Experiential Learning Program at CPS

At the College of Professional Studies, co-ops and internships can be taken during bachelor’s and master’s degree programs. The co-op program follows a "parallel" model, meaning that students work at their internships and co-ops during the day and may take classes at night. This program offers great opportunities for students to explore in-class learning through real-world work, explore career interests and network with potential employers.

1) Plan Ahead

Speak with your Academic & Student Support Specialist. Every student who does a co-op (paid, 35-40 hours/wk) or internship (paid or unpaid, 10-20 hours/wk) will need to take COP6940 (graduate) or COP3940 (undergraduate) - Personal and Career Development during the first 12 weeks of any internship or co-op. This is a three quarter hour class that can count for an elective as long as you have gotten permission from your department. Students are financially responsible for the 3QHs. Students who need 4 QHs for an elective may arrange an additional 1 credit hour reflection during the second term of their work or upon completion. Speak with your co-op advisor. You will be assigned to work with a co-op advisor from the Office of Cooperative Education based on your academic program. Before you meet with this advisor you should be familiar with the information on this sheet and the co-op website.

It is best to start planning for your co-op or internship during your first quarter at the College of Professional Studies. If you are an international student, explore the information for international students’ page on our website to learn about Curricular Practical Training (CPT) authorization. Undergraduate students holding an F-1 visa must be enrolled full time for one academic year (three consecutive quarters) before engaging in co-op. Students cannot engage in a co-op or internship if they have previously completed all required coursework for their degree program.

2) Prepare

Consider being enrolled in an optional 6-week preparation course called COP 5001 Preparation for Experiential Learning. This course prepares students for finding and securing an internship or co-op. Students will develop a resume, cover letter, branding message, interview skills, a job search strategy and have knowledge of US business etiquette. This course is strongly encouraged for students who have less than two (2) years of work experience in the US.

Students who have completed one quarter at The College of Professional Studies and are interested in an internship/Co-op will activate their profile through our NEXUS database, http://myinterface.com/nu/student. A complete profile must be submitted in order for the Cooperative Education staff to begin working with you.

3) Search

You can either find a co-op or internship through the NEXUS database or through your own search using other on and off campus resources. There are no guarantees that every student will find a placement since ultimately you need to interview and be offered a position. In addition to the company “leads” you discover during the preparation course, CPS staff will also try to provide additional leads and offer as much support as possible to help you in your search. There are also ongoing events coordinated by NU Career Services to help you get internships and co-ops.

4) Start and Engage

Students who find a work opportunity on their own can petition to have it become an approved placement. The requirements are the same. Students should send us a job description with the details of the position. We will determine whether it falls into the internship or Co-op category and whether it aligns with the objectives of your program.

Start dates for co-ops and internships must correspond with the quarter starts in September, January, April and July. Check with your co-op advisor about acceptable start dates when you are interviewing so that you can make potential employers aware of your availability. Before you can accept a position you should have a job letter offer including the following information: Job title, hours/week, duration and compensation (if any), supervisors contact information, office location

Co-op advisors are available to discuss this material in more detail.
Eligibility for Co-ops

Co-ops
- Work related to your degree field
- 12-24 weeks in length (Maximum 2 quarters)
- Paid positions where students negotiate a salary with their employer
- Between 35-40 hours a week
- Accompanied by the 3 QH course: COP3940/6940 Personal and Career Development
- Participation in a co-op constitutes full time status for visa and financial aid purposes. Students do not need to take additional classes other than COP 3940/6940 Personal and Career Development

Eligibility Requirements for a Co-op:
- Bachelors or Master’s degree seeking candidates
- Minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 and in good academic standing, with no record of academic probation or “incomplete” grades for required prerequisite courses
- Undergraduates must have completed 42 quarter hours in foundation degree courses at CPS. Graduate students must have completed 21 quarter hours in required courses at CPS.
- Regulatory Affairs students must complete 20 QHs from Required Courses. Effective spring 2012, all Regulatory Affairs students must complete RGA 6100 and BTC 6210 before participating in a co-op. After completing a co-op students will take RGA 6920.
- Project Management students who want to do a full time co-op are required to take 20 QHs including the following:
  - PM Preparation (3QH): PJM 5900/Foundations of Project Management. (Only required for students with less than 2 years of experience working on project teams)
  - PM Basics (3QH): PJM 6000/PM Practice PM Cost and Schedule Management (3QH): PJM 6010/Planning and Scheduling OR PJM 6020/Cost & Budget OR PJM 6025 – Project Planning and Cost Management.
  - PM Risk & Quality(3QH): PJM 6015/Risk OR PJM6135/Quality OR LDR 6110/Leading Teams

Eligibility for Internships

Internships
- Work related to your degree field
- 12-24 weeks in length (Maximum 2 quarters)
- Paid or unpaid positions
- 10-20 hours a week
- Accompanied by the 3 QH course: COP3940/6940 Personal and Career Development
- Approved internships do not constitute full time status. Students need to take additional quarter hours to meet their enrollment requirements.

Eligibility Requirements for an internship:
- Bachelors or Master’s degree seeking candidates
- Minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 and in good academic standing, with no record of academic probation or “incomplete” grades for required prerequisite courses
- Undergraduate students must have completed 15 quarter hours in foundation degree courses at CPS. Graduate students must have completed 12 quarter hours in required courses at CPS.
- Regulatory Affairs students must complete 20 QHs from Required Courses. Effective spring 2012, all Regulatory Affairs students must complete RGA 6100 and BTC 6210 before participating in an internship. After completing a co-op students will take RGA 6920.
- Project Management students who want to do a part time internship are required to take 12 quarter hours from the categories below.
  - PM Preparation (3QH): PJM 5900/Foundations of Project Management. (Only required for students with less than 2 years of experience working on project teams)
  - PM Basics (3QH): PJM 6000/PM Practice PM Cost and Schedule Management (3QH): PJM 6010/Planning and Scheduling OR PJM 6020/Cost & Budget OR PJM 6025 – Project Planning and Cost Management.
  - PM Risk & Quality(3QH): PJM 6015/Risk OR PJM6135/Quality OR LDR 6110/Leading Teams