

# What is Cooperative Education?

## Guide for Employers

Cooperative Education (Co-op) is a joint effort between industry and higher education. You, as a Co-op employer, have the opportunity to influence the learning process by working directly with our students. For the student, it means practical, on-the-job experience and academic credit. The intent is to integrate classroom theory with practical work experience in the student's area of study.

Our goal is to forge a full-time and continuing relationship with your company. Co-op will help you meet some of your short and long-term professional staffing needs and it will provide excellent real world experiences for our students.

Cooperative Education is an exciting alternative to traditional classroom learning. Those in the program actually lead a double life—as a student and as an employee, benefiting by on-the-job achievement of classroom goals and their direct application in the work setting. For the student, Cooperative Education pays off in money and experience. For the employer, Co-op is smart business that pays off in innovative and economic ways. Here at UND, we value the bond Co-op students form between education and industry.

The program itself is easy to implement. We can help you advertise your positions, arrange for on-campus interviews, or have students directly submit resumes. We provide a liaison between you, your student employees and UND.

In the past 22 years, 7,000+ students have enrolled in the Cooperative Education program at UND. The department has a variety of work sites in North Dakota, many of the other states, the District of Columbia, and several international locations.

### ***Cooperative Education is...***

Career/Academically related  
Credit generating  
Professionally supervised  
Always salaried

The four options for doing Cooperative Education are:

**Alternating Co-op:** work full-time for one semester, then return to school  
**Consecutive Co-op:** work two semesters, then return to school  
**Parallel Co-op:** work and go to school at the same time  
**Summer Co-op:** work during the summer, then return to school

### ***Opportunities For The Employer***

**Employers participating in the program will have the opportunity to:**

1. Participate in the educational process.
2. Gain a well-trained pool of potential employees.
3. Gain a source of professional manpower.
4. Reduce the cost of recruiting and training professional staff.
5. Acquire a source of new ideas and talent for their organization.
6. Generate a high retention rate because Co-op graduates have already worked within the company.
7. Observe a potential employee before committing to full-time employment of that employee.

### ***How to start a Co-op Relationship with the University of North Dakota***

1. Fax or e-mail us a description of the job for which you'd like to hire a Co-op student. You may also register on our Career Connect system, under the Employer section of our web page, [www.und.edu/careerservices](http://www.und.edu/careerservices), and enter the job yourself.
2. We post job descriptions on Career Connect and send flyers out to the appropriate majors.

3. You receive applicants who have met clearly defined academic standards and your criteria.
4. You select the students you want to visit with. We can arrange an on-campus interview schedule for you or you may contact the students directly and establish your own interview schedule.
5. Upon hiring a student, you follow your normal hiring and training procedures.
6. During the Co-op, your student's work supervisor will be asked to help the student establish goals for the work term and submit two evaluations of the student's work to our office. We will provide the evaluation forms.

### ***Compensation/Benefit Guidelines***

#### **SALARY**

The salary paid by the employer must be within standards for the industry and commensurate with the student's skills and abilities. Salaries for Co-op students vary depending on the size and location of the company and the type of position. Hourly salary schedules generally are determined by the educational level and number of previous terms worked by the student. The student typically receives an increase in salary for each Co-op work term.

During the 2009 - 2010 school year, the salaries received by Cooperative Education students ranged from a low of \$7.25 to a high of \$26.68, with an average salary of \$12.12.

#### ***Other Benefits***

#### **EMPLOYERS MAY PROVIDE ALL OR SOME OF THE FOLLOWING:**

##### **BENEFITS**

Holiday Pay  
Sick Leave  
Overtime  
Accrued Seniority  
Thrift/Savings Plan  
Business Travel Accident Insurance

##### **TUITION UNDERWRITING**

Cooperative Education students are required to pay for the credits they receive during their Co-op experience with your company. Some companies have chosen to underwrite the cost of these credits for the student.

##### **RELOCATION ASSISTANCE**

Rental of hauling equipment  
Relocation mileage  
Meals while in route  
Expenses for connecting utilities  
In emergency situations, temporary lodging assistance

#### **CAREER SERVICES COOPERATIVE EDUCATION**

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