

Undergraduate Engineering Students

WHAT IS CO-OP?



The Swanson School of Engineering's Cooperative Education Program works with engineering (undergraduate and graduates) and computer science/information science (undergraduate only) students.

Co-op is not a one-and-done work experience like an internship. **Students commit to and complete multiple work rotations with their employer.**

The rotations are four months long and alternate work with school. Since this is an academic program, students will receive 3 credits once they've completed all 3 rotations. They are still considered full-time students while working.

Students have new options on how to complete the co-op program. They can work 2 rotations with one company and:

a third rotation with that company, one rotation with a different company, or a semester of research.

Cooperative & Experiential
Education Division of the American
Society for Engineering Education
National Co-op Student of the Year
Winners (Pitt):

Jelena Tudman, 2000

Kristy Petrovsky, 2002

Howard Wang, 2014

Kendra LaVallee, 2017

Julie Shields, 2019

CO-OP PROGRAM BENEFITS

There are many benefits to the co-op program. Since it is an academic program, students receive 1 credit each work rotation, and earn all 3 credits once they've completed the program.

The positions are all paid, giving students the chance to earn an income while they're still in school. Positions are full-time and located throughout the U.S. Since they work three rotations, they will have 8-12 months of work experience on their resumes before they graduated.

The students aren't just fetching coffee, they're doing real engineering work! The main point of the program is that students can continue to progress each rotation and build upon things they've been working on. By their final rotation, they're doing the work of an entry-level

engineer, if not sooner.

About half of our co-op participants receive a full-time job offer from their company after they graduate. For those who don't receive a full-time offer from their company, they have that work experience and some great references that help them stand out more than students who may only have a few months of engineering related work experience.

Co-op does not have an impact on federal financial aid received. The students are still considered full-time students while they're working and don't pay tuition, so the aid is not applied during those terms.

The alternating terms give students a break from classes and allow them to apply what they've learned to industry right away. Co-op student's GPA's usually rise.

HOW TO APPLY



Cooperative Education Program
152 Benedum Hall

Contact Information:

Maureen Barcic, Director
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Director
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Administrator
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Office Hours:
Monday- Friday
8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

*Student walk-ins are welcome
anytime during these hours!*

Applying to the Co-op Program is quick and simple! Once you're officially registered as an applicant, you will have access to our USR co-op job posting system. You'll be able to apply directly online to co-ops, sometimes have your resume sent to employers directly, and keep track of where you've applied to.

First, login to <https://usr.engr.pitt.edu/CoOpStudent>. You'll complete the online application, providing such information as: geographic preference, car availability, semesters you're available to start co-op, financial aid status, housing, etc. Please answer all questions completely and accurately. **Be sure to thoroughly read the Statement of Understanding before submitting your application so you fully understand our guidelines.**

Once you've applied, please stop by our office or email us a copy of your resume to have it reviewed and approved.

The final step will be to submit a sample co-op schedule and an unofficial transcript prior to your co-op search. The schedule helps you plan out your rotations, classes, as well as planning ahead for a minor, study abroad experience, etc. Sample schedules can be found on your departmental website. You will need to have a final schedule approved by your faculty co-op advisor once you officially accept a position.

If you have questions, feel free to stop by the co-op office, 152 Benedum Hall, first floor behind the lobby front desk.

PROFESSIONALISM

This academic program is a partnership between the student, employer, and co-op program/engineering departments.

We expect our students to maintain a high level of professionalism throughout the entire co-op process and follow our program's rules and guidelines.

Students should respond to companies and the co-op office in a timely manner. If a student

accepts a co-op position (verbally or signed), their co-op search has ended. They should not continue to interview or apply to other companies, nor can they renege on their acceptance.

Students are expected to follow their alternating schedule while on co-op. If a student resigns from a company, they must officially resign in writing before applying or interviewing anywhere else. Students can read our handbook for more in-depth information.