

Cooperative Education
SUPERVISOR'S HANDBOOK

Southampton College

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What is Co-op?

Co-op is an academic program that integrates classroom study with career-related professional training. Co-op allows students to gain practical, paid work experience while earning academic credit towards a degree. Since it's considered part of the students' academic studies, Co-op differs dramatically from casual employment. This is because there are **three partners in Co-op: *The Student, The College, The Employer.***

- ***The Student*** uses Co-op as a valid learning strategy to apply classroom theory in a real world setting.
- ***The College*** prepares the student to act professionally, to set reasonable learning objectives, and awards credit for the work experience.
- ***The Employer*** provides meaningful employment, including orientation, supervision and training, and evaluates the student's on-the-job performance.

This three-member strategy creates a win-win situation for all of its partners!

"This Co-op has opened my eyes to a whole range of new career options. It makes me realize that there is so much out there yet to learn. In a way, I am still confused and uncertain about my future career goals, but now I am faced with a whole new menu to choose from, and I realize that I don't have to make a choice right away. All in all, this experience has been one of learning and growing for me. I'm glad I didn't let it pass by."

Benefits of Co-op to Supervisor:

- Co-op provides an excellent source of highly motivated, appropriately educated, career-oriented employees.
- Co-op students energize the workplace with enthusiasm and new ideas.
- Co-op provides alternative solutions to seasonal or special project work needs.
- Co-op is an effective vehicle for covering short-term staffing needs.
- Co-op can be a cost & time-effective method of identifying potential permanent employees through direct observation of performance.
- Co-op releases professional employees from basic tasks, freeing them to pursue more complex activities.
- Co-op students returning to Campus are ambassadors of goodwill for your organization.
- Co-op builds a student's self esteem and creates a productive workforce for the future.

"Thanks for the opportunity to get one of your very promising people, and we look forward to meeting next year's prospective Co-op students."

Co-op - An Overview:

Southampton's Co-op Program began in 1979 and is available in every academic major:

Marketing • Accounting • Education • Biology • History • Fine Arts • Graphic Design • Pre-Law • Sociology • English/Writing • Marine Science • Psychobiology • Political Science • Communication Arts • Psychology • Environmental Studies • Environmental Science

- Students may do Co-op on a **full-time or part-time** basis during any academic semester, including Summer and our 5-week Wintersession.
- Students are eligible for Co-op if they are in good academic standing (2.0 g.p.a. with a 2.25 major g.p.a.) after completion of one full-time semester of study at LIU/Southampton.
- Students must successfully complete our pre-placement workshop series which covers topics such as resume-writing, interviewing, success on the job, dealing with conflict, and ethics in the workplace. They must also get the approval of their academic advisor **before being placed**. This system helps to ensure a successful placement.
- Once on the job, students must conform to all workplace regulations and standards of professionalism, company policies and schedules.

How does Co-op work?

Credits are awarded based on the number of hours worked (students are expected to work a minimum of 12 weeks in a semester, except during Wintersession, when they work for 5 weeks).

10 hours/week:	1 credit min.	120 hours
11 - 14 hours/week:	2 credits min.	132 hours
15 - 19 hours/week:	3 credits min.	180 hours
20 - 24 hours/week:	4 credits min.	240 hours
25 - 29 hours/week:	5 credits min.	300 hours
30 - 40 hours/week:	6 credits min.	360 hours

(Wintersession is full-time for 1-2 credits. A full-time Co-op during summer session may be taken for 3 or 6 credits); this credit-for-work policy is different than for class attendance which is calculated at 1 credit for each hour per week spent in the classroom.

Most students do more than one Co-op. They may earn as many as 18 Co-op credits - which count as electives - towards their 128-credit degree requirement. Co-op is graded on a Pass/Fail basis, based on a successful evaluation by the on-site supervisor, **completion of full term of employment**, and completion of a final paper which is graded by a faculty sponsor.

