

Cooperative Education

Cooperative (Co-op) Education is a program which allows students to gain work experience associated with their fields of study. This plan integrates classroom study with employment and is based on the principle that learning does not confine itself to academic achievement but is equally dependent upon practical experience. Students are placed in industrial, business, educational and governmental positions where they have the opportunity for real-world work experiences.

In addition to work experience gained by the student, the co-op program has a distinct advantage for participating companies. Employers are given the opportunity of having first chance at hiring some of the most knowledgeable and aggressive students which attend specific programs of study. Past experience has shown that these students are very loyal to companies that hire them providing them with an income as they continue their education. In addition, the students are usually hired on a part-time basis and do not incur the cost of hiring full-time employees.

There are two avenues for the student to select from as they enter the co-op education program. Both options have a one (1) credit hour limit per semester with a maximum of three (3) credit hours in two years. They also require employer involvement through employer appraisal sheets submitted at the end of each semester.

The co-op elective option requires a minimum of 20 clock hours per week in the co-op work environment. The co-op substitution option allows the student to substitute real-world work experiences in their field of study for the required lab classes in their selected program. The student must attend the theory classes and is responsible for all the content material within the lab they are substituting.

For more information, contact the Instructional Dean's Office at 256.331.5217.