

**2020-2021 Graduate Co-op Handbook  
Swanson School of Engineering**



## Special Covid-19 Information for Co-op Students

First and foremost, the University of Pittsburgh and Swanson School of Engineering cares for your safety during these unprecedented times. No student should feel uncomfortable or unsafe going to work. If such a situation would occur for you, please contact us so that we can communicate any uncertainties to your employer. We know the companies will do everything they can do ensure your safety; however, if you as an individual are uncomfortable, it is your right to leave the site and co-op rotation. Please contact our offices with any concerns whatsoever concerning the coronavirus and the unsettling times it has caused.

We recommend compliance with CDC guidelines:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/guidance-list.html?Sort=Date%3A%3Adesc>

Be aware that your safety at work and beyond work hours can help keep you and others healthy!

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Welcome to the University of Pittsburgh's Co-op Program, an exciting opportunity that will allow you to learn, gain experience, professional development, and financial remuneration!

With the first degrees of "Engineer" awarded in 1846, Pitt was established as the nation's sixth earliest engineering programs. Keeping in stride with their "cutting edge", Pitt's Swanson School of Engineering was among the first three established co-op programs in the country. Although the Depression forced its suspension in the 1930's, cooperative education at the University of Pittsburgh was re-established in 1987. Soon afterwards, the university's nationally ranked chemistry and computer science departments were added to the program, as well as students from our regional campuses. The graduate program was instituted in 2011. Since 1987, thousands of students have benefited from this exceptional program. Although the program is not mandatory, almost half of the students in engineering participate, along with growing numbers from our other departments.

### What is Co-op?

Co-op provides students with work experience relating directly to their field of study. The program enables students to complement classroom studies with practical experience, technical knowledge and financial reward.

Co-op is an academic program where students earn credit while working in their field of study.

All co-ops are paid a competitive wage. The average salary for graduate students in 2019-2020 was approximately \$16-45/hour. All positions are full-time.

### Nuts and Bolts of Co-op at Pitt

**Graduate students must complete at least one rotation to complete the program requirements. Although most MS students will work only one term, there is a possibility to work multiple terms; however, each work experience must be integral to the student's field of study, and documented as such by the students' faculty advisor. Students on an F-1 visa must be sure to comply with the CPT requirements. PhD candidates may complete more than one rotation as well, particularly when working on the dissertation. All co-op schedules need to be approved by the graduate faculty advisor.**

- **Students work full-time while on co-op. The standard term is 15 weeks of work. We do not accept less than 12 weeks of work. Students normally do not take any academic courses along with the co-op.**
- **Students earn one credit for each term worked.**
- **Our positions are with employers who are local, national, and international.**
- **The one credit co-op course keeps you enrolled with a full-time status.**
- **Students do not pay tuition while on a co-op assignment, but a modest fee.**
- **The work should take place in the employer's physical location (no telecommuting, etc.)**

### Program Requirements

1. All participating students would first obtain approval from their program's graduate coordinator prior to signing up for the Graduate Co-op Program. Additional departmental rules may apply, so please check with your department.
2. Students would then sign-up officially with the Co-op Program Office, including signing the "Statement of Understanding" and agreeing to follow all Co-op rules and policies including payment of the necessary fees.
3. The Co-op Office and the student partner to find an appropriate position.
4. The student would be charged the regular Co-op Fee as well as the other applicable University of Pittsburgh fees. The student would also register for the 1 credit that is covered by the Co-op Fee.
5. The student would be required to prepare a short paper describing their rotation, including the skills learned and used and its educational relevance. That paper would be due within two weeks after completion of the rotation. In addition, the student and employer would complete the required evaluation forms.
6. Upon acceptance of both evaluations, the student would receive an "S" grade for the 1 credit. Additionally, the student must supply a one-page synopsis of the work term to the graduate co-op academic advisor.
7. Participation Eligibility

- a. Swanson School of Engineering (SSoE) undergraduates who go directly into an SSOE graduate program would be permitted to co-op the term before starting their graduate degree program as well as the term between their first and second graduate years.
- b. Full-time MS students who were not SSoE undergraduates would be allowed to co-op after two academic semesters (typically the summer between the first and second year, but other terms are possible as well, depending on course requirements and schedules).
- c. PhD students would be allowed to participate after two academic semesters with the approval of their research adviser and their graduate coordinator. They may participate for up to three rotations.
- d. MS students who are GSRs would be allowed to participate after two academic semesters with the approval of the research adviser and the graduate coordinator.

### International Students

Before registering with co-op, international students are required to check with the Office of International Studies (OIS) to determine eligibility to co-op and start date. Their website is <http://www.ois.pitt.edu/> and appointments are made online.

Eligible students accepting a co-op offer must complete the necessary forms for OIS and the co-op office; additionally, the student must inform both offices of any changes in visa status, work status or work rotations. All positions must be directly related to the student's field of study and on par with graduate level work.

### Work Schedules

Any changes in already approved co-op schedules must be approved by the co-op office, faculty advisor and employer. This includes additional work sessions.

### University Co-op Certification

Graduate level students who participate in the cooperative education program at the University of Pittsburgh must complete the required work term(s) in order to receive certification on their transcript.

### Commitment and Ethics

Students who apply and then accept a position through the Co-op Program should be aware that it is a commitment. We expect students to honor the commitment to their employer and to the university. This means that we expect students to adhere to the co-op schedules that are prepared for them by their faculty advisors. In the event that a change is requested, we must have it in writing. When taking into account any request for changes, we will look at the individual as well as the impact on the whole program. Please bring any and all concerns to our office.

