

The Cooperative Education Program at Clarkson is designed for University students who have initiative, a “can do” attitude, and an understanding of the value of real world experience! “Going co-op” simply means that you are choosing to work in business and industry for at least one academic semester and typically a summer, in a professional position related to your academic major.

Co-op Program Procedures

Step 1 - Joining the program

Joining the Co-op Program is relatively easy to do. We help you prepare your resume and cover letter, give you tips about your job search and make sure you understand the finer points of the Co-op Program. Throughout the semester we will be asking you to attend some early evening programs to review writing a resume, learn about interviewing skills, and talk about how to do a successful job search. If you are serious about joining the program, we are ready to help you accomplish your goal of finding a co-op position. Follow these 6 steps and you will be on your way to going co-op:

1. Attend the Fall or Spring general Interest Meeting or stop by the Co-op office to learn more about the program.
2. Register with the Co-op office by using the eRecruiting software. You will need to stop by the Co-op office or the Career Center to open your account. Please fill out the registration part of the software and post your resume (after it has been critiqued), on your account. This account will enable you to sign up for interviews through the on-campus recruiting program and also participate in the resume referral service.
3. Meet with the Director of Co-op to discuss your plans and review your academic schedule. It is suggested that you do this before you meet with your advisor.
4. Complete the required administrative paperwork including:
 - o Student Information Form
 - o Waiver of Right to Records
 - o Academic Plan
 - o Risk/Consent Form
 - o Work Agreement Form (after a co-op position has been accepted)

These forms can be found on the Co-op Web site <http://clarkson.edu/coop>

5. Meet with your academic advisor and complete the Academic Plan form. This meeting will help you decide when it is best to go co-op for you. Additionally, it will enable the Co-op office to submit your course selection for the semester you are returning from co-op to SAS.
6. Attend all meetings and workshops regarding the program.

Step 2 - Finding a Co-op job

Using On-Campus Recruiting

Each semester there will be companies coming to campus to recruit specifically for co-op students. These companies will be advertised in the Career Center’s weekly newsletter three weeks prior to

their visit, as well as on the eRecruiting Software. The Newsletter can be found on line at <http://clarkson.edu/career>. There is a tab for the newsletter. You can also obtain a copy of the newsletter outside the Career Center.

Remember that some companies will require you to attend an Information Session the night before their scheduled interviews and these "Info" sessions will be advertised prior to the company visit.

All interviews are held in the ERC. Students should check with the Career Center 10-15 minutes before their scheduled appointment to locate their interview room and confirm the name of the interviewer.

No Show Rule

Any student who misses a scheduled interview without calling the Career Center or Co-op office at least 48 hours in advance will not be permitted to take further interviews.

Keep in mind that using the software to sign up for an interview is only one way to go about speaking with prospective employers on-campus. You are always welcome to approach visiting company representatives to "pitch" yourself in hopes of getting an interview. Generally, corporate representatives are impressed by students who take the initiative and demonstrate their assertiveness to market themselves. Show your enthusiasm and interest and you may get invited to interview on the spot!

Using Your Own Resources

There are many different ways you can search for a co-op job on your own. In fact, even if you plan to participate in on-campus recruiting, it would also be wise to do your own job search. The steps to get you started are simple. First, prepare a draft of your resume and cover letter and bring them in the Co-op office or Career Center to have them critiqued. If you have no idea how to write a resume or cover letter, be sure to attend one of the early evening programs designed to teach students these skills. Next, identify prospective companies by using the Career Guide, alumni lists, company homepages, Co-op web page links, monsterTRAK.com and the Co-op bulletin board to find prospective co-op opportunities. Try not to rely exclusively on hardcopy or on-line ads for your co-op job search. Instead, look for companies that interest you and write to them to inquire about a possible co-op placement. After you send your initial letter and credentials, remember to follow-up on your interest and application for the co-op position.

