



Cooperative education is the integration of academic studies with practical work experience. In addition to putting classroom learning to work in a job-related experience, cooperative education (co-op) allows students to test career choices and to earn money to apply toward the cost of their college education.

All co-op students are required to have completed their freshman year, have declared a major, and have a 2.50 minimum grade point average. A faculty member and a practicing professional at the placement site provide supervision. In a learning contract the student, faculty supervisor, and work supervisor design a learning plan with objectives, strategies (including reading and writing assignments), and progress assessment. All work assignments are directly related to the student's chosen field of study, challenging to the student and increasing in complexity as the student progresses in school and at work.

A student can earn one semester credit hour per 50 hours of work at the work site. A maximum of 12 hours of credit can be awarded cooperative education as either major or minor elective credit. Grades are recorded on a Pass or Fail basis.

Three calendar options are available:

1. *Alternating Placement*: students work full-time for at least two, and preferably three, four-month periods before graduating, alternating with their on-campus courses.
2. *Parallel Placement*: students work 20-25 hours per week for at least four four-month periods while enrolled in a limited number of courses on campus.
3. *Year-long Placement*: students who will complete the equivalent of three four-month periods and must plan to complete their undergraduate degree in five years.

Additional information and the necessary forms are available in the Career Development Office. The forms must be completed by the first week of the semester in which the co-op placement is undertaken. After all paper work is completed, the student must register for the co-op in the Office of Registration and Records.