**Participants are expected to serve as ambassadors of the University of Pittsburgh, working to the best of their abilities, and acting in an ethical manner, both during the interviewing process and work rotations. In a recent employer survey, it was noted that employers valued ethics in an individual as much or more as a high GPA. We have found that it is a rare occurrence for a student to lose a co-op position due to lack of ability. Students most often lose a co-op because of poor attendance, lack of professionalism, or unwillingness to give 100%. Check with us about any concerns you have.**

### Co-op Fees

Students who are placed through the efforts of the co-op office are required to register for the co-op credit. In fairness to the many hundreds of students who participate in our program each year, we cannot negotiate or waive the co-op fees. Changing your status from co-op to intern will not preclude you from paying the fee.

Current fees per term are: \$335 co-op fee (includes cost of credit) plus pro-rata charges for the activity fee and computer fee. All main campus students will pay the safety and transportation fee.

### Office Hours

The co-op office is open Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. We have an open door policy. Students are encouraged to visit us at any time and do not need an appointment. This unique feature of our program allows us to more successfully serve you and the type of co-op you are seeking. We are here to advise on resume writing, interviewing skills, job development and to answer any questions that you might have about the program.

### Forms and Procedures

The co-op office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and located in offices 152 Benedum Hall.

The following link can be used to register; however, graduate students must also submit an approved co-op schedule that has been signed off by the academic advisor. We also require an electronic copy of your resume that can be sent to [paub2m@pitt.edu](mailto:paub2m@pitt.edu)

<http://www.engineering.pitt.edu/Student/Student-Programs/Coop/For-Students/Application-Process/>

Each student who wishes to participate in the program will be responsible for completing the application process which will include an online application and question and answer portion. We also need an electronic version of the resume and a signed and approved academic schedule. Your co-op faculty advisor must approve the schedule.

When students register for co-op, it should be understood that our applicants need to be proactive in seeking a position. Additionally, our office continually job develops and circulates positions and resume request. Your resume may be sent to employers where you have indicated an interest or preference. We expect you to respond to any employer inquiries within 24 hours.

We encourage students to look on their own for positions as well. We expect our applicants to respond to the office, actively apply for positions, and report interviews and offers. If you wish, we can contact any company on your behalf, even if they are not current co-op employers. The office reserves the right to remove applicants who demonstrate a pattern of non-responsiveness. Because we have so many students wanting to co-op, our attention must be directed to those who are truly interested in the co-op program.

You will also want to be sure to attend the Co-op job fairs, a place for you to meet many of our employers in person. **You will also want to be sure to attend the Co-op job fairs, a place for you to meet many of our employers in person.**

Graduate students are expected to be proactive in seeking co-op positions and work in partnership with the Co-op Office.

### Finding a Co-op through Handshake

Handshake is the University's Career Services' on-line job-posting and recruiting system. We recommend that you view possible opportunities on the Handshake site in addition to utilizing the co-op office for positions.

If the employer is attending the co-op job fair or university career fair, please be sure to submit your resume in person on that date.

For more information or if you have any questions contact Maureen Barcic at [paub2m@pitt.edu](mailto:paub2m@pitt.edu) or 412-624-9882.

### Success in Co-op

Have a positive attitude. One of our employers once noted that he looks for "A" level work. That means:

- You are willing to work.
- You are anxious to learn.
- You are flexible.
- You expect to make a contribution.

Also, make sure that you respond to any e-mail or phone calls from either the co-op office or the employers within 24 hours. This is critical to your success in the program. Remember: You never have a second chance to make a first impression!

### Resume and Interviewing Skills Assistance

The co-op office is here to assist you with your resume. We would like to critique yours before you turn it in to our office. There are several sample resumes in the back of this handbook. Prepare a draft of a resume that will showcase your skills and bring it in to our office for a final review.

We provide a cover letter example as well as a thank you letter in the back of this handbook.

There is also an interview section to assist you in preparation for the interview process. We can schedule mock interviews for you if you would like. Without a good resume and interviewing information skills, you will have a hard time making a good impression. You can also check our website for interviewing information and upcoming workshops.

What is an interview?

Typically, an interview is used as a screening process in which you are given the opportunity to learn more about an organization. At the same time, it is the company's opportunity to evaluate you as a prospective employee. The effective interview is the most important aspect of the employment search. In a 20- or 30- minute interview, your personality, educational background and work experience are appraised. It is usually the most decisive part of your campaign for the job opportunity you want. Initial contacts by letter, resume or application describe one's credentials. The interview demonstrates these credentials.

QUALITIES THE INTERVIEWER LOOKS FOR:

Personality Be genuine, self-confident, pleasant and honest. Be yourself.

Articulateness Express yourself clearly and concisely. Answer questions thoroughly and in a candid manner.

Alertness Make your answers and questions relevant and intelligent. Develop your questions prior to the interview.

Enthusiasm Be enthusiastic, optimistic, and show an appropriate amount of interest.

Maturity Express clear professional goals. Know what you want. Conduct yourself as if you are determined to get the job you are discussing.

Motivation Show your incentive and willingness through your desire and interest in the job opportunity.

Compatibility Express, through your behavior, your ability to get along with others.

Preparation Know relevant information about the company – location, product, and general knowledge about its business purpose. The more you know, the greater impression you will make on the interviewer.

