

**CAREER EDUCATION CENTER**

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# Guide to Cooperative Education

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2012-13

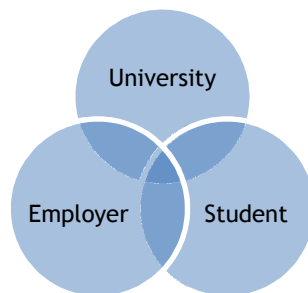
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# Introduction to Cooperative Education

## *What is co-op?*

Cooperative education is a structured educational strategy integrating classroom studies with learning through productive work experiences in a field related to a student's academic or career goals. It provides progressive experiences in integrating theory and practice. Co-op is a partnership among students, educational institutions and employers, with specified responsibilities for each party.



## Essential Characteristics

Formal recognition by the school as an educational strategy integrating classroom learning and progressive work experiences, with a constructive academic relationship between teaching faculty and co-op faculty or administrators.

The structure for multiple work experiences in formalized sequence with study leading to degree completion of an academic program.

Work experiences which include both an appropriate learning environment and productive work. Work experiences related to career or academic goals. Formal recognition of the co-op experience on student records (e.g. grade, credit hours, part of degree requirement, notation on transcript, etc.) Pre-employment preparation for students, as well as ongoing advising is provided.

Agreement among the school, employer and the student on:

- Job description and new learning opportunities
- Specified minimum work periods (equivalent in length to an academic term (quarter, semester or trimester). In alternating programs, students work approximately 40 hrs/wk, full-time during the term. In parallel programs, students work approximately 20 hrs/wk, part-time during the term.
- Work monitored by the school and supervised by employers
- Academic credit for cooperative education reflected on transcript
- Recognition as a co-op employee by the employer
- Evaluations by the student, the school, and the employer, with guided reflection by the student

- Remuneration for the work performed
- Provision for employer and school evaluation of quality and relevance of the work experience and curriculum designed to maximize outcomes for students, employers and the school.

## Anticipated Outcomes

Participation in Cooperative Education can develop or enhance the following outcomes:

### STUDENT OUTCOMES

#### Academic

- Ability to integrate classroom theory with workplace practice
- Clarity about academic goals
- Academic motivation
- Technical knowledge through use of state-of-the-art equipment

#### Professional

- Clarity about career goals
- Understanding of workplace culture
- Workplace competencies
- New or advanced skills
- Career management
- Professional network
- After-graduation employment opportunities

#### Personal

- Maturity
- Determination of strengths & weaknesses
- Development/enhancement of interpersonal skills
- Earnings to assist with college expenses or to support personal financial needs

#### Responsibilities

- Citizenship skills
- Lifelong learning skills

### Employer Outcomes

- Well-prepared short-term employees

- Flexibility to address human resource needs
- Cost-effective long-term recruitment and retention
- Access to candidates with sought-after skills and/or background
- Increased staff diversity
- Partnerships with schools
- Input on quality and relevance of school's curricula
- Cost-effective productivity

### **COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY OUTCOMES**

- Recruitment of new students
- Retention of current students
- Wider range of learning opportunities for students
- Enriched curriculum
- Enhanced reputation in the employment community
- Improved rate of employment of graduates
- Increased alumni participation (hire students, contribute money, etc.)
- Partnerships with business, government and community organizations
- Increased external support by corporations, foundations & government grants

### **SOCIETAL OUTCOMES**

- Established model for workforce preparedness
- Income tax revenue
- Reduced demand for student loans
- Productive and responsible citizens
- Industry-education partnerships

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## Cooperative Education at University of Detroit Mercy

Cooperative education (co-op) has been part of the University of Detroit Mercy curriculum since 1911 when the University of Detroit introduced co-op as a required component of the engineering program. The UDM program was the first in Michigan and the fourth oldest program in the United States.

Cooperative education is a required part of the curriculum for architecture, engineering and nursing students. Co-op is available to students in most undergraduate majors except dental hygiene and education and on a limited basis for graduate students.

Cooperative education is reflected on the student's academic transcript distinguishing co-op as a structured academic learning experience.

