



## EMPLOYMENT TALKING POINTS

### For international students seeking co-op employment

**This document has three sections:**

**I. Terms and definitions.** | Benefits of hiring an international student.

**II. Words and phrases for students to use WHILE a Michigan Tech** student seeking a cooperative education partnership with an employer. The bolded statements are the main points, with details or sub points in bullets.

**III. Words and phrases for use AFTER graduating from Michigan Technological University University**

### SECTION I

#### Terms and definitions

CPT curricular practical training – while a co-op student

DSO designated school official

EAD employment authorization document

OPT optional practical training – after graduation

#### The benefits to an employer of hiring an international student:

- Help increase the diversity of your workforce
- Bring a variety of ideas and perspectives to your team
- Enhance cross-cultural understanding and communication
- Assist employers that are experiencing a STEM talent gap.

### SECTION II - Words and phrases for students to use WHILE at Michigan Tech.

**I am legally authorized to work in the US.**

**I am sponsored by Michigan Technological University.**

**My co-op employer does not need to assist me regarding work authorization.**

**For a cooperative education work term, I will apply for, and work under, the CPT program.**

- My employer only needs to provide an official letter confirming a job offer. It needs to include: work start and end dates, my job title, supervisor name, location of employment and hours I will work. The dates need to follow the schedule published on the [MTU career services website](#).
- Under CPT rules I may work full-time for up to 364 days in total.\*



- My Michigan Technological University designated school official will maintain my student record, and update my employment information in the government student and exchange visitor information system (SEVIS).
- \* If I work more than 364 days/12 months of full time CPT (over 20 hours per week), I will not be eligible for OPT after graduation.

### **SECTION III**

#### **After graduating from Michigan Tech, I may be hired full-time - without H1B sponsorship - under optional practical training (OPT) employment authorization.**

- I will continue to work with my Michigan Technological University designated school official.
- I may apply for OPT as early as 90 days before graduation.
- An employer has no responsibility in the application process.
- I would wait to start work until after I receive my employment authorization document (EAD).
  - Since a social security number alone is not sufficient proof of work authorization, I would confirm my work authorization prior to an employment start date to prevent any liability for my employer and complete the I-9 process when employment begins.

#### **As an F-1 student on a regular period of OPT, I may apply for a 24-month STEM OPT extension.**

- I would qualify for an additional 24 months of OPT because:
  - I was currently participating in a regular period of OPT.
  - I received a science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) degree at an undergraduate level or higher, and seek a training opportunity related to this degree.
  - I received a qualifying STEM degree from a currently accredited SEVP-certified college or university.
- I would work with my designated school official (DSO) to complete the required forms.
- An employer has some responsibility in the application process. Specifically, my employer would work with me on completing the I-983 training plan form.

#### **Given a STEM OPT extension, I could work for up to three years beyond my Michigan Tech program without sponsorship by the company.**

- **Employer responsibilities during STEM OPT:**
  - Complete and certify form I-983, which includes preparing a training plan for the student
  - Implement training plan:
    - report on the student's progress at the midpoint and end of the 24 months.
    - complete and sign student's self-evaluation
  - Report to student's DSO any material changes to or deviations from an existing form I-983



- Report a student's departure from, or the termination of student's practical training, to designated school official
- Report noncompliance to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security

**My employer *could* apply for an H-1B visa on my behalf during the three-year OPT period.**

- Employer responsibility: to file the H-1B petition on behalf of the international employee.
- Each fiscal year, for-profit companies are granted 65,000 H-1Bs for candidates who have completed undergraduate degrees.
- Timeline: employers wishing to file an H-1B petition must first submit the name of the individual during a registration period in March. USCIS then conducts a lottery of all registrations received. If their beneficiary was selected, the employer will then have a 90-day period beginning April 1 to file a complete H-1B petition on behalf of its beneficiary.
- There are other ways employers can file for an H-1B visa, and it depends on the situation.
- Michigan Tech advises students to either work with their hiring company and/or an immigration attorney.

Information adapted from:

<https://www.ice.gov/sevis/practical-training>

<https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/optional-practical-training-opt-for-f-1-students>