POSITIVE INTERVIEW TIPS:

Some interviewers like to do most of the talking and judge you by your reactions – the comprehensive and intelligence you show. Other interviewers say very little. Their attitude is that it is up to you to sell yourself. In either case, the following tips can be of great value to you:

Approach the interview with a positive attitude and sincere interest in the company.

Pay attention to your appearance. You want to appear professional, so dress conservatively.

Arrive a few minutes early for the interview  
Allow the interviewer to initiate the conversation.

Be friendly, relaxed; be yourself.

Maintain good eye contact.

Communicate accomplishments.

Do not monopolize the conversation, but be an active participant.

Be an attentive listener when the interviewer is speaking.

Respond to questions with more than a yes or no answer.

Show interest through asking well-thought-out questions. Ask some definite questions about the company.

Do not try to fill in the silent spots. You may tend to ramble.

Display your personality and achievements, initiating as well as responding.

Accentuate the positives. Be optimistic. Display self-confidence, ambition, and competitive attitude. Be sure your good points get across to the interviewer.

Emphasize your special skills and interests.

QUESTIONS THE INTERVIEWER IS LIKELY TO ASK:

What do you know about our company? **(Critical !!!)**

Why did you decided to interview with our company?

Tell me about yourself.

What personal qualities do you possess which might distinguish you from other applicants?

What are your basic interests and your non-job or school-related achievements?

Why did you decide to attend college?

How did you choose this particular school?

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How did you choose this particular field of study?  
What have been some of the more important aspects of your education?  
What courses did you like best? Least? Why?

In what school activities have you participated? To what extent?  
How have your extracurricular activities helped prepare you for the kind of work you've done or influenced your development as a person?

<p>Do you feel you have done the best scholastic work of which you are capable?</p> <p>Which of your college courses were the more difficult? Why?</p> <p>What type of work interests you?</p> <p>Under what kinds of conditions do you work best?</p> <p>What jobs have you held? How were they obtained and why did you leave?</p> <p>What personal factors do you consider most important in evaluating yourself or your success?</p> <p>How do you weight career priorities such as job security, satisfaction, work hours, salary, and working conditions in evaluating your needs in a job?</p> <p>To date, what have been some of your more important work responsibilities?</p> <p>What have you enjoyed most and liked least about the work you have done?</p> <p>What work satisfaction or achievements have not been realized or at least have not been at the level that you had hoped?</p> <p>Do you have a geographical preference? Why?</p> <p>What consideration have you given to further enhance your performance and personal growth?</p> <p>How do you schedule your time? Set priorities? What are your hobbies?</p> <p>What do you consider to be strengths and weaknesses?</p> <p>What was your most difficult decision in the last six months? What made it difficult?</p> <p>Give some instances in which you anticipated problems or influenced new directions.</p> <p>How do you deal with pressure?</p> <p>Do you prefer working with others or by yourself?</p> <p>Would you prefer a large or small company? Why?</p>	<p>Do you think that your extracurricular activities were worth the time you devoted to them? Why?</p> <p>At this point in your life, what would you like to be doing in the foreseeable future in terms of your career goals?</p> <p><u>QUESTIONS THE INTERVIEWEE IS LIKELY TO ASK:</u></p> <p>What are the opportunities for advancement?</p> <p>Does your company have a practice of promoting on merit and of promoting within?</p> <p>Describe initial assignments in my particular area of interest.</p> <p>What opportunities will I have for professional development?</p> <p>Does your company encourage and support "continuing education" for its employees?</p> <p>Tell me about the community in which I would be employed.</p> <p>What will I be doing?</p> <p><u>CHECKLIST FOR CO-OP INTERVIEWING:</u></p> <p>Dress professionally for the co-op interview. "You never get a second chance to make a first impression."</p> <p>Do not chew gum, smoke, or use too much perfume or aftershave.</p> <p>Be on time for an interview. Call if an emergency prevents you from being on time.</p> <p>Bring a copy of your resume, a list of at least 3 references, pen and notebook, and list of questions to ask the interviewer.</p> <p>Know something about the company. (co-op office has information.)</p> <p>Send thank you note to the interviewer noting your interest and how you can contribute to the company.</p>
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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CO-OP

### *What is Cooperative Education?*

Cooperative Education is an academic program allowing full-time work assignments that relate directly to your engineering, chemistry, or computer science discipline. This program enables students to complement classroom studies with practical experience, technical knowledge, and financial reward.

### *Do I work full-time or part-time?*

At the University of Pittsburgh, the student works full-time for a term, and then returns to school for full time study.

### *When Do I Begin and how many terms can I work?*

Master's students with a Pitt engineering undergraduate degree may work the summer before matriculation and the summer between their first and second year of study; other academic terms of work can be permitted if approved by the faculty advisor. If you are a student here on a visa, the work must be integral to your field of study and academic and work schedules approved by the faculty advisor and OIS. PhD students may work 1 or more rotations.

### *What are the eligibility requirements?*

Students must possess a minimum 2.0 GPA overall, and should not be on term probation. Also, required coursework for each department must be completed. If you are in doubt regarding your academic status, see the co-op advisor in your department. (Some co-op employers will set a higher QPA requirement.)

### *Is co-oping mandatory?*

No, co-oping is an option for any qualified student.