# Overview of Co-op Roles & Responsibilities

## STUDENT

### Prior to starting assignment

1. Meet the established minimum GPA criteria
2. Actively pursue co-op job opportunity (submitting resumes, participating in job fairs, campus interviews, networking, etc.)
3. Complete the Report A Hire section in your TitanCareerLink account as soon as a position offer has been accepted (See Reporting your Co-op Employment Instructions)
  - a. (International students should submit offer letter on official company letter head to Career Education Center for approval,)
4. Complete UDM registration for appropriate course/term

### Once assignment is approved

1. Develop and submit learning objectives to TitanCareerLink
2. Participate in academic portion following co-op syllabus to complete all assignments including Blackboard component
3. Complete work which the co-op supervisor evaluates as satisfactory or better as reflected on the Supervisor Evaluation
4. Complete the equivalent of twelve weeks of work
5. Maintain communication with co-op coordinator responding, as appropriate to email or phone messages
6. Complete and submit Student Evaluation of Co-op Experience

## CO-OP COORDINATOR/CAREER EDUCATION CENTER

1. Facilitate the hybrid Preparation for Co-op course (CEC 3000)
2. Assist student to learn to establish learning goals/objectives
3. Approve/Deny Application for Co-op Credit
4. Review job description for appropriateness
5. Verification of co-op assignment employment
6. Monitor student experience
7. Review learning objectives for appropriateness
8. Review all academic assignments and provide feedback as necessary
9. Complete grading at end of term
10. Conduct site visit as appropriate
11. Review student and supervisor evaluation and provide appropriate feedback to student

## EMPLOYER

### Career Education Center documentation

1. Verify the students co-op by completing and returning the Employer Verification of Co-op Assignment form to the Career Education Center
2. Complete the CEC Evaluation of Student's Co-op Experience using TitanCareerLink

3. Supervisors are encouraged to discuss the evaluation with student prior to submission

#### Working with student

1. Provide job description and reasonable wages and/or benefits to the student
2. Provide an orientation and training session for new or returning co-op students
3. Assist the student in the development of learning objectives
4. Provide reasonable level of supervision to student
5. Provide meaningful work experiences related to the students field of study

#### **FACULTY/ACADEMIC ADVISOR**

1. Verify eligibility to participate in co-op by confirming that:
2. Student has required GPA
3. Student has completed coursework sufficient to begin co-op assignment
4. Student has/will have earned the required credits to begin co-op assignment

#### **SCHOOL/COLLEGE**

- Ensure integration of cooperative education into academic curriculum.



## Typical Co-op Rotations

	Term1	Term 2	Term 3
<b>Nursing</b>			
Freshmen	Academic	Academic	Vacation
Sophomore	Academic/CEC 3000	Academic	NUC 3940 (1st Co-op) Part-time
Junior	Academic	Academic	NUC 3950 (2nd Co-op) Full-time
Senior	Academic	Academic	Academic
	Term1	Term 2	Term 3
<b>5yr-Physician Assistant Program</b>			
Freshmen	Academic	Academic	Vacation
Sophomore	Academic	Academic	Clinical Training
Junior	Academic	Academic/CEC 300	HPC 3940 (Co-op)
Senior	Academic	Academic	Academic
5 <sup>th</sup> Year	Academic	Academic	
	Term1	Term 2	Term 3
<b>5yr- Business Administration Program</b>			
Freshmen	Academic	Academic	Vacation
Sophomore	Academic/CEC 3000	Academic	Vacation
Junior	Academic	Academic	ADM 3950(1st Co-op)
Senior	Academic	Academic	ADM 3960(2 <sup>nd</sup> Co-op)
5 <sup>th</sup> Year	Academic	Academic	
	Term1	Term 2	Term 3
<b>Non-Required Majors</b>			
Freshmen	Academic	Academic	Vacation
Sophomore	Academic/CEC 3000	Academic	Co-op Employment
Junior	Academic	Co-op Employment	Academic
Senior	Co-op Employment	Academic	Academic

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University of Detroit Mercy

Student Guide to  
Cooperative Education

2012-13

University of Detroit Mercy

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## Cooperative Education for Undergraduates

Participation in the undergraduate cooperative education program is a privilege extended to those students who meet certain criteria and who demonstrate through their initial academic work their ability. Students must be “full-time” matriculating students carrying a minimum of twelve (12) academic credit hours per fall and winter semester and majoring in a discipline which allows cooperative education in the curriculum.

