Cooperative Education Eligibility and Procedures For F-1 Students for the 5-session (Traditional) Program

International students with F-1 visas are eligible to participate in the 5-session (Traditional) Professional Practice Program if they meet the qualification requirements. Co-Op employment is covered by *Curricular Practical Training* [CPT] for the first twelve (12) months and by *Optional Practical Training* [OPT] for the remainder of the program (usually 6 months). The eligible time remaining under OPT (usually 6 months) is then available to work after graduation.

F-1 students applying to the 5-session (Traditional) program are expected to enter the program in good faith and complete all five required work periods. The first twelve months of Co-Op employment (approximately the first three work sessions) will be covered by the eligible CPT. At the end of the first twelve months, the student will switch to OPT to complete the remainder of the Co-Op Program requirements (i.e., the fourth and fifth work sessions). Processing of OPT applications requires approximately 3 months for approval by ISS. Students must apply at the beginning of the third work session to insure all paperwork is completed properly.

It is unethical, unprofessional, and unacceptable to apply to and enter the 5-session (Traditional) Co-Op Program with the intention of terminating at the end of the twelve months covered by CPT. Such action will reflect negatively on the student, the Co-Op Program, and the university. Be advised that most successful Co-Op students receive job offers from their Co-Op employers after graduation.

If students prefer to use the full 12 months of OPT work hours after graduation, it is recommended that F-1 students be encouraged to wait for eligibility for the 3-session Co-Op Programs to be able to complete the required number of work sessions and avoid use of their OPT work hours.