Tips on Interviewing Co-op Students:

If you are in a position of having to select a Co-op employee, you will probably make this decision by holding personal interviews. For students, this may be the first time they have had an in-person interview. By making students comfortable, and encouraging them to do the talking, you will put them at ease and get the information you need to make a good decision. If you query the students about how they'd handle typical situations, you'll get a pretty good feeling about how they'll fit in. Here are some quick tips:

- Encourage students to talk about their expectations for this Co-op - what they hope to be doing, and what they hope to learn.
- Describe the 'culture' of your workplace: formal vs. informal, working hours, safety/security issues, dress code. Ask the student to tell you how s/he feels about the work environment you've described;

- To predict how well the student will perform, ask specific questions addressing: techniques used in problem solving; ability to relate to others; level of motivation.

- Eliminate distractions and interruptions during the interview. A concentrated fifteen minutes will yield more useful information than a half hour punctuated by phone calls and other distractions.

Preparation and First Meeting:

The most effective preparation for working with a Co-op student is for you to think through what you want your student to accomplish, how s/he will do so, and how you will insure that the appropriate tools are available. Here are some practical hints that will help make the Co-op experience a positive one:

- Prepare permanent staff for the Co-op student. Explain the purpose of the placement and job description, how the student might be of help, and how s/he will be an asset.
- Develop a written job description and, if resources allow, prepare a workspace in advance for the arrival of your student.
- Set aside some uninterrupted time - early on - to explain your department's function, how it relates to the company as a whole and where the student's job fits in.
- Describe, specifically, your expectations, your performance standards and how you will evaluate that performance. (This is also a good time to discuss the student's expectations and learning objectives).
- Personally introduce your Co-op student to all of the people s/he will be working with.
- Explain all of the "housekeeping" details: work hours, payroll procedures, handling absence due to illness, telephone usage, dress code, lunch coverage, parking, rest room location, coffee system. If your workplace is large, or if there are off-limits or sensitive areas, try to arrange a tour.

Maximizing the Co-op Experience:

We have found that the most successful supervisors share certain styles and behaviors which we have listed below. We encourage you to give us your feedback if there are techniques you have found helpful which are not discussed here.

- They are clear and specific about their expectations and give the student plenty of feedback on how they are measuring up to standards - early and often. This can be best accomplished with periodic, regularly scheduled meetings.
- They encourage students to ask questions and explore options about new ways of doing things. If certain procedures are sacrosanct, they explain why. Supervisors who take the time to do this, and who are flexible about job descriptions, get better results than those who simply require compliance.
- If you remember back to when you were starting out and think about what you would have wished for in a boss, you probably will have the blueprint for perfection as a Co-op supervisor.
- One more thing: call us, call us, call us if you have any questions or concerns, so we can work on them together before they become problems. Co-op is a three-way partnership among the student, school and employer that works best with open lines of communication.

- For our part, we will keep in touch with you before, during and at the end of a placement. We will try to make at least one site visit each semester. This visit will be by appointment at your convenience and usually lasts no more than half an hour.

Tips for Getting the Most From Your Co-op Student:

- Help your Co-op student to see the significance and relevance of his/her work, and how it fits into the 'big picture.'
- Provide options; wherever possible, let students make their own decisions.
- Encourage students to set their own goals for learning. Personal goal-setting enhances commitment to goal achievement.
- Give students as much responsibility and autonomy as you can.
- Criticize behavior - not the person. Negative feedback should never focus on the performer as an individual.
- Encourage and prod your Co-op student to make connections and look for new explanations. This will help to foster self-confidence.
- At least once per semester - if not every day - tell your Co-op student what you'd like to see more of, less of, and what should remain the same.
- Keep your sense of humor.

"The quality of Mike's work as a Co-op student has matched or surpassed what would be expected of a full-time staff member."

