just send you away so it is going to be a waste of your time to do that. Wait for orientation that is when you will get the instructions on what is needed. You will need to get a special letter from your employer on campus, you will also need a special letter from ISSS and we will give you all the instructions and everything you need to know for that. Basically, just be aware that you are not going to be able to apply for this number until sometimes the second week of classes.

That is pretty much the overview that I was hoping to go over with you today. If you have questions and certainly we are going to read through some of the questions you have submitted in just a moment and try to answer as much as we can, but if you think of questions later, if you have something that is really more of a personal question with your situation email iss@uiowa.edu and we will be happy to answer questions that way. If you have any questions about orientation such as filling out the Pre-arrival checklist or other things related orientation, that is the orientation email up there, Brandon Paulson in our office will be the one to see and responding to those emails for orientation.
2017 Pre-departure Webinar Series – Employment Questions & Answers

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Question: Can I work more than one place on OPT?

Answer: That is a very good question. The answer can be yes and how you do that depends on which type of OPT you are going to be using. If you are on the basic 12 months OPT, yes you can go ahead and work for more than one employer. No matter what, it still makes a difference in terms of the fact that the employment still has to relate directly to your degree program, so all of the same rules apply. If it is going to be during that 2 months extension, that can get a little more complicated and maybe possible but that something that really depends on your individual situation so I don’t want to answer definitely yes to that. I am going to give that a maybe and this is something that we would have to go over directly to see what your individual situation is.

Question: Will the UI help me find a job?

Answer: Absolutely! That was discussed in the Pomerantz Career Center slide. If you happen to be an MBA student or an engineering student they have their own career services offices in their departments but all other students are able to work with this Pomerantz Career Center on campus. Or if you are a graduate student, the graduate college also can provide assistance finding placements and I can’t stress enough how much work with them, start early, that way by the time you are ready to start searching whether it is late or during your studies or after graduation you will be ready to go. You will know what to do, you will have an excellent resume, you will be prepared and know what to expect for job interviews. That is a fantastic resource for everyone on our campus.

Question: My department wants me start working right away but I don’t have a Social Security Number, what can I do? And how early can a student start working on campus?

Answer: Great questions that I didn’t talk about! The Social Security Number like I said you are not going to be able to apply until sometimes later in the second week of classes. So what if you are expected to work earlier? Fortunately, you can start your employment with the University of Iowa before you get the Social Security Number which I know it sounds weird and you can’t continue doing it so that it is why you need to apply as soon as you can, but you can start working the first few weeks without the Social Security number but there is a requirement and an expectation that within the first month or so of your employment you should have your number so that the University can enter it in the HR system.

The question of how soon you can start working for the University. F-1 students can actually work up to 30 days before the start of classes. Usually, you don’t see this happening for undergraduate students, most often it would be graduate students who might have a teaching or research assistant position where they may want you to come in and do some training a week or two before classes start and you are getting paid for that. So absolutely, you can start your on campus employment as long as it is within

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30 days before the first day of classes and you can start it even if you do not yet have your Social Security Number.

**Question:** Do I need CPT if I volunteer?

**Answer:** That is a good question! Volunteering, that itself is a complicated question. We always want about your specific situation. If you are thinking about volunteering come talk to an ISSS advisor and we can tell you with your specific situation if you need to have any kind of authorization for it or not but in general I can tell you that in U.S. when we talk about volunteering particularly in relation to whether or not you need employment authorization to do it or not, usually volunteering means doing something for nonprofit groups like there is a local food bank in town or crisis center or to read for elderly at the library, things like that are true volunteer positions and no one gets paid for, there are other volunteers doing it. Usually, those are the kind of things you don’t need any special authorization for because it is not going to be considered employment. What you can’t do is say I am going to work for this professor’s lab or work in this off-campus business, they are not going to pay me so it is volunteer time. No it is not. It is still considered employment even if you are not getting paid, that could still be a violation of employment regulation and you could lose you status. That is why whatever your specific situation is be sure to come in and talk to an ISSS advisor first.

