

## PhD Internship Policy and Procedure

**Current Graduate School of Engineering Policy on CPT Internship Requests-Intl PhD Students -**  
<https://coe.northeastern.edu/academics-experiential-learning/graduate-school-of-engineering/graduate-student-services/policies-and-procedures/gse-policy-on-cpt-for-f-1-students/>

### PhD Internship

The Graduate School of Engineering at Northeastern University defines an Internship as a special case of experiential learning that applies only to PhD students. Eligibility is restricted to PhD students who have completed a minimum of two semesters of full-time registration, and who are pursuing a dissertation in which their dissertation advisor supports their working at an outside organization in order to complete the research. Note that some companies or organizations refer to either paid or unpaid student work experiences as “internship;” however, in the College of Engineering, Internship has special meaning from an educational point of view.

An Internship must be integral (read: essential, vital, fundamental) to a student’s research or dissertation and is generally a special arrangement with a research partner organized by the student’s dissertation advisor – it is not a student-initiated opportunity, nor is it a co-op or other employment opportunity that is separate from the student’s research. An internship can only be approved if necessary or required for the student’s dissertation research in order to successfully complete the program of study. The faculty advisor is required to sign, verify, and document that this experience is integral to the student’s dissertation research in order to obtain approval from the Graduate School of Engineering.

### Approval Process for International PhD Students

All students must obtain approval from their dissertation advisor and Department Chair via the *Internship Authorization Request form* to officially engage in a PhD Internship.

The following documentation is required to be submitted to the Graduate School of Engineering for review:

1. Internship Authorization Request form.
2. Copy of internship offer letter or other official proof of internship on company letterhead (the internship must carry a minimum duration of 11 weeks within the academic semester, as defined by the [academic calendar](#)).
3. Letter from dissertation advisor describing how the internship is integral to the student’s dissertation research. The letter must be on departmental letterhead and signed.
4. In addition to the approval process for all PhD Students, F-1 status or AT for J-1 students, will need to complete the Office of Global Services CPT Authorization Request e-Form through the myOGS system. Both paid and unpaid internships will require CPT authorization for international students.

### **Approval Process for Domestic PhD Students**

All international students must obtain approval from their dissertation advisor and Department Chair via the *Internship Authorization Request form* to officially engage in a PhD Internship.

The following documentation is required to be submitted to the Graduate School of Engineering for review:

1. Internship Authorization Request form.
2. Copy of internship offer letter or other official proof of internship on company letterhead (the internship must carry a minimum duration of 11 weeks within the academic semester, as defined by the [academic calendar](#)).
3. Letter from dissertation advisor describing how the internship is integral to the student's dissertation research. The letter must be on departmental letterhead and signed.

Since the experience is required for, and/or integral to, a student's dissertation research, **PhD Internships are never authorized in a student's final semester**. For students completing their program during any portion of Full Summer, the final semester is considered to be the Full Summer term.

### **PhD Students – CPT Request Process**

For immigration work authorization purposes, PhD Internship is classified as Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for F-1 visa holders or pre-Academic Training (pre-AT) for J-1 visa holders and therefore must be requested in order to engage in a PhD Internship. Paid or unpaid internships require CPT authorization.

In addition to the approval process international PhD students, F-1 status or AT for J-1 students, will need to complete the Office of Global Services CPT Authorization Request e-Form through the myOGS system. To access the e-form, click on the link for CPT Authorization Request Form found on the OGS website under Current Student Forms → Employment Forms → Curricular Practical Training.

### **Registration**

Students who receive approval for PhD Internship will be prompted to submit an Individual Instruction Request for ENGR 9700: Dissertation Fieldwork, under their dissertation advisor, by the Graduate School of Engineering. Registration in this course is required during each term in which they engage in the internship, including summer. This course can be completed a maximum of three times.

ENGR 9700: Dissertation Fieldwork is a zero semester hour course that carries full-time enrollment status and is billed at one semester hour of tuition. **However, all students approved to engage in a PhD Internship will be awarded a one semester hour tuition scholarship to cover the cost of the tuition of the course by the College of Engineering. This will be applied to your student account by the Graduate School of Engineering.**

### **PhD Internship Continuation**

The following documentation is required to be submitted to the Graduate School of Engineering for review if students wish to extend their current internship (for the same position) beyond the initial end date, but still **within the semester (as defined by the Academic Calendar)**:

International students:

1. Internship Authorization Request form
2. A copy of the updated internship offer letter (with the new end date) on company letterhead
3. OGS CPT authorization extension form

Domestic students:

1. Internship Authorization Request form
2. A copy of the updated internship offer letter (with the new end date) on company letterhead

If students intend to extend their current internship **beyond** the current semester, they will need to submit:

International students:

1. Internship Authorization Request form
2. A copy of the updated internship offer letter (with the new end date) on company letterhead
3. **NEW** OGS CPT authorization form
4. Registration request for ENGR 9700 Dissertation Fieldwork
5. Updated Letter of Support from Research Advisor

Domestic students:

1. Internship Authorization Request form
2. A copy of the updated internship offer letter (with the new end date) on company letterhead
3. Registration request for ENGR 9700 Dissertation Fieldwork
4. Updated Letter of Support from Research Advisor