Alfred University
McComsey Career Development Center Experiential Education Program

COORDERATIVE EDUCATION EMPLOYER GUIDELINES

A cooperative education program consists of alternating periods of attendance at school and work-in-practice. Colleges and universities with cooperative education (co-op) programs recognize that employment, in fields related to academic curricula, is a vital part of education. For this reason, academic credit for work experience is granted.

In general, a sponsoring organization agrees to employ one student or more in paraprofessional technical positions in which the work experience has educational value. Students in Alfred University's co-op program spend a minimum of one semester at an approved work site. The fall semester work period typically begins in late May and extends to the end of December. The spring semester work period begins in January and usually runs until the end of August. While it is preferred that the co-op work assignment include the summer months, employment during the summer is the employer's option since many companies have a separate summer internship program.

Administration & Process

University – Employer Agreement
First, a work agreement must be completed between the university and the sponsoring organization. This agreement includes the work/study pattern to be used, the location(s) and work activity within the organization, supervision of the student while on assignment, reporting system to be used, etc. In addition, a written description of the co-op position to be filled is required to be on file with the Career Development Center each time a student co-ops with an organization.

Application
Only students in good academic standing may apply to the program. Interested candidates must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.7/4.0. Candidates with less than a 2.7 cumulative GPA must obtain approval from the Internship/Co-op Coordinator of the Career Development Center or their faculty advisors, prior to applying. Applications will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Recruiting, Interviewing, and Selection of Students
Selection procedures vary depending on a variety of factors. The availability of co-op opportunities will be advertised within the School of Engineering. Employers will receive a resume book twice per year (September and February). Once the Career Development Center has a completed employer agreement and job description on file, a company is invited to schedule a recruiting visit. If the company schedules a recruiting visit, campus interviews may be conducted in the McComsey Career Development Center. Companies interested in on-campus recruiting should contact Mariann Walsh, Recruiting Coordinator, by phone at (607) 871-2164 or Jill R. Crandall, Assistant Director of Experiential Education, by phone at (607) 871-2164.

Since it is not feasible for all employers to interview at Alfred University, some companies prefer to conduct telephone interviews and/or invite candidates to interview at the work site. In all cases, the decision regarding selection of a co-op student for an offer of employment is the responsibility of the company.

Occasionally, students are able to independently arrange their own co-op work assignments; however, before a commitment for academic credit can be obtained, the work assignment MUST BE
APPROVED through the Career Development Center. Any student contemplating an independent co-op job search must schedule a meeting with the Assistant Director at the Career Development Center.

Compensation and Arrangements
The hiring company establishes compensation for co-op employment according to its own pay scale. The employing organization is not obligated to find or establish room and board for the student, although assistance in arranging suitable lodging is welcomed. If the work site is at some distance from the campus, the employer may provide a travel allowance.

In addition, students are expected to sign standard agreements for the protection of employers’ proprietary information. The student should understand that there is no implied offer of permanent employment involved as a result of participation in the co-op program.

Cooperative Education Survey:
The students who participate in co-ops fill out a cooperative education survey in order to gather information which will assist new companies in developing their co-op programs. The following information was gathered from 9 students.

Salary Range:
- 8/hr-10/hr: 0 students (0%)
- 11/hr-13/hr: 0 students (0%)
- 14/hr-16/hr: 3 students (33%)
- 17/hr-20/hr: 3 students (33%)
- 21+/hr: 3 students (33%)

Housing:
- Found on own: 6 students (66%)
- Lived at home: 0 students (0%)
- Company provided: 0 students (0%)
- Company offered some assistance: 3 students (33%)

Benefits/Compensation received:
- Workers Compensation when injured finger
- All travel expenses paid for
- Paid dinners (sometimes)
- Interview expenses paid for
- $300 stipend for moving/living costs
- 401k
- $1500 for moving expenses
- RPI-ID card
  - Access to gym, free bus fare, access to library
- Paid sick leave, paid vacation days, holiday pay

According to NACE’s 2011 Internship and Co-op Survey, the average compensation for co-op students is rather similar to the average compensation for interns. The average wage rate for a co-op student at the bachelor’s level is $16.46, and $23.65 for someone at the master’s level.
The most common benefits provided to interns and co-op students in recent years have been planned social activities, paid holidays, and recognition for work service time. In the upcoming year, roughly 50% of employers reported that they will provide some sort of relocation assistance to co-ops, usually through a housing stipend or moving allowance. $1,500 seems to be the amount that has been deemed appropriate by employers in the last few years to provide interns and co-ops with the funds they need to relocate.

**Learning Contract, Reports, and Supervision**

Although students will be participating in a school-related program, hiring organizations are encouraged to have students’ complete technical agreements and/or employee conduct agreements. These arrangements are between the student and hiring organization; therefore, the Career Development Center does not need a copy of any proprietary or conduct “contract.”

Once a student has accepted an offer, your organization is required to contact the Career Development Center. In addition, the employing organization may require periodic written and oral reports from the student as would normally be expected from an employee working on an engineering or computer science project. It is possible in certain instances for a student to carry out undergraduate thesis work while on co-op assignment. Approvals for such an arrangement must be obtained from both the university and the employing organization prior to beginning the work assignment.

The company will provide a supervisor who will work with the student. Approximately midway through and at the end of the work period, the Assistant Director will request an evaluation of the student’s performance from the work-site supervisor. The site supervisor is required to review these evaluations with the student and return them to the Career Development Center.

At the end of the work period, students will complete a Co-op Experience Evaluation form and submit a written report describing their work assignment(s) while on co-op (omitting proprietary information). The student is also required to request a letter of recommendation from their direct supervisor. These materials are submitted to the Assistant Director at the Career Development Center.

**Credit, Tuition, and Enrollment Status**

During semesters away from campus on co-op assignment, the student will be registered at Alfred University for three (3) credit hours and will be billed at the current $/credit-hour tuition rate.

Upon completion of all report requirements, the student will receive a pass-fail grade, for credit, in co-op (COOP 385). Most students prefer to apply these credits towards fulfilling their technical electives; however, the student should discuss this option with his/her academic advisor.
Benefits to Employers

AU Students...

- Are highly motivated, technical employees who provide high level work
- Let a company view potential employees without long-term commitments
- Free up other employees to work on other projects
- Re-energize current workers and provide innovative ideas
- Ensure a favorable reputation for your company, allowing you to recruit students in the future

are Dedicated, ambitious, driven students that want to work for your company

Program Coordination

Any questions or suggestions in regard to the program should be directed to:

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