**Question:** The work is part of a class, do you still need CPT if it is happening off-campus?

**Answer:** We would very strongly advice that yes you should because CPT is called curricular practical training for a reason. Examples would be if you are in Education you may need to do students teaching somewhere or Social Work Programs you need to do social work internships somewhere you should get CPT for that just because it is part of the requirements for the class or the degree program you still have to follow the U.S. immigration laws because from their perspective you are working for someone whether it is paid or unpaid, whether it is required for your program or not required, you are still doing work somewhere that is why you should still get CPT.

**Question:** Does my on campus job need to be related to my major?

**Answer:** No, it does not. If you are just working under the regular on campus rules so 20 hours a week it could be anything. Like I said earlier food service jobs are great examples of that because that is not related to anybody’s major on our campus but international student absolutely can work in food service jobs. If it is regular on campus position it does not have to be related to your major area of study.

**Question:** Can I have OPT and CPT at the same time?

**Answer:** No you cannot. Those two are exclusive. They are really meant for different periods of your student employment situation anyways. CPT is strictly for when you are a student. You won’t ever get CPT after you graduated because you are not eligible for it at point. OPT as I said, most of those cases are for after graduation. There are few cases for PhD student where they could be eligible for OPT before they graduate. They may also be eligible for CPT. You can only have one of the other. You cannot have both at the same time but what we will do with these cases is help you figure out which one is going to be the best option or which one you may still qualify for.

**Question:** Can I have an on campus job and CPT at the same time?
Answer: This is a good question. Yes, you can! Because they are two different types of employment authorization one doesn’t exclude the other one so you could have a job working on campus for 20 hours a week, maybe a teaching assistant maybe working at one of the libraries or one of the food services you can do that for 20 hours a week, and maybe you get a chance to do an internship for a semester at a local business, if you are in accounting major maybe working with someone’s accounting situation you can then get CPT authorization to that off campus internship and continue to work on campus. Whether you should? That is a whole other question because that is lot of work and you still have to be registered full time and maintaining your studies but it is possible to do that.

Question: I hear that working too much CPT can keep me from having OPT. I already have a Social Security Number, would I need a new Social Security Number?

Answer: Yes, this is something I didn’t mention in CPT section but there are rules when in some cases a student could lose eligibility to do OPT. What I didn’t mention about CPT is there are two different types. One is part time CPT, the other is full time CPT. Part time CPT is 20 hours or less per week of employment and full time is anything over 20 hours a week. If you are authorized to work full time CPT and you do that for a total of 12 months then you lose your ability to do OPT after graduation. When I say 12 months of full time CPT that is cumulative, it doesn’t have to happen 12 months straight, it is possible you may work 3 months full time CPT, another 3 months of full time CPT and eventually if you add up to 12 months of full time CPT then you don’t get a new OPT authorization. Part time CPT will never impact OPT eligibility, it is only 12 total months cumulative of full time CPT.

If you have a Social Security Number in the U.S. that is your Social Security Number that follows you for your life. International students or people who are not U.S. citizens if you lose that card you would have to reapply the same way you applied the first time but when you get the card it is going to be the same number.

Question: Is there a time limit for on campus jobs? Do they expire? Can you keep the same job for your entire college career?

Answer: Technically, no. It is up to the office or the departments that is employing you. Usually, when they hire you they will tell you it is for a specific period of time particularly if it is a teaching or research assistantship they will tell you if it is for a semester or one academic year and then they will consider if they want to offer you to extend the position for the future years. But technically, as long as you are a student, registered and you are maintaining status then you can keep working on campus.

Question: How can I register on Hireahawk and do I have to wait until after orientation?

Answer: I think you should be able to login into Hireahawk right away, I am not entirely sure but you can try it out. It is going to be in MyUI so after you login to MyUI go to Student Information tab and find the Hireahawk link and once you click in the link it is going to start asking you questions about basically information to set up an account there.

For further information about that you can always contact the Career Center and they can answer more questions about that. careercenter@uiowa.edu
I want to thank Lee for providing such great information for us today. Thank you for listening to us today and please make sure to do the survey that has been posted in the chat function, it should take you only a couple minutes and we would love your feedback. Thanks and you have a great day!