

Co-operative Education & Student Employment

Administration

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The Co-operative Education & Student Employment Department

The co-op department co-ordinates both the educational and the administrative aspects of the co-operative work experience process. Prior to the field experience, co-op staff deliver the Workplace Education Prep workshop series and help students secure work placements with industry, government and other employers. They actively promote the co-op model to the employer community and ensure the visibility of Camosun programs and students.

Student developed positions may be eligible for work term credit and students are encouraged to self develop work term positions. Students may consult with employment facilitators or co-op and internship coordinators for guidance on the development of such positions.

What is Co-op?

Co-operative education enables students to connect their classroom studies to the real world by gaining work experience related to their program area. As the name implies, co-op is an educational process, anchored in a co-operative relationship among the student, the employer and the college. Co-op students function as employees of the co-operating employer organization and are normally paid at market rates. At the same time, they are also enrolled college students, who work with Camosun instructors and staff to maximize the learning value of their field experience. Students pay tuition and receive college credit for the work term, and they are required to submit assignments demonstrating their achievement of academic, professional, and personal learning objectives.

The co-op model has proven highly effective for more than 100 years in North America's leading universities and colleges. Studies show that co-op students enjoy higher academic achievement and motivation and graduate with higher employment rates and earnings. Students value co-op as a great opportunity to 'earn and learn'; to see practical applications of their studies; and to develop valuable work experience and employer references. Employers value co-op as a source of eager and well-prepared talent and often use the co-op process as a means of recruiting permanent employees.

Camosun has offered co-operative education since 1987 and places more co-op and internship students than any other community college in western Canada.

Co-operative Education and Internship Designations

Students may earn either the "Co-operative Education" or the "Internship" designation on their graduating credential, depending on their program of study and the details of their work experience. The co-operative education designation requires completion of at least two work terms (three for the Bachelor of Business Administration) of progressively greater challenge, followed by a final academic term. The internship designation requires completion of one work term, which may fall at the end of the student's program. The minimum work term length is 250 hours for the internship designation and either 270 (quarter system) or 420 (semester system) hours for the co-operative education designation.

For complete details on requirements for the co-op and internship designations, see the Co-operative Education & Student Employment office.

Participation in Co-operative Education/Internships

Co-op information sessions will be held at the beginning of the fall and spring terms to familiarize interested students with co-op/internships. Co-op information sessions are advertised around the campuses well in advance.

Admission Requirements

Submission of a signed student application form is a student's commitment to comply with the procedures and requirements of the co-op program as outlined in this calendar.

To register in a work term students must:

- be registered in a Camosun program with an approved co-op or internship option;
- have completed a specified portion (normally at least one semester) of the program;
- have a minimum GPA of 3.0 ("C+"); and,
- have successfully completed the Workplace Education Prep workshop series (COOP WEP).

Additional requirements may apply in some programs. Students who begin a work term but do not successfully complete it, whether due to academic or employment grounds, may be excluded from registration in subsequent work terms.

Workplace Education Preparation Workshop Series (COOP WEP)

In order to prepare for workplace learning, students first complete the mandatory prerequisite, the Workplace Education Prep workshop series (COOP WEP) offered by employment facilitators from the Co-operative Education & Student Employment department.

This seminar is offered several times throughout the year. Students are advised to plan carefully to ensure completion of the Workplace Education Prep series at least one semester/quarter before commencing their first work term.

Workplace Education Prep is comprised of several modules designed to provide the student with a range of skills required for obtaining a career-related job. The seminar provides training in core competencies needed for outstanding resume writing and interview skills. Workplace Education Prep ensures students have advanced job-finding, employability, and workplace safety skills. Specialized modules will also provide students with specifics on the employment industry relating to their program of study. In the final module, students are introduced to the co-op field instructor, a member of the faculty who is responsible for evaluation. Students will be guided on the work term academic requirements and assignments required for successful completion of the work term. Faculty and Co-operative Education & Student Employment staff together to support and assist students through their work term.

Co-op/Internship Work Term Grades

To graduate with a Co-operative Education or Internship designation, students must satisfactorily complete the minimum number of work terms and maintain the academic standing required by the program.

Work placement grades appear on the students' official transcript as "COM" (complete), "NC" (not complete), or "DST" (complete with distinction). Continuation in co-op will normally require that students achieve "COM" or "DST" work term grades. In programs where co-operative work experience is optional, the academic credit for the work term is over and above the mandatory credit for the program. Work term grades are not taken into account in calculating GPA.

Co-op Work Term Transfers

Co-operative education work terms completed at other BC post-secondary institutions are eligible for transfer credit where:

- the other institution is a member of the BC Accreditation Council on Co-operative Education;
- credit for the work term is recorded on the student transcript from the originating institution;
- the student is accepted into a Camosun College program with a co-operative education option; and,
- the credit from the originating institution was granted for a work term in the same discipline as the Camosun College program into which the student is transferring.

Acceptance into a co-op option at another institution does not guarantee eligibility for co-operative work experience in a Camosun program. Students seeking to transfer work term credit from another institution must apply in writing to the Director of Co-operative Education & Student Employment.

International Students

International students may participate in co-op/internship programs unless excluded by Canadian Immigration regulations relating to employment. The full international fee structure will apply to international students on co-op.