### *What types of positions are there?*

The Cooperative Engineering Education office is committed to assuring a practical work experience for each student in their field of study. We work with a wide range of companies including public and private, small and large. We have placed students nationally as well as in the Pittsburgh area. Some students have had international assignments with their co-op employers.

### *What are the primary benefits of the co-op program?*

Practical experience, technical knowledge, financial remuneration, confidence, assurance, and better understanding of academics are all benefits of the co-op experience in addition to the academic credits earned by the student. The co-op experience has also immensely benefited graduating students in their job search. Although many students eventually accept permanent employment with their co-op employers, many others find that they have multiple offers to select from; many with a higher than average starting salary.

### *How do I register with the Co-op program?*

The co-op office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and located in offices 152 Benedum Hall. The following link can be used to register; however, graduate students must also submit an approved co-op schedule that has been signed off by the academic advisor. We also require an electronic copy of your resume that can be sent to [paub2m@pitt.edu](mailto:paub2m@pitt.edu)

<http://www.engineering.pitt.edu/Student/Student-Programs/Coop/For-Students/Application-Process/>

## USR Job Posting Portal

The co-op program will post all co-op job notifications on the USR Portal. Students will gain access to the online portal once they've applied for the co-op program. Students can then search for jobs by their major and apply to jobs they're interested in. Students can either apply online through a link posted, or simply check the "send resume" box if applicable, and the co-op office will send their resume directly to the employer. Once students accept a job offer, their app access will then be revoked since they will be done with the co-op search process.

A one-on-one mock interview is available to any student who requests it. We strongly encourage all registrants to participate.

*How long will it take to get a job?*

First of all, we cannot guarantee anyone a co-op position or guarantee that you will receive an offer within a specific time frame. You may be one of those students who interviews for one position, receives an offer from the company, accepts it, and thus completes the interviewing process. Most students find, though, that securing a position is a waiting game. Most offers are tendered toward the end of the term, and many students find themselves deciding between two offers. Keep in mind that it may take more than one term to secure a position. You may want to apply to the co-op office as early as possible in your college career. It is our experience though that, if you are interested in only certain industries or certain geographic locations, your job search will become more difficult.

Don't give up! Many students think that because they haven't heard from a company they are not desirable candidates. That is simply not the case. Employers are extremely busy with varied responsibilities; the co-op program is just one area for many of them. Again, most students will receive offers if they sign up for a number of companies.

*Will there be a job fair?*

Yes! The co-op office hosts two annual job fairs for co-op employers and students during the spring and fall terms of each year. By attending this job fair, you will significantly increase your opportunities of finding a co-op position. A booklet of participating companies will be available the week of the Fair and can also be found on our website. Please check with the co-op office for details on this event. Not all companies attend the job fair. The co-op office works with many employers and continues job development efforts throughout the term. Grad students should also attend the university career fairs, since the co-op schedules are more flexible for graduate students.

*How will I know which companies interest me?*

You should research any company that interests you on-line. Our job fair participants are listed on our website [www.engineering.pitt.edu/coop](http://www.engineering.pitt.edu/coop). We also have a list of participating companies from our annual reports but please keep in mind that this list changes constantly.

In addition, the co-op office has a file on each company. We often have informational brochures on each company that you can keep or borrow. We also have salary information on almost all of our employers. Please ask us for this information if it is important to you!

*What if I don't have the QPA or discipline the company requests? Can I still sign up?*

It is important that we follow guidelines established by the employers. However, if you are truly interested in a company for which you do not meet criteria, please let us know. We will contact that company on your behalf. Many employers will agree to consider those candidates, and some have received offers!

*How will I know which companies are interested in me?*

Once the resumes leave our office, one of several things might happen:

- The company schedules an on-campus recruiting visit. You will be notified by email of the interview schedule. We will expect a response from you.
- The company contacts you by telephone and discusses the position with you.
- The company offers you a plant trip based either on your resume or telephone interview. (It is imperative that you have an answering machine or cell phone. Companies will call during business hours when you are often not available. The greeting on your phone needs to be professional. If an employer is offended by a message, he will not continue the interview process.
- The company will usually notify you by telephone or in writing to offer you a position.
- Please note: All offers and plant visits must be reported to the co-op office.
- Don't forget to check your spam. Every now and then an employer's email or offer letter is found there!

*I've never interviewed with a corporation before. Do you assist us in preparation for an interview?*

Yes. We strongly encourage all students to mock interview with our staff members or someone in the Career Services Office. We have found that most students who utilize this service not only feel more comfortable during the interviewing process, but ultimately receive job offers. Co-op employers sometimes offer interviewing skills workshops through Career Services or our office. Check out our important dates to see if there are any professional development workshops coming up. It's important!

*Is it appropriate to send "Thank You" notes after an interview?*

Yes! Particularly if you are interested in the position. A sample letter can be found in this booklet. It is appropriate to send by email or regular mail. The notes can be hand written if sent by regular mail.

*If I get an offer, do I have to take it?*

No, you do not. However, it is critical to turn down the position in a professional manner. There may come a day when that same company might be of great interest to you. If the company has had a less than positive experience with you, it's possible that they won't consider you for future employment with them. Be truthful but professional. If you have absolutely no interest in the position, don't take up the interviewer's time by accepting a plant visit.

*What if I interview and then decide that co-oping is not for me?*

The first thing you need to do is notify the co-op office. We will make certain that your resume is not circulated to any additional companies, to save you the responsibility of explaining your decision to them. Do not continue to interview or go

on plant trips. Tell any employers who contact you that you are no longer available, but thank them for considering you. You may also want to add that you might re-submit a resume to them during senior year.