Students must successfully complete the appropriate section Introduction to Cooperative Education (CEC 3000) course in the appropriate time frame and meet the minimum grade point average requirement. The CEC provides opportunities for students to network with employers to secure co-op experience via job postings on our online recruitment database TitanCareerLink ([www.udmercy.edu/cecc](http://www.udmercy.edu/cecc)), campus interviews, employer information sessions, sponsored career fairs and announcements about other area career networking events.

Because co-op integrates work with classroom trainings in non-required programs will not be allowed to enroll for co-op credit in the final semester of study. **Academic credit is not provided retroactively. Students must register for the credit during the semester they engage in the learning experience.**

### Criteria for Required Majors

#### *Nursing*

- 2.5 Grade Point Average
- Successful completion (Grade C or better) of CEC 300 in first semester of 2nd year
- Successful completion of all nursing courses required for first rotation

#### Physician Assistant (5 year accelerated)

- 2.5 Grade Point Average
- Successful completion (Grade C or better) of CEC 300 prior to beginning employment
- Successful completion of all physician assistant courses required for first rotation
- Successful completion of EMT and or CNA certification training

#### Business Administration (5 year accelerated)

- 3.25 Grade Point Average
- Successful completion (Grade C or better) of CEC 300 in first semester of 2<sup>nd</sup> year
- Successful completion of all business administration courses required for first rotation

### Criteria for Elective Majors

#### *Business,*

- 2.5 Grade Point Average
- Successful completion (Grade C or better) of CEC 300 in first semester of 2nd year
- Successful completion of first and second year business courses

#### *Liberal Arts,*

- 2.5 Grade Point Average
- Successful completion (Grade C or better) of CEC 300 in first semester of 2nd year

#### *Health Professions*

- 2.0 Grade Point Average
- Successful completion (Grade C or better) of CEC 300 in first semester of 2nd year

### **Assignment Limits**

Cooperative education is an opportunity for students to learn and apply something new. To maintain the integrity of cooperative education undergraduate students are limited to

- The equivalent of 3 full-time (ALTERNATING) experiences for academic credit
- No more than the equivalent of 1 full-time (ALTERNATING) experience for non-credit

## Cooperative Education for Graduate Students

Graduate students can gain valuable on-the-job experiences to enhance their academic training while pursuing a degree program. Participation in the graduate cooperative education program is a privilege extended to those students who demonstrate satisfactory academic ability and progress and majoring in a discipline which allows cooperative education credits.

Cooperative education is an opportunity for students to learn and apply concepts obtained in actual work experiences. Because co-op integrates work with classroom trainings students in non-required programs will not be allowed to enroll for co-op credit in the final semester of study.

Co-op is not required at the graduate level and cannot be substituted for curriculum requirements.

To maintain the integrity of cooperative education, graduate students must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Successfully complete at least one semester of academic study prior to participation in co-op
  - International students qualify after two academic semesters in F-1 status (one semester must be at UDM)
- Have declared major
- Have clearance from the academic discipline to participate
- Meet with co-op coordinator at least one semester before you intend to co-op.
- Be in good academic standing, with a GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Successful completion of the Cooperative Education for Graduate Students seminar
- Meet with a co-op coordinator who will work with students to determine the best course of action
- Secure a full-time or part-time employment offer, related to the field of study, for a full academic term
- Provide co-op coordinator with a letter of offer and description of the job responsibilities
- Work full-time or part-time for a minimum of 12 weeks of the academic term.

### Assignment Limits

- Graduate students are limited to the equivalent of 2 full-time (ALTERNATING) experiences for academic credit
- No more than the equivalent of 1 full-time (ALTERNATING) experience for non-credit

## Second and Subsequent Master's from UDM

The co-op eligibility requirements for second/subsequent Master's are the same. Students earning a second/subsequent Master's degree (from UDM) who have already met the co-op limit in a first Master's (at UDM) are limited to one (1) additional co-op assignment for a maximum of 4 full-time graduate level co-op assignments.