Applying to Companies That Do Not Interview On Campus

Some companies are interested in hiring co-op's are not able to interview on campus. These jobs will be posted on monsterTRAK, the job listing service on the Internet - www.monsterTRAK.com. Also, throughout the year, the Co-op office will be sending resumes out upon request, to companies that contact our office, and companies will also be able to access them directly off the Web database using Experience.com. It is critical that co-op students keep their resumes updated at all times. Companies may also request transcripts and/or company applications. This may result in your being contacted for telephone interview or invited to make on-site visits to the facility.

Step 3 - Accepting a Co-op job offer & deciding when to work

A student accepts a co-op position by signing a Work Agreement Form, and submitting it to the Co-op office after accepting an offer. A student is not officially considered a part of the co-op program until this form is completed. After the form is filled out, the student must obtain signatures from

their academic advisor or department chair, and staff member from both the Student Administrative Services Office and the Co-op office. Once an offer has been accepted, the student should not take any additional interviews, as this is considered an official commitment to that company.

Please remember that it is also the student's responsibility to decline subsequent offers made by other companies, in writing as soon as possible. Once an offer is made, it is important for students to be prepared to make commitments as rapidly as possible. If the initial student does not accept the offer, an alternate may be offered the position.

Fall Work Block

The fall work block typically starts shortly after the second session of summer school and may continue until the week prior to the beginning of the spring semester in January. In some cases, the student may also be asked to work the summer before fall work block. The exact dates are negotiated between the student and the company.

Many students who work during the fall semester return to the same company the following summer. If a student desires a summer work block with the company, both the supervisor and the company's co-op coordinator should be contacted by the student before the end of the fall work experience.

Spring Work Block

The spring work experience usually begins shortly after the holiday vacation between semesters and may extend through August, depending on the company's needs. If the company does not extend an offer for a summer work block, the position will end in May or June. Once again, exact dates are negotiated between the student and the company.

To be eligible for a spring work experience, the student must be in an academic department that offers appropriate courses during the fall and summer to permit scheduling a viable academic program in sequence.

Step 4 - Evaluation and Your Job Performance

Remember that a very important part of your co-op experience is building relationships with professionals in the company. You will need their support and written recommendation to help you make the next step in your career. Before you leave, make sure your supervisor does a formal oral and written evaluation of your work and ask (if appropriate) if you can use them as a professional reference. Prior to the end of your co-op, the Co-op Office will have sent your supervisor our Initial and Final Evaluation forms which we encourage them to use in reviewing your work. However, if they prefer to use the company's administrative forms, request that they send a copy to the Co-op office. We will then add the evaluation to your co-op folder.

Housing Information

The Co-op office is happy to assist you in finding housing while on co-op. This year we will be building a database of apartments that past co-ops have lived in while on co-op, as well as providing you with the names of past co-op students who worked at your assignment (upon

request).

Since a co-op assignment may not be finalized before on-campus housing needs to be arranged (for when you return from co-op) all students should follow normal procedures for requesting University housing for the following semester. Keep in mind the following items:

- When a request is made for university housing and the student later makes a commitment to the Co-op Program for the following fall or spring semester, the student will be released from his/her university housing commitment for that semester. The student is required to live on campus during the semester that he/she is not out working. Those students leaving campus for the fall semester and returning to university housing for the spring semester cannot be assured of reassignment to a specific room, although space in university housing will be assured.
- A student who resides at his/her Clarkson-recognized fraternity/sorority and is going out to work during the fall semester has an obligation to return to his/her respective house during the spring semester, or return to university housing.
- All students who are away from campus participating in co-op during the spring semester can expect to receive housing/lottery information for the following fall semester in the month of March. Housing information will be mailed to your co-op address or your home address (if you have not provided a co-op address). If the student does not receive material, it is his/her responsibility to contact the Residence Life at (315) 268-6642 immediately, to ensure that outline procedures are followed and that the required information is submitted prior to indicated deadlines. If students wish to participate in the university housing lottery, please follow the instructions indicated in the housing lottery packet.
- A majority of co-op companies are regular recruiters of Clarkson University co-op students. They deal with students arriving and departing frequently, and may be able to assist students with housing arrangements. More specifically, the Co-op office, the personnel office in the company, and past co-op students can often be of assistance.