*Will I be told if I don't get the position?*

Usually. However, some companies just notify the students they wish to extend the offers to for co-op employment. If you have not heard from a company you are interested in, ask someone in the co-op office. We are usually up to date on what is happening with each company.

*Are all positions paid?*

Yes; all positions are paid. The average starting salary is approximately \$3494 per month.

*What if I accept a position with a company but a better offer comes along?*

We ask that you consider any job offer very seriously before accepting or rejecting. If you have an offer but are waiting for a possible offer from another company, it is perfectly acceptable and in fact a good idea to call them to ascertain your status before making a decision. We are also available to help you obtain any needed information.

Once you have made your decision, however, we expect you to consider that a commitment to the company. Reneging on job acceptance will cause dismissal or suspension from the co-op program. We recommend that students ask questions and get details regarding the position before accepting. Information can be gained from: 1. Employer 2. Internet 3. Other Students 4. Professors. 5. Co-op office. Take advantage.

*If I co-op, can I still get the courses I need in order to graduate?*

Yes, each student has a co-op faculty advisor and courses have been scheduled to accommodate the co-op students. Your advisor will complete a schedule form for you, which can be picked up from the co-op office. The schedules are to be completed as a part of the application checklist before you accept interviews. It is the student's responsibility to give a signed copy to the co-op office and their department. You also need to keep a copy for yourself.

*What if I accept a job outside of Pittsburgh and need temporary housing during either my school or work rotations?*

Accepting a co-op position outside of Pittsburgh is a great way to broaden your horizons. It is a fantastic way for you to see what it's like to live in another part of the country or even internationally for a finite period of time. Most companies will offer some form of housing assistance for those positions outside of Pittsburgh. Inquire at the co-op office or ask the company during your interview. When you return to Pitt for classes and need a sublet for 4 months, you can let us know and we will email your housing needs to current co-ops through Blackboard. Students working more than 75 miles from campus may be exempted from the wellness and the safety and transportation fees.

*Are there any co-op fees?*

Yes; engineering co-op students will be registered for a one credit course entitled Engineering 2090. The fee for this course is \$335 plus the safety & transportation fee, part-time activity fee, part-time wellness fee, and computer fee. Students will be registered for this course prior to the commencement of each work term. Although a credit is earned, you do not pay for the credit itself.

*Is there any negotiation with the fee?*

No. If a student uses the services of this office to gain employment, the fee must be paid.

*Will I be drug tested before beginning an assignment?*

You will most likely be drug tested. Companies have the right to rescind the offer in the event of a positive testing. Additionally, many companies complete background checks, and can also rescind an offer based on the results of that check.

## AFTER ACCEPTING A CO-OP POSITION

Congratulations on being accepted as a Co-op Professional! The privilege of participating in this program will enhance your academic career while affording you an opportunity to gain practical work experience and financial reward.

Before beginning your co-op position, notify the co-op office of your acceptance. We will have some final paperwork and instructions for you. If you are an international student, it is required that you meet with the OIS office before starting your co-op.

### Class Registration Process

You MUST be registered for the one-credit co-op course, entitled Engineering 2090. The student does not pay for the one credit but does pay the \$335\* co-op fee plus miscellaneous fees listed in this handbook. The Co-op Office will work with you to enroll you in ENGR 2090. While enrolled in co-op, you are considered a full-time student. The Co-op Office will work in conjunction with Engineering Administration and your department to register you for co-op.

If you accept a position through the efforts of the co-op office, you will pay the fee.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are add/dropped into Co-op Engineering 2090, you will not receive a second invoice. You can verify the amount you owe by contacting student accounts (412-624-7575, 201 Thackeray), or checking your account through my.pitt.edu. You are responsible for settling your invoice by your due date, or you will be assessed a late fee.

If you are an international student, the Office of International Services (OIS) must approve your Curricular Practical Training (CPT) before you begin working. Apply online at <http://www.ois.pitt.edu/>.

Students who work more than 75 miles from campus can receive refunds for the wellness and safety and transportation fees. Be sure to sign up for eRefunds. Each term we will send an email to the students regarding your location.

### Helpful Housing Hints

- \*Co-op employers are not obligated to provide housing for students, though some do and many assist.
- \*During interviews and when inquiring about opportunities with an employer, ask them if they offer any assistance for housing. If the position is in Pittsburgh, they might not offer anything for local students.
- \*Ask employers if they have recommendations for finding housing if they do not provide it.
- \*Ask co-op office if other students have or are currently co-oping at the company where you are going to work. We might be able to contact these students and see how they found housing or connect you with them.
- \*If you know of friends or classmates who have co-oped, ask them how they found their housing.
- \*Use Facebook, Rentjungle.com (this website also provides a 360° street view of area), Craigslist, Apartments.com, and Oodle.com to find housing near the employer.
- \*Contact the co-op offices at colleges and/or universities near your employer to see if they have any recommendations.
- \*If you're co-oping in summer - Contact the housing offices at colleges and/or universities near your employer to see if they allow summer housing for outside students.
- \*Try contacting Alumni Office to see if they can reach out to/connect you with alumni who now live in the area of interest.
- \* Ask employers if they have employees who will rent out rooms to co-ops.
- \*Ask to be connected with a current co-op at the company who may be from another school, if possible.