## Post Graduate/Doctoral Students

Cooperative education is **not** a component of post-graduate/doctoral level study. Doctoral level students requesting participation in co-op will only be considered **under exceptional circumstances** on a case by case basis. If approved, the guidelines for graduate level co-op will apply.

International students at the post-graduate/doctoral level should consult with ISO for thesis/dissertation related Curricular Practical Training (CPT) guidelines.

## International Students & Cooperative Education

International students are subject to the same prerequisites as all other UDM students who wish to participate in cooperative education. International students should be aware that many employers may have citizenship requirements that exclude opportunities for international students

International students are required to submit an offer letter on the employer letterhead. The offer letter must include a start and end date and the number of hours.

### Before You Begin Your Job Search

- International students are strongly encouraged to take the English as a Second Language courses offered by the Language and Cultural Studies Program to assist them in
- International students are strongly encouraged to participate in at least one Interviewing Skills Workshop and one Resume Writing Workshop offered by the Career Education Center.

The UDM International Student Office is the official source for guidelines and regulations for international students. More information is available on the ISO website:

[http://www.udmercy.edu/iso/emp\\_f1.php](http://www.udmercy.edu/iso/emp_f1.php).

## Reporting your Co-op Employment

The University of Detroit Mercy Career Education Center is taking a small step to help the environment by Going Green with the cooperative education program.

Students who plan to complete a co-op for academic credit must complete the Report A Hire Section through their TitanCareerLink account. To receive credit for a co-op work term students must do the following:

1. Register with the University for the appropriate co-op work term
2. Provide the Company Name, Address, Contact Phone number and contact email address
  - a. This should include all contact information for the co-op supervisor and Human Resources contact.
  - b. Student will need a Release of Information form on file with the Human Resources Department of the company/organization.
  - c. This form is found in the Resource Library in the Co-op Documents Folder
3. Submit co-op work term learning objectives
4. Complete all co-op work term assignments on the syllabus in Blackboard.

The co-op coordinator will answer questions on how to complete Report A Hire and provide the deadline for submission. For employment offers made prior to the start of the co-op work term semester all employment information and learning objectives must be completed within the first two weeks of the semester.

Notice: Student will submit the end of co-op work term self-evaluation, program evaluation through TitanCareerLink. The semester report and employment tracking form are submitted in Blackboard.

If you need assistance please contact the CEC Career Education Center front office at (313)993-1017 or email [careerlink@udmercy.edu](mailto:careerlink@udmercy.edu)



## Working with or for Family

Co-op students must disclose to the Career Education Center if they are hired by or working with relatives on the co-op work site. Co-op employment within a family owned company is discouraged but not forbidden.

The Co-op work supervisor may not be a close relative, partner or business associate.

For the purpose of this policy, close family includes all relatives such as, but not limited to the following: spouses, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, children, siblings, cousins or other persons who reside in the household. Included in the definition are in-laws, "step" and "half" affiliations.

## Failing a Co-op Work Term

To obtain credit for co-op work experience, students must

- officially register online via TitanCareerLink for each co-op work term;
- submit completed Co-op Learning Objectives
- receive a satisfactory employer evaluation
- submit a satisfactory work term report by the deadline date.

Failure to fulfill any of the above can result in the student receiving a failing grade on the student's transcript and require the completion of an additional co-op work term which will likely delay graduation for students in required co-op programs and incur additional expense.

Students terminated from co-op employment "for cause", i.e. sleeping on the job, will **not** be permitted to replace the earned "F" grade with a "P".

Students, including international students, in non-required co-op programs who fail a co-op work term will not be permitted to register for additional co-op work terms.

If it is determined that the student was unable to complete the cooperative requirements through no fault of their own, the co-op coordinator in consultation with the CEC Dean and/or Assistant Dean will determine the appropriateness of a passing or incomplete grade for the term.

It will be the sole responsibility of the student to initiate any incomplete grade requests. In addition, the student must comply with all other university rules and regulations governing the issuance of incomplete grades.

