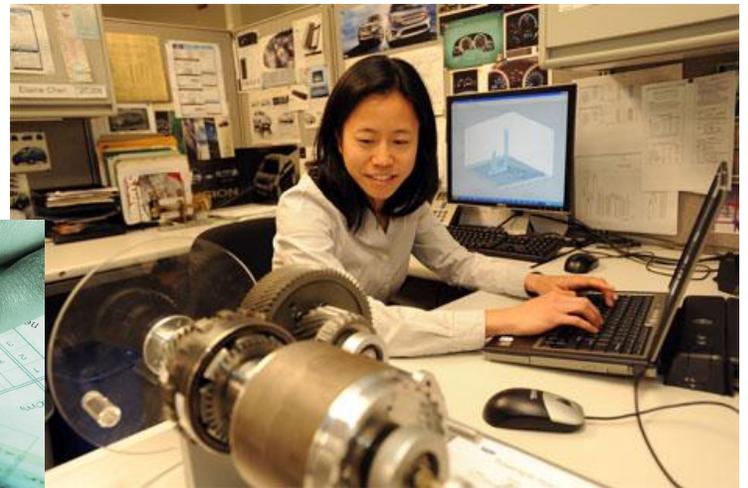


UAHuntsville Office of Career Development

**Student Guidelines
Cooperative Education
and
Internship Program**



111 Madison Hall

256-824-6741 * <http://ssc.uah.edu/ssc/careers>

UAHuntsville Career Development Office

Co-op/Intern Policies and Procedures

I. Definitions

Cooperative Education (more commonly referred to as Co-op) is a program designed to integrate degree related, real-world experience with classroom studies. Co-ops work multiple semesters with the same employer and are paid employees. Employers may or may not offer additional benefits.

Students in the College of Engineering are encouraged to work a minimum of 12 months, including a fall or spring term and a summer term with the same employer. Exceptions must be approved by the Career Education office.

Students in all other colleges are required to work a minimum of 6 months, including a fall or spring term, with a single employer. Exceptions must be approved by the Career Development Office.

The Co-op program intentionally provides balance of work and school. There are two basic models. The Alternating Program allows students to work full time a semester and then go to school full time the following. Students rotate work and school terms until the requirements are met. The Parallel Program allows students to work part time and go to school part time consecutive semesters. It is never recommended that a student work full time and go to school full time simultaneously.

The Career Development Office typically works with students to identify **Not-for-Credit internships**. If students are required to participate in a For-Credit internship, they should coordinator with their advisor to begin the process.

Internships usually last only one work term. They *could* extend for more than one term back-to-back (for example, spring into summer), but it is still a single assignment with very little, if any, coursework integrated. Unlike Cooperative Education, not all internships are paid. Remember that although you may not be paid monetarily, the experience you receive is extremely valuable! Students may have multiple internships during the time they are in school. The requirements to participate in an internship are the same as those required to participate in co-op.

Charger Path is the Career Development Office's online comprehensive career management system. All currently enrolled students are automatically enrolled in Charger Path during their first semester of classes. Charger Path is one resource available to students to assist in their job search.

II. Requirements for Participation

In order to participate in experiential programs offered by the Career Development Office students must:

1. Be currently enrolled in a degree seeking program.
2. Complete their profile in Charger Path to include an uploaded, approved resume.
3. Maintain minimum 2.5 GPA. Graduate students must maintain a “B” average.
NOTE: Employers may have different GPA requirements. Students must meet the employer’s minimum requirements to be considered for a co-op or internship.
4. Complete the Experiential Programs checklist.

Upon receipt of a co-op or internship offer, students must:

1. Sign the Statement of Understanding.
 - a. Students receiving financial aid must also have the Statement of Understanding signed by a representative from the Financial Aid office.
2. Register for the appropriate section in Banner.
3. Pay the associated processing fees:
 - a. \$80/work term for Alternating Co-op
 - b. \$40/work term for Parallel Co-op and Not-for-Credit Internships
4. Complete beginning of term and end of term forms in Charger Path.

III. Policies and Procedures

*Work/School Commitment

Undergraduate Students

Alternating Co-op

Work Term: Work full time. If enrolled in classes, suggested maximum enrollment of 3 credit hours during the work term.

School Term: Enroll full time during Fall and Spring with a 6 hour minimum in the Summer.

Parallel Co-op

Work Term: Work suggested maximum of 20 hours and enroll in a minimum of 6 credit hours with a maximum enrollment of 9 credit hours.

Graduate Students

Alternating Co-op

Work Term: Work full time. If enrolled in classes, suggested maximum enrollment of 6 credit hours during the work term.

School Term: Enroll full time per graduate requirements.

Parallel Co-op

Work Term: Work suggested maximum of 20 hours and enroll in a minimum of 6 credit hours with a maximum of 9 credit hours.

***NOTE: If you receive financial aid or scholarships, please refer to the guidelines set forth by Student Financial Services on page 6.**

Transfer Students

There are no minimum institutional credit requirements for transfer students before being able to participate in a co-op or internship.