Financial Information

Financial Aid

After accepting a co-op position, students should schedule an appointment with the Student Administrative Services Office. At that time, all financial aid questions will be answered and the appropriate forms will be reviewed. Keep in mind that while you are on co-op your academic and financial status as a student is frozen. You do not pay tuition and your student loans/scholarships are put on hold. However, it would be in your best interest to keep accurate financial records of your expenses and salary because your financial aid package may be affected by co-op. Be assured that the SAS staff will make every effort not to let your co-op salary negatively affect your financial aid.

Program Fee

The only additional administrative charge for participation in the Co-op Program is the charge (\$35) for an eRecruiting Account.

Health Insurance Coverage

All students who are not covered under a parent's policy must maintain coverage under the Clarkson University contracted insurance program. The contracted insurance program is in effect annually. In addition, Co-op students are encouraged to look into obtaining renter's insurance if they will be renting during their co-op assignment.

Academic Information

The key to setting yourself up for a successful co-op experience is working closely with your academic advisor. They will be advising you about how best to make up the work, signing the co-op administrative forms and helping you pre-select your courses to prepare you for your return to the University. If you work closely with them, preparing to go co-op will be easy!

Grades and Co-op

All students interested in a co-op opportunity must be in good academic standing, carrying a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0. Eligible students must have completed their freshman year and should plan on completing their last semester at the University.

Co-op Timeframe

All prospective co-op students need to meet with their academic advisor or the department Executive Officer to determine whether the co-op assignment is acceptable during a specific semester in their academic schedule. In general, you may go co-op at anytime (fall or spring), as long as you have permission from your academic department. However, you may find that going co-op during certain months of the year is easier for you than others.

Taking courses while on Co-op

Any student interested in taking courses at another college or university during their co-op assignment must meet with his/her advisor prior to enrolling. The course(s) should not interfere in any way with the work experience. An Off Campus Permission Form should be completed prior to the work experience to ensure transfer of credit. This form can be obtained at the Student Administrative Services Office.

Academic credit

Academic credit is not granted for the Co-op Program itself. However, in some special cases job assignments may incorporate projects similar to those performed on campus for academic credit. Under such circumstances, it may be possible to enroll in a three-credit special project course during the co-op experience. Students wishing to pursue this possibility must contact their academic department as soon as the job assignment is known, prior to the onset of the work experience. The Co-op office should be notified if such a project is arranged.

Making up the work

Again, students should be meeting with their academic advisor to review their academic plan and determine how they will complete the work missed while on co-op. Among the options for completing work are: attending summer school, pushing back your graduation date, using any AP credits, or overloading (taking more than 15 credit hours per semester) during the academic year. If you decide to attend summer school, keep in mind that tuition is assessed at a per-credit-hour rate. However you plan to make up the work, it is important to inform the SAS office of your plans, so the appropriate financial assistance information is provided.

Registering and selecting courses for your return

While you are involved in the Co-op Program, the Co-op office will assist you in registering for courses. Initially, every student must meet with their academic advisor and Student Administrative Services Office representative to confirm they are meeting all pre-registration deadlines. All students interested in going co-op should pre-register for courses unless they have accepted a co-op position and have submitted a Work Agreement Form to the Co-op office. If you are offered a co-op position after you pre-register, you will be released from all courses during the co-op work block.

While you are on a co-op assignment, the Co-op office administrative staff will assist you in registering for courses for when you return to the University. Typically, if your academic plan is accurate, the Co-op office will register for you. However, we may contact you while you are on your co-op assignment if there is a problem with your academic schedule or a course. (Please be sure the Co-op office has your most recent contact information.)