[www.ocl.pitt.edu](http://www.ocl.pitt.edu) is a website that might be of interest for off-campus housing

### Wellness Fee

Local Co-ops less than 75 miles from campus will pay a part-time wellness fee which enables you to visit the Student Health Center, which is located on the first floor the Nordenberg Hall.

### Cooperative Education Financial Aid Procedures

Please notify Engineering Administration (engineering major) or your department if you have financial aid. Engineering Administration's contact information is 412-624-9800 or [ssoeadm@pitt.edu](mailto:ssoeadm@pitt.edu) and are located in 151 Benedum Hall.

Additionally, contact Karen Sciulli [ksciulli@pitt.edu](mailto:ksciulli@pitt.edu) in Financial Aid.

### Evaluation of Co-op Assignments

Students are required to complete and submit two evaluation forms to the co-op office per term. The first is e-mailed approximately 6 weeks into the term and is to be completed and returned as soon as possible. If there are any concerns with your assignment, both the co-op office and faculty coordinator would like to be of assistance. Many issues can be easily resolved, and this six- week evaluation provides us with a mechanism to assist the students in a timely manner.

At the beginning of each work rotation we will email you and ask you to send your manager's name and e-mail address to us. At the beginning of the last month of your work rotation term, you and your manager will receive an e-mail which will give you instructions regarding our on-line registration process through which you and your manager will submit end-of-term evaluations.

End of term evaluations must be completed each term by both the student and the employer. You cannot receive a satisfactory grade without the completion of the forms. We encourage your manager to go over the Employer Evaluation of Student with you.

**Graduate students must also submit a one-page synopsis of their experience to their faculty advisor and the co-op office.**

### Taking Coursework while on a Co-op Assignment

Students are not encouraged to take coursework in addition to co-op during the first work term unless they have been scheduled to do so by their co-op advisor. In the event that a class must be taken, we do not expect the student to leave work early or re-schedule work hours.\* This practice puts a strain on our relationships with employers, does not take into account that these positions are considered professional in nature, and may occasionally require overtime, and puts the student at academic risk. Students are expected to adhere to the work schedule prepared for them by their faculty coordinators.

Daytime classes are not permitted while a student is on a co-op rotation..

\*If the course is at another university, you must have approval beforehand.

### Part-Time Work

Students are prohibited from working part-time with the co-op employer during academic terms. Students put themselves at academic risk and the practice of juggling part-time work and full-time academics is a practice which is not in the spirit of cooperative education.

### Work Realities

*We strongly discourage the use of excessive vacation or personal sick leave while on assignments unless absolutely necessary. Students are expected to work the full work term (approximately 15 weeks). Work periods include: January through April, May through August, and September through December.*

*We have had students lose their co-op position due to absenteeism and tardiness.*

*The Co-op Office strongly recommends you check with your employer to discern and abide by their Internet Usage Policy.*

### Grading Policies

1. After completing the co-op, the student would be required to prepare a paper describing their rotation, including the skills learned and used and its educational relevance. That paper would be due within two weeks after completion of the rotation and is sent to the graduate faculty coordinator. In addition, the student would complete the required evaluation forms.
2. "S" grades are issued if both the employer and student reviews are received before the deadline for grade submissions. "G" grades are issued if we are missing one or both of the reviews.

3. \*Per University policy, "G" grades cannot be changed after one year. If you have a "G" grade from spring to spring for instance, you will then receive an "NG" grade and that grade cannot be changed to an "S."

#### **Unsatisfactory grades can be given for the following reasons:**

- Unsatisfactory completion of assignment, including poor work performance, missed days, or other unprofessional practices.
- Work term not meeting enough weeks of work. The co-op term is 15 weeks in length. That's the expectation for the term. Let us know if your work term will not meet that criteria. We do realize that a study abroad program or an employer program date might interfere, but we would expect a minimum of 12 weeks under these circumstances.
- Failure to return for a work rotation without properly and promptly notifying the co-op director and the employer of your resignation.
- Not abiding by co-op regulations as detailed in this booklet.

#### Co-op Probation

Graduate students must perform up to the standards of their departments academically in order to participate or continue in the co-op program

#### Removal from the Co-op Program

Automatic removal or an unsatisfactory grade may result from the following:

- Changing rotations without approval of the co-op office.
- Receiving less than a 2.0 term quality point average for two consecutive school terms.
- Being dismissed by employer for poor work performance, failure of drug testing or other unprofessional work behaviors.
- Resigning from your position without authorization of the co-op office.
- Reneging on a commitment to an employer in order to take a position with another company without going through the co-op office.
- Taking an overload of coursework while on co-op.
- For International Students, failing to notify the OIS office and to abide by OIS and university policies

#### Layoffs or Strikes

Co-op students will be treated the same as regular employees in the event of lay-offs. The student is then encouraged to use the co-op office to find another position to complete the Program requirements.

In the event of layoff, a student is encouraged to use the co-op office to find another position to complete program requirements.

#### Conditions of Employment

Students are responsible for confirming all conditions and dates of employment, keeping in mind that a term is about 15 weeks in length.

As a graduate level student, we expect you to determine the appropriate level of your education in conjunction with your job duties prior to accepting the position.

#### Legal Requirements

Students must have a social security number and have social security tax deducted from their salaries. Students who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents must have approval from the OIS office to co-op.

#### Co-op Certification

Students completing their work term(s) in good standing under the Co-op Program are eligible for certification upon graduation from the University of Pittsburgh. This certification is noted on the student's transcript.