## Tuition for Cooperative Education 2012-13 (Undergrad and Graduate)

**ALTERNATING (FULL-TIME)**

Full-time work assignments alternating with full-time academic terms (generally 32 to 40 hours during a 15 week semester)

**Tuition**           \$910

**PARALLEL (PART-TIME)**

Part-time work assignments parallel with part or full-time academic terms (generally 20 to 31 hours during a 15 week semester)

**Tuition**           \$510

**UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE CO-OP COURSE SEQUENCES**

**Undergraduate And Graduate Co-op Course Sequences**

College/School	Course & Numbers	Course Credit		Zero Credit
		Full-Time	Part-Time	
Business Administration	ADM 3950, 3960, 3970, 5950, 5960, 5970	2	1	ADM 3980, 5980
Health Professions	HPC 3940, 3950, 3960, 5940, 5950, 5960	3	1.5	HPC 3970, 5970
Liberal Arts/Education	LAC 3910, 3920, 3930, 5910, 5920, 5930	3	1.5	LAC 3940, 5940
Nursing	NUC 3940, 3950, 3960	2	1	NUC 3970
Physician Assistant (5 yr)	HPC 3940	3	1.5	--

**Note: Fall & Winter = Section 01 (Full-time), 02 (1st, 3rd & 5th part-time), Section 03 (2nd, 4th & 6th part-time). Summer = Section 31 (full-time), Section 32 (1st part-time), Section 33 (2nd part-time)**

Assignment Type		
1st Full-time		1st Part-Time
2nd Full-time		2nd Part-Time
3rd Full-time		3rd Part-Time
4th Full-time		4th Part-Time
		5th Part-Time
		6th Part-Time
<b>Required Rotations for:</b>		
5Yr/MBA	ADM	2 FT
Biology/5Yr PA CTA=3FT	HPC	1 FT
Nursing	NUC	1PT & 1 FT

## Co-op Awards and Scholarships

### *CO-OP STUDENT OF THE YEAR AWARD*

The Career Education Center recognizes the value of cooperative education and salutes the accomplishments of students by annually selecting a Cooperative Education Student of the Year. The awardees are generally seniors in required co-op programs who completed at least two co-op assignments with an overall outstanding rating from their co-op employer.

### *DON HUNT SCHOLARSHIP*

The Donald C. Hunt Cooperative Education Scholarship is a \$1200 competitive tuition award to a UDM student from the College of Liberal Arts and Education, College of Business Administration or College of Health Professions.

The goal of the scholarship is to:

1. Increase UDM students' awareness of the need for and benefit of career development and cooperation education
2. Assist students in identifying and/or clarifying their career direction through participation in the co-op program

Scholarship application announcements and criteria are made through the Career Education Center.

## Frequently Asked Questions – Students

### 1. Will the Career Education Center “place” me?

The Career Education Center does not “place” students. The CEC provides opportunities for students to network with employers to secure co-op experience via job postings on our online recruitment database [TitanCareerLink \(www.udmercy.edu/cecc\)](http://www.udmercy.edu/cecc), campus interviews, employer information sessions, sponsored career fairs and announcements about other area career networking events.

### 2. What kind of job will count as co-op?

The co-op assignment job description must detail a work assignment that is related to the student’s academic major/career goals.

### 3. How will I know how to conduct a co-op job search?

The CEC 3000 Course (Preparation for Co-op) provides the basis for students to learn effective job search techniques as well as to understand the value/purpose of cooperative education.

### 4. What’s the difference between a required major and an elective major?

Cooperative education is a “required” component of the in nursing undergraduate programs, 5Yr/MBA and the 5-year physician assistant program curriculums. Students in most other majors can “elect” to participate in cooperative education.

### 5. Are there minimum number of hours that the student is required to work?

To earn full time credit, the student should generally work 32-40 hours per week for a during a 15-week semester. To earn part-time credit, the student should generally work 20-31 hours per week for a during a 15 week semester. For employment that is less than a semester in length the student should consult with their co-op coordinator.

### 6. Can I go on consecutive (back-to-back) assignments?

Full-time (ALTERNATING) co-ops for undergraduate students cannot be consecutive. The only exceptions are transfer students in required programs who need consecutive assignments to catch-up and athletes who need a consecutive rotation to accommodate a verified sports schedule (the athletic department must provide documentation to support the need).

### 7. Can I co-op in the last semester of study?

The ALTERNATING school/work/school cycle is integral to the co-op experience. Therefore, co-op cannot be completed in the final semester of study.