If a student is currently participating in a co-op at the time of transfer to UAHuntsville, we ask that the student notify the Career Development Office and fill out a Statement of Understanding and register their co-op on Banner.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are encouraged to speak with Disability Services prior to beginning their co-op or internships in order to discuss any necessary accommodations necessary to perform their job. Disability Services can advise students on appropriate ways to disclose information regarding their disability to their co-op or internship supervisor should they choose to do so.

International Students

International students with an F or J student visa must meet the requirements set forth by the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO):

- Attend an off-campus employment workshop offered by the International Student and Scholar Office before seeking an internship or co-op.
- Students must enroll in and complete one academic year of full-time study before being eligible for CPT, as required by immigration law.
- Students must have CPT, OPT, or J1 Academic Training work permission to begin working off-campus.
- Complete the Experiential Programs Checklist (available in the Career Development Office).
- When offered a co-op position, students must submit a copy of their offer letter to the Career Development Office. If the position meets the criteria of cooperative education, the Career Development Office will then issue a Co-op authorization statement to the ISSO.
- Do not begin working off-campus until you receive confirmation you have been authorized for employment and you have picked up evidence of your work authorization from the University Center 116.

Lay-offs or Terminations from Co-op or Internship Assignment

Students who experience a lay-off due to economic reasons, corporate downsizing or reconstruction should immediately notify the Career Development Office. Students who are terminated or laid off due to reasons beyond their control will not be penalized.

Students who are dismissed from their co-op or internship due to inappropriate behavior or violation of company's policies and procedures or students who resign their position prior to the Career Development Office's approval will either 1) be moved to probationary status or 2) be terminated from the program based on the severity of the infraction.

It is the student's responsibility to notify the Career Development Office of any changes in their status of employment.

Failure to Follow Policies and Procedures

Failure to observe the Career Development Office's policies and procedures or termination from a co-op or internship based upon inappropriate behavior, failure to follow company policies and procedures and/or repeated workplace violations will result in consequences such as receiving a Warning issued by the Career Development Office and/or ineligibility to participate in experiential learning programs.

If a student receives a Warning from the Career Development Office, relevant terms and conditions will be decided at a meeting which will be attended by the student, the student's Career Coordinator, and the Career Programs Manager.

Additionally, the Career Development Office may place a block on a student's Charger Path account should the student not adhere to the Career Development Office's policies and procedures. If a student's account is blocked on Charger Path, it is the student's responsibility to contact his/her Career Coordinator to resolve the issue in a timely manner.

The Career Development Office reserves the right to remove a co-op or intern student from any/all experiential learning programs.

Coordinating Co-op and Financial Aid / Scholarships at UAH: What you need to know

If you are receiving scholarships or other financial aid (grants, loans, etc.) at UAH and choose to enter the Cooperative Education program, it is important to contact the Office of Student Financial Services so that your funds may be administered accurately according to your alternation schedule. It is the student's responsibility to ensure financial aid and scholarships are properly scheduled for disbursement.

Upon entering the program you must notify the Office of Student Financial Services (212 University Center) of your status as a co-op student with a copy of your alternation schedule. **It is also important to contact this office as soon as possible when changes occur in your schedule, or when faced with questions or difficulties regarding the maintenance of your funding eligibility. Failure to do so may result in delay or loss of funds.**

- Student loan payments may be deferred during co-op work terms by completion of an In-School Deferment Request Form. You may receive a loan, if eligible, during any term in which you are enrolled in classes for a minimum of 6 hours.
- Alternating co-op: Scholarships will be disbursed only during co-op study terms, during which you must be enrolled as a full-time student (12 hours - undergraduate, 9 hours - graduate). Co-op work terms are not considered full-time for disbursement purposes.

Upon request, a student enrolled in a co-op summer study term may enroll at less than full-time status without forfeiting scholarships if courses needed are not available. Any applicable scholarships will be prorated proportionately according to the number of hours enrolled. One term of scholarship award will be charged for any prorated summer study term. Any unused balance from that term is forfeited. Students who elect to enroll at less than full-time status during a summer study term and do not request to receive prorated scholarship funding will not receive scholarship funding during this term.

- Parallel co-op: Scholarships will be divided equally between the three terms (fall, spring, summer). You must enroll in classes for a minimum of 9 hours each fall and spring term and 6 hours in the summer semester. *Can request regular disbursement if taking 12 hours each term.*
- Scholarship recipients must complete 24 credit hours per academic year and maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA to maintain eligibility for scholarship renewals. (An exception is an approved, pro-rated summer study term).

Please contact the UAH Office of Student Financial Services with any additional questions.
212 University Center, phone: 256-824-2761, e-mail: financialaid@email.uah.edu

Please acknowledge receipt of your Co-op and Internship Student Guidelines. If you have any questions about the program requirements or if our office can assist you in any way, please let us know.

Student Signature

Date

Printed Name