## **Graduate Student Resume #1**

3700 O'Hara Street, Pittsburgh, PA-15217 • [aaa1@pitt.edu](mailto:aaa1@pitt.edu) • 412-555-1212

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### **Objective**

To seek a challenging co-op opportunity in a professional & competitive environment. To be involved in research & implementation of projects related to Power Storage, Conversion and Transmission, grid and systems Integration.

### **Educational Qualification**

#### **Electrical Engineering, University of Pittsburgh**

Masters, Electrical Power & Control Systems

Pittsburgh, USA

GPA- 4.0/4.0

**December 2019**

#### **Electrical Engineering, Mumbai University**

Bachelor of Engineering

Aggregate: 67%

**May 2017**

*Mumbai, INDIA*

### **Professional Experience**

#### **University of Pittsburgh**

*Graduate Research Assistant*

- Evolution of VSC-HVDC and conventional HVDC technology over the years
- Conducting feasibility studies as part of an initiative on offshore wind farm integration in North East
- Market research and penetration levels of major vendors involved in HVDC Technology

**January 2018-Present**

#### **Arrow Engineers Pvt. Ltd.**

*Senior Design Project*

- Designed a power factor correction device which switched capacitor at zero voltage
- Acquired various components after preparing technical specifications based on IS (Indian Standards)
- Assembled the device at factory workshop
- Successfully corrected the power factor of an industrial motor from 0.7 to 0.95

**September 2016-May 2017**

*Mumbai, INDIA*

### **Academic Projects**

- **Offshore Wind-Farm Turnkey Project**-Prepared a complete project proposal with technical specifications, regulations involved, transmission system, civil costs, project management and payback period calculations
- **Load Flow Studies**: Used C++ to perform load flow using Gauss Seidel and Newton Raphson methods
- **Static VAR Compensator (SVC) Design**-Designed an SVC for a facility to provide smooth control for compensation in the range of -150 to +300 MVAR

### **Relevant Coursework**

- Power System Planning & Reliability, Power System Operation & Control, Protection & Switchgear Engineering
- Project Management, HVDC & FACTS Applications, Power Electronics, Electrical Drives & Control
- Control systems, Optimal Control, Design & Management of Electrical Systems, Digital Signal Processing, Computer Aided Power System Analysis, Electric Machine Design

**Applications:** MATLAB, SIMULINK, PSCAD, PSSE, MS OFFICE, C++

### Leadership Skills & Accomplishments

- **Head of Organizers, Energy Volunteers' Group (EVG)**-With the help of faculty, started an On-Campus initiative to spread awareness on Energy Conservation. As a senior student, organized seminars, energy audits and industry talks with representatives from corporates for Junior, Sophomore and Freshmen
- **Cultural Secretary, SPCE**-Led a team of 20 people to efficiently carry out all cultural events (fairs and festivals) in academic year 2009-2010. Raised the budget by roping in more sponsors and events. Took the initiative to introduce new events and community service as part of the college tradition
- **Second Place, Annual Gulf Science Exhibition**-Second prize for developing a chemical equation balancer using C++
- E-mail: [resume3@gmail.com](mailto:resume3@gmail.com) Phone:412-555-1212

## Graduate Student Resume #2

### EDUCATION

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2017.9-Present	<b>University of Pittsburgh, Swanson School of Engineering</b>	Pittsburgh, PA
	Master in Industrial Engineering	
2013.9-2017.5	<b>University of Shanghai for Science and Technology (USST)</b>	Shanghai, China
	B.S. in Opeoelectronic Information Engineering	GPA: 3.30 / 4.00

### AWARDS AND HONORS

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2017.03	<b>Outstanding Graduate, USST</b>
2016.10	<b>Second-class Scholarship for Spiritual Civilization</b>
2016.5	<b>The Excellent cadre of Communist Youth League of China</b>
2013 & 2014	<b>Third-class Scholarship for Academic Excellence, USST</b>
2013	<b>Second-class Scholarship for Student Leadership</b>

### WORK EXPERIENCE

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2015.12-2016.1	<b>Intern, Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp. (HSBC)</b>	Shanghai
	◆ Inspected the factors influencing the bullion price such as trade balance, interest rate, CPI and PPI, etc.	
	◆ Learned foreign exchange regulations for managing well in foreign currency operations.	
	◆ Planned a family financial management according to the investment and financing pyramid ratios.	
2014.3-2015.5	<b>Intern, Baosteel Group Corporation, EM Department.</b>	Shanghai
	◆ Got familiar with the process of steel production, transportation, and plant layout.	
	◆ Interviewed three project leaders of functional divisions.	
	◆ Analyzed the managerial framework and contributed several suggestions about rational planning and information processing.	

