

The Donald Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences (ICS) at UC Irvine takes pride in attracting elite tech talent globally. This includes international students enrolled in our professionally-oriented programs: [Master of Computer Science \(MCS\)](#), [Master of Software Engineering \(MSWE\)](#), and [Master of Data Science \(MDS\)](#). Our students are distinguished graduates from leading universities in their countries, possess multilingual abilities, offer cross-cultural insights, and are ready to contribute their specialized skills and industry knowledge.

Therefore, do not allow concerns over visa procedures to deter you from hiring the most qualified candidates. U.S. laws facilitate various options for employing international students, who will manage the work authorization process with the UCI International Center, and will require minimal effort from their potential employers.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Internships

CPT provides F-1 students work authorization for temporary employment (e.g. internship, co-op) in order for students to meet their programs' degree requirements. Such employment can be paid or unpaid, full-time or part-time. Employers go through the same process needed for hiring domestic students and are only required to provide an offer letter outlining the details of employment. Benefits and considerations for CPT:

- There is no cost to the employer for a CPT application.
- Employers do not need to “sponsor” a student for CPT.
- Students are responsible for applying for CPT with requisite paperwork and course enrollment.
- Students can work using CPT after they have completed 3 consecutive quarters at UCI.
- Students can work full-time or part-time in the summer, and part-time during the academic year.
- Students only need a [written job offer or CPT letter](#) from the employer that contains the below:
 - Company's Letterhead
 - Addressed to the Student
 - Job Title/Position
 - Description of Job Duties
 - Address of Employer, and Worksite Location (if different)
 - Specify if Work is Part-Time/Full-Time
 - Specify the exact Start and End Date of Employment
 - Employer's Signature

Optional Practical Training (OPT) and Post-Graduation Employment

Optional Practical Training (OPT) provides students holding an F-1 visa authorization to work in the U.S. for up to 12 months following graduation on either a full-time or part-time basis. MCS, MSWE and MDS students also qualify for OPT STEM Extension and can apply for an additional 24 months of full-time work authorization. Students must obtain a work authorization card (EAD) by graduation from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to be eligible for this option. Benefits and considerations for OPT:

- There is no cost to the employer for an OPT application.
- Employers do not need to “sponsor” a student for OPT.
- Students are responsible for applying for OPT with requisite paperwork.
- Students will not need an offer letter from an employer for an OPT application.
- Students and employers can coordinate a desired start date within 60 days of their graduation.
- OPT and STEM-OPT combined provide employers with an employee for up to 36 months at no extra cost.

Questions? Contact the Career Development Team for ICS Professional Programs at code@ics.uci.edu.