**8. Why am I required to pay tuition for cooperative education?**

Cooperative education is an academic course. The tuition rate for co-op is per assignment (see page 12), not per academic credit. Students earn up to 3 academic credits per assignment. The amount of credits is determined by the school/college.

**9. Why do I need to do coursework, isn't working enough?**

The co-op coursework helps reflect on and assess your personal (working with people, communication, time management, etc.) and professional (using your academic learning in the workplace) skill development.

**10. What is co-op for zero (0) credit?**

The zero credit co-op allows students to gain additional work experience without exceeding the maximum number of allowable credits. The assignment is reflected on the academic transcript. The required coursework MAY be adjusted for zero credit co-ops, however, the co-op tuition remains the same.

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University of Detroit Mercy

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# Employers Guide to Cooperative Education

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2012-13

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## The Co-op Partnership

Each partner in the co-op relationship has certain roles and responsibilities. As a participating employer, you are expected to do the following:

- Provide an orientation and training session for new or returning co-op students
- Assist in the development of learning objectives
- Provide reasonable wages and/or benefits to the student
- Complete a written evaluation of the student's performance
- Each of these items will be covered in more detail in this handbook

The student is responsible for enrolling for co-op credit with the University, locating and interviewing for an appropriate co-op assignment, completing all assignments in a timely manner, and keeping in contact with the Co-op Coordinator assigned to his or her college. As an employee of your company, the student is expected to conform to your employment and personnel policies and perform all assigned job duties to the best of his or her ability.

The staff of the Career Education Center works with employers and students during all phases of the co-op program. We will answer any questions you may have about co-op and assignment policies and procedures, help you locate qualified student candidates, and offer other assistance as needed. We also teach the cooperative education preparation courses, coach students in developing job search skills, maintain contact with students during their assignments, and serve as a resource for co-op and career-related information and advising throughout the year. Since our Co-op Coordinators are assigned by college, employers and students work with the same staff member over a period of time.

Employers must meet the following minimum guidelines to be considered a legitimate co-op work place:

- have an federal employer identification number
- have an established non-residential business address
- have an established business email address associated with the company name and domain site for communication (email accounts with yahoo, msn, gmail, etc. are not acceptable)



## Establishing a Co-op Program

### Develop a Job Description

If your company already has a job description for the position, the student may submit that in lieu of a writing a new one. Develop a job description and work plan for your co-op student before the start date. This has several benefits:

- Allows time for more members of the department to participate in developing the work plan - a wider range of projects may be considered for the student to work on, which helps the student gain a more comprehensive understanding of the way the department or company works.
- Helps you orient the student more quickly so the student can be productive earlier in her/his employment.
- Ensures that the student will be engaged in meaningful work throughout the employment period and feels like an integral part of the team's efforts.

### Create a Work Plan

1. Make sure work is both challenging and appropriate to the student's skill level. While a certain amount of administrative work and routine tasks are appropriate, the majority of the student's time should be spent on work that is related to their major and calls upon the skills for which s/he was hired. Remember that a sophomore student is suited for different tasks than a senior, and plan her/his work accordingly.
2. Be specific about what you want to be accomplished. Target numbers, deadlines, and other specific, measurable objectives will help students understand the scope of the tasks at hand and plan their time wisely. This also allows students to see the measurable contributions they are making to the team.
3. Students want to contribute, but may not know how or where to direct their efforts. Explain office procedures, the work flow of projects, and the larger context in which the student is working; s/he may be able to make contributions in areas outside of the assignment during potential down time. This may be the first professional job this student has held, so do not take for granted that s/he understands all aspects of the daily functioning of a business. Taking the time to explain routine matters will pay off when the student feels comfortable contributing as part of your team.

A STUDENT WHO HAS HAD A SUCCESSFUL CO-OP EXPERIENCE IS MORE LIKELY TO WANT TO RETURN TO YOUR COMPANY FOR ANOTHER CO-OP OR A PERMANENT POSITION. RAISING THE PAY SCALE FOR RETURNING STUDENTS SHOWS THAT YOU VALUE THEIR LOYALTY AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS THEY HAVE MADE IN THE PAST.