Save-The Bay

What Other Employers Say:

"Without question, Colin is the finest studio assistant with whom I have worked. He has the discipline, focus and intelligence to be successful in many fields. I am hoping he will consider working with me again." Steve Miller, Artist

"Cathy's patience, genuine interest in each child and creativity enabled her to share and provide an excellent experience for our children. Thank you for providing such a wonderful student to be part of our center this summer!" Claudine Franzson, East Hampton Day Care

"Darlene has fulfilled our expectations and has proven herself to be a valuable member of our team. We are very impressed with her motivation, attitude and willingness to extend herself." Janet Marlow-Stern, AHRC

"Kristen was one of the best technicians I have had during the last seven years. This evaluation is made even stronger by the fact that, in general, I am comparing her to Bachelor's and Master's level biologists."

I would hire her again, and would recommend her without hesitation for a similar position elsewhere."
Gregory DeBrosse, Cape Shore Laboratory

"Christine was a joy to have around. She is a very fast learner. She is meticulous, careful and thoughtful. Her upbeat attitude in a perpetually tense deadline atmosphere helped a lot. I can't say enough good things about her. She will go far in life". Timothy McDarrah, Dan's Papers

Grading Policy:

Co-op students receive academic credit from Long Island University for each work experience. A major part of the student's grade is based on two performance evaluations by the direct supervisor.

- **Preliminary Evaluation:** We ask that this short form be completed early into the student's work experience, usually within a month of starting to ensure that all is progressing as expected. This presents an early opportunity for you to "touch base" with your Co-op student and reassess your mutual expectations. (See Sample Forms, pg. 16)
- **Final Evaluation:** This brief evaluation of the student's overall job performance summarizes duties, growth and abilities. (See Sample Forms, pg. 16)

All Co-op students receive a Pass/Fail grade for their work experiences. In addition to your evaluations, students are required to complete a final paper which synthesizes the experience and assesses personal growth and achievement of learning objectives. ***Students must complete a minimum of 12 weeks of work in order to get credit for this Coop.*** Faculty Sponsors, who award the final grade, may also assign additional projects such as journals, outside reading, or portfolios to their Co-op students.

Co-op Facts and Figures:

- Since the inception of the program in 1979, over 3000 Southampton students have held Co-op jobs.
- 80% of all Southampton Co-op students receive offers of continuing or permanent employment from their Co-op employers.
- In 2002-03, Southampton Co-op students earned over \$275,000 with an average hourly salary of \$7.85.
- Southampton Co-op students have worked in 33 states and 18 foreign countries.
- Nationwide, approximately 900 colleges and universities offer some form of Cooperative Education serving approximately 250,000 students.

"Without question, he exceeded our expectations for summer interns and demonstrated the kind of skills, comprehension, adaptability, confidence, energy, patience, and hard work ethic necessary for succeeding in the environmental field at the local government level. My only regret is the brevity of his employment here, as he was certainly a highly valued asset to this department."
Town of Southampton Planning Department.

Final Paper Guidelines:

The following information should be included in each student's report, which is expected to be a minimum of five typewritten pages in length.

Title Page: Name Semester/Year of Co-op, Employer, Date

Part One:

A. Job Title

First week challenges...please comment on first week adjustments regarding assignments, schedule, supervisor, co-workers and any advise you would have for new co-op students in surviving the first week jitters and expectations.

B. Job Description: Summarize the work experience, including:

- A description of specific responsibilities
- A typical day
- The work environment (people, places, things)
- Background of the organization

C. Learning Objectives:

- List your objectives and indicate whether you were able to meet your objectives and if not, why
- What proof do you have that your objectives were met? (criteria, measurement, levels of achievement)
- What new goals might you now set as a result of this experience?

D. Personal Growth:

- What insights have you gained? How were your expectations clarified or modified over the course of the semester?
- How has this placement affected your goals? (academic, personal and career)

Part Two: Synthesis, Analysis of Experience:

- **Compare/Contrast** methods, procedures used at your workplace to standards in the field, or to those used in the classroom, lab or texts.
- **Explain** how certain tasks, procedures, methods could be applied to the field in general or to another setting.
- **Identify** what new skills you have gained from this experience, and explain how these skills can be used either in the classroom, or how they might be applied to another setting.

Part Three: Self-Evaluation: Use the form provided to complete this part of your evaluation. Submit it attached to the front of your paper.