### Orienting Your Student Employee

The manner in which you orient your student to the workplace sets the tone for the rest of the work experience.

Before the student's start date, have a work area set up, as well as any necessary computer IDs, passwords and phone extensions. Just as you would for a permanent employee, be sure the rest of the team is aware of the student's start date and the role s/he is expected to play in the company.

Whenever possible, orient the student in the same way you would a permanent employee, including an office tour, explanation of the company history and philosophy, and introductions to your staff.

Provide the student with information about office hours, HR procedures, dress code, attendance policies, parking, lunch and break times, time sheets or punch cards, etc.

It is also helpful to explain the workflow of your company, with the roles and responsibilities of each person, team, or department, and an overall explanation of how your company's business is conducted.

Shortly after the student begins work, s/he will be required to submit a set of learning objectives for the current work term. Co-op supervisors are asked to work with student to ensure that the learning objectives meet the following criteria.

A learning objective:

- should be written in terms of realistic results the student intends to achieve
- should be specific, reasonable, achievable and measurable within the available time limit
- should be specifically related to the co-op work experience (assignments from the supervisor can support the objective)
- may be learning or using a new habit or skill, finding a solution to a problem, or acquiring a new form of job knowledge
- must be beyond the scale of their regular experiences on the job and over and above their routine performance

### **Verification of Assignment**

The Career Education Center will verify the students work role with your company via the Verification of Assignment form. A company designee will receive an email asking for this verification. You will be asked to complete and return the form, including information about the student's salary and work hours. This information is needed in the first two weeks of the student beginning the assignment.

### **During the Co-op Work Assignment**

Once the student has started working, a supervisor or mentor should be available to answer routine questions and provide ongoing feedback about the student's performance. It is recommended that any formal performance reviews be supplemented with less-formal evaluations that allow the student to gauge her/his progress on a regular basis. These informal reviews serve as a valuable checkpoint for students regarding their learning objectives and ensure that communication is maintained even during busy times.

Include the student in regular staff activities as appropriate, such as staff meetings, training and professional development sessions, or other events. The more your team members understand the role the student plays in the workings of the organization, the more effectively the student will be integrated into the workforce. This allows staff members to delegate tasks appropriately and maximize the student's contributions.

Students are expected to complete a number of assignments for the academic credits they earn while working. In addition to the job description and learning objectives, students must contribute in online discussion topics about their assignment and submit a final term paper summarizing their experiences and exploring a career-related topic. Architecture students are required to submit work samples. All students submit an evaluation of the assignment, and employers are asked to complete an evaluation of the student. The Co-op Coordinator working with the student may arrange a site visit during the work term, during which a brief meeting with the student's supervisor may be requested.

### **Supervisor Evaluation of Co-op Student**

The CEC Supervisor Evaluation of Co-op Student asks you for constructive feedback on the student's performance, strengths, weaknesses, etc. It provides the student with important feedback as it relates to

## Recruiting UDM Co-op Students

The Career Education Center (CEC) is staffed with individuals dedicated to servicing the specific schools and colleges. CEC Co-op Coordinators are your link to identifying and recruiting the right students for your opportunity. The best way to recruit UDM students is to contact the coordinator who works with students in the specific majors you would like to recruit. The coordinator can also work with you in establishing the best foundation possible to launch a successful co-op program at your worksite.

### Finding the Right Candidates

The first step in recruiting is defining your employment needs and/or your goals in instituting a co-op program at your site. If you are unsure of how to start defining your needs, please talk the Co-op Coordinators who works with students in the major you are interested in recruiting.

While it is important to remember the students' levels of education and experience, do not underestimate the potential of these students. Our students value meaningful and challenging work assignments. They are eager to learn and contribute to the success of your organization. Our co-op coordinators can share with you examples of job titles, job responsibilities, and the typical salary ranges associated with those positions such that you can create your own job description, if needed.

After you have defined your needs there are a number of ways that you can connect with UDM students.