All papers and other assignments should be submitted to the Co-op Office the final week of classes of that semester. (Any extensions must be requested from the student's Faculty Sponsor). Papers should be submitted before the end of the semester to avoid an INC. grade on your transcript. We will keep a copy on file, and we'll send a copy to the Faculty Sponsor for grading. We will also keep a copy of your paper for prospective Co-op students to read.

Please email your papers to coop@southampton.liu.edu and make three copies of your final paper and mail or bring it to the Co-op office.*

SOUTHAMPTON COLLEGE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM ABNEY PEAK

(631) 287-8273 fax (631) 287-8272

www.southampton.liu.edu/coop



* Faculty Sponsor:
Please make copy for
student

LEARNING AGREEMENT

THE LEARNING AGREEMENT IS A TOOL TO HELP YOU CONNECT YOUR CLASSROOM WORK WITH THE EXPERIENCES YOU WILL HAVE IN THE WORKPLACE. THIS WILL MAXIMIZE THE BENEFITS OF CO-OP AND ENHANCE YOUR FUTURE ACADEMIC WORK. PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM WITH YOUR FACULTY SPONSOR AND RETURN TO THE CO-OP OFFICE BEFORE STARTING YOUR CO-OP. DEADLINE FOR FINAL PAPER IS THE LAST WEEK OF CLASSES (SUBMIT 3 COPIES OF FINAL PAPER TO CO-OP OFFICE

STUDENT NAME _____ CO-OP TERM _____
EMPLOYER _____ FACULTY SPONSOR _____
STUDENT MAJOR _____ CO-OP COORDINATOR _____
ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS _____
(JOURNAL, RESEARCH, OUTSIDE READING, PORTFOLIO PIECES)

I. SKILLS ACQUISITION

A. Name two skills you hope to acquire or improve on the job (e.g. communication skills computer skills; flora/fauna identification; sales/marketing skills; writing, research or training skills; mastery of an artistic technique).

1. _____
2. _____

B. List two procedures you hope to learn or improve upon (Examples: processing stock purchases; social service referral counseling; editing/layout of newspaper/magazine articles; lab testing methods; protocol for handling sick/wild animals; teaching techniques; gallery operations; specific computer software; preparing tax returns).

1. _____
2. _____

C. Based on what you know about your Co-op placement, how do you think you will learn the above skills and procedures?

II. LEARNING TO USE THE "TOOLS OF YOUR TRADE"

A. List two items of equipment that you want to learn to use (Examples: office equipment; art/ photography equipment; water testing equipment; centrifuge; small/ large boats; other technical equipment;).

1. _____ 2. _____

III. APPLYING CLASSROOM THEORY OR METHODS TO THE WORKPLACE

Name one concept learned in your studies that you want to "see in action" on the job.

IV. BECOMING A TEAM PLAYER: INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

A. Name three personal attributes you think are most valued by employers.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

B. Name three personal attributes that you would like to develop.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

C. How might you go about developing these attributes?

IV. PRESENT AND FUTURE GOALS

A. Do you know what you want to do after graduation? Yes _____ No _____

B. If yes, how will this Co-op help you reach that goal? If no, how do you think this Co-op will help you decide?

FACULTY SPONSOR'S SIGNATURE

DATE

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

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Verification of Meeting Between Co-op Supervisor and Co-op Student

(this meeting is further described on page 6)

(please return this form to the Co-op Office by the end of the first week of Co-op employment)

Supervisor's Name _____

Salary: _____ Date of Meeting _____

Was student apprised of: ___ company policies ___ standards
of behavior

check all that apply) ___ schedule of working hours
 ___ performance standards
 ___ supervisor's expectations ___ job

description ___ other (please

annotate _____

Did student: ___ apprise you of his/her expectations
(check all that apply) ___ review learning agreement/objectives with you
 ___ give you Supervisor's Handbook

Comments: _____

essential to maintaining the quality of our program. Please feel free to call us at: (631) 287-8273
or fax us at (631) 287-8287 if you have any additional comments.

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