- Connect with students through our online recruiting database called TitanCareerLink ([www.udmercy.edu/cecc](http://www.udmercy.edu/cecc)). With an employer account, you can post job opportunities (both co-op and permanent opportunities) at no charge, set up interviews and information sessions, as well as access select resumes.
- Connect with students through our career fairs. We host a number of career fairs on campus, including fairs for the entire campus as well as select majors.
- Connect with students by conducting a company information session. Information sessions are sessions where employers give a presentation on the company history, products, services, and career opportunities. Information sessions can also be an informal meeting with students to discuss career opportunities.
- Connect with students by interviewing on campus. We have interview rooms available in the CEC for employers to conduct interviews for both co-op and permanent positions. Campus interviewing is an excellent opportunity when you have several UDM interview candidates. In the fall and winter semesters, you can participate in practice or mock interviews to assist students in sharpening their interviewing skills. Employers volunteer their time and expertise. It is an opportunity to share your expertise and get to know our students.
- Connect with students by facilitating or sponsoring a workshop or event. This is another opportunity to make your presence known on campus.
- Connect with students by volunteering your time as a classroom speaker. Employers have expertise in certain areas, such as interviewing or portfolio development. Speaking to classes is a way to stay connected with students even when employment opportunities may not be available.

## Employer Role in UDM Cooperative Education

(Please see the Section 1—Guide to Cooperative Education for full description)

Career Education Center documentation

1. Verify the students co-op by completing and returning the Employer Verification of Co-op Assignment form to the Career Education Center
2. Complete and return the CEC Evaluation of Student's Co-op Experience
3. Supervisors are encouraged to discuss the evaluation with student prior to submission

Working with student

1. Provide job description and reasonable wages and/or benefits to the student
2. Provide an orientation and training session for new or returning co-op students
3. Assist the student in the development of learning objectives
4. Provide reasonable level of supervision to student
5. Provide meaningful work experiences related to the students field of study

## Hiring Timeline Example

If you want the student to begin her/his first co-op assignment in

Summer

1. Identify co-op candidates during the Fall Career Expo
2. Pre-screen your candidates by participating in Fall term Campus Interviewing program in the Career Education Center
3. Invite selected candidates to your place of employment for the next round of interviews
4. Make offer by spring
5. Start date is generally the first Monday of May

The CEC staff is available year-round to assist your recruitment needs.

## Frequently Asked Questions - Employers

### **Am I expected to hire the student permanently upon graduation?**

You are not required to offer the student permanent employment upon graduation. However, if a position is available for which the student qualifies and the student is the proper fit for the organization, we would hope that the student is considered for the position.

### **Can I terminate a student during co-op?**

The student is your employee. Yes, you can terminate a student if the situation warrants termination. However, we ask that you communicate your concerns with the co-op coordinator, so that all parties understand what is occurring in that situation.

### **Are there a minimum number of hours that the student is required to work?**

To earn full time credit, the student should generally work 32-40 hours per week during a 15 week semester. To earn part-time credit, the student should generally work 20 to 31 hours per week for a during a 15 week semester.

### **Can I hire students outside of the co-op program?**

Students may be employed as regular, part-time or interning employees. However, to receive academic credit, the student must be registered in the UDM co-op program.

### **Can a student's position be eliminated due to economic reasons?**

Yes. However, we ask that you communicate your concerns with the co-op coordinator, so that all parties understand what is occurring in that particular situation.

### **My company uses their own performance evaluations. Can I submit that instead of the UDM Supervisor evaluation form?**

You may evaluate their performance using your company evaluation process. However, in order to maintain consistency in the data we collect, we ask that you also complete and submit the Supervisor Evaluation form.

**Why do I have to verify the student's employment?**

Students proactively seek out and secure co-op employment. We need to verify that the student is indeed working in a valid assignment. We also collect data from the verification form, such as job title and salary information. This information allows us to provide better service to both employers and students. The verification form also informs us of who will directly supervise and evaluate the student's performance.

**What are learning objectives?**

Learning objectives are measurable goals or objectives to be accomplished during work session. The student and supervisor should work together in developing learning objectives.

**Can I hire an international student?**

International students can participate in cooperative education provided they have been in F-1 student visa status for the required amount of time. Co-op Coordinators can assist you to determine the student's eligibility.

To post employment opportunities for UDM students or to request an on-campus interview please visit the CEC website at <http://www.udmercy.edu/cec>

## Career Education Center Staff

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