### RELEVANT COURSEWORK

#### **University of Pittsburgh:**

Lean Six Sigma    Probability and Statistic for Engineers and Scientists  
Intro to Manufacturing Systems    Data Mining    Operations Research    Database Design

### RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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2013.9-2014.3	<b>Research Assistant, Key Lab of Modern Optical System of Shanghai</b>
	<b>Project 1: Far-field nano-resolution optical microscopy imaging method</b>
	<b>Project 2: Nanoscale detection of the facula and the intensity of the light</b>
2013.6-2014.12	<b>Research Assistant, Key Lab of Modern Optical System of Shanghai</b>
	<b>USST</b>
	<b>Project: Identification of Drugs THz Absorption Spectra of Using SVM</b>

### EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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2017 Summer	<b>Organizer, "Knowing Cup" College Student Social Practice Contest</b>	Shanghai
2014.3-2016.5	<b>Senior member, Student In Free Enterprise (SIFE), USST</b>	Shanghai
	◆ Co-designed the project "Save Our Culture Heritage" and be responsible for the statistics;	

- ◆ Team-worked on presentation, responsible for competition in East China;
- ◆ *Achieved the 1st place in East China region and "The Most Environmental Project"*

2014 Spring **A Comparison of Business Strategy and Tactics in Mainland KFC and McDonald's** Shanghai

**TECHNICAL SKILLS**

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- ◆ Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Power Point
- ◆ Data Processing: IBM SPSS.
- ◆ Design Software: Zemax, Protel DXP

**SAMPLE COVER LETTER #1**

Attention XYZ Company recruiting,

I am interested in interviewing with COMPANY for an IT/Application developer Co-op position or an IT infrastructure Co-op position. I recently had an interview with Fred Smith at the University of Pittsburgh campus, and I would like to reiterate my interest in your company.

I am especially interested in obtaining a position with COMPANY because of its long history as an industry leader and because of your company's wide international presence. I can offer your company strong communication skills, an ability to learn quickly, and considerable lab experience.

I have worked at the Radio Frequency and Devices Lab at the University of Pittsburgh since January where I have gained valuable experience solving complicated real world design problems. One particular problem was how to design a blood pH RF sensor model using a thermistor. I also gained experience with surface mount soldering of resistors and capacitors to a printed circuit board.

Over the summer, I taught myself the fundamentals of object-oriented programming by developing IOS applications for the iPhone. I am currently furthering my knowledge of object-oriented programming in my Intermediate Programming with Java class. I am confident that my programming background along with my lab experience and communication skills provides me with a solid foundation for a successful co-op with COMPANY.

I am very interested in coming onsite for an interview with COMPANY. I look forward to hearing from you and I would like to thank you in advance for your consideration.

Regards,  
Student Name

**SAMPLE COVER LETTER #2**

111 ABC Highway  
Pittsburgh, PA 15555

July 31, 2019

Mrs. Jane Doe  
Manager, Executive Recruitment  
XYZ Company  
400 Fifth Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mrs. Doe,

I am interested in interviewing with XYZ Company during your October 4<sup>th</sup> recruiting visit to the University of Pittsburgh. I am particularly interested in a career with XYZ Company because of your reputation as one of the 10 best executive training programs in your industry. As a candidate, I can offer your company strong interpersonal skills, organizational ability, and retail sales experience.

As a sales associate at Rave, I developed effective selling techniques, resulting in consistently exceeding my store's quotas. Through extensive contact with customers, assisting in merchandising, and performance of daily store operations, I gained valuable experience.

*(cont'd on next page)*

My internship at WJPA Radio and my work-study position at the University of Pittsburgh have provided me with an opportunity to develop excellent oral and written communication skills, as well as experience in researching and analysis of data. I am confident that these skills have provided me with the background for a successful and productive career at XYZ Company.

I have enclosed a resume for your review. I am very interested in discussing my qualifications with you further. I will contact your office on October 22<sup>nd</sup> to arrange a mutually convenient time for a meeting. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

(Pen written signature)

Joe Retailer

Enclosure

#### Post-Interview Thank You Note Samples

150 Farmington Avenue  
Hartford CT 06105  
August 21, 2019

Mr. John Doe  
XYZ Enterprises  
1931 W. Willow Drive  
Chicago, IL 00178

Dear Mr. Doe,

Thank you for meeting with me this morning to discuss the media relations position at XYZ Enterprises. I would like to reiterate my interest in the position and your organization.

The enthusiasm I have felt right along about the possibility of working for you has increased with our meeting. I am more certain than ever that I am well qualified to make the kind of contribution to XYZ Enterprises that you are expecting from your media relations specialist.

I will look forward to hearing your decision regarding my application.

Sincerely,

Clarence Smith

Hi Ms. ZZZ,

I wanted to thank you for your time in meeting with me and setting up the interview.

It was a great opportunity for me to interact with you and learn about the basic challenges that a global company like ABC Company faces. The fact that you took my inputs and discussed how they could effectively change the operations within ABC Company was a highly valued experience for me.

Thank you for considering me for the co-op position and please let me know if there is any additional information that I can provide.

Yours Sincerely,  
Student Name

The University of Pittsburgh's Title IX Office is committed to ensuring that students, staff and faculty are not only provided with all options available to them related to the Title IX process, but also are supported over the course of this process. Title IX prohibits **sexual violence and sexual misconduct** which can affect the educational or campus environment. The University has a responsibility to ensure the safety of our students and campus community.

Whether or not a person chooses to participate with a University investigation, he or she still has the right to interim measures to assist in getting back to class and work. Additionally, anyone coming forward under Title IX will be protected from any form of retaliation related to the matter.

If you have any questions regarding the Title IX process, you can contact the Title IX office directly.

Options for filing complaints and seeking resources, which can be pursued simultaneously:

- File a report with the Title IX office. They are located on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of Craig Hall at 200 South Craig Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15260 or 412-648-7860. The Title IX office can provide you with options and resources available both at the University and in the community.
- Filing a report with the University of Pittsburgh Police. They are located in the Public Safety Building at 3412 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15260 or 412-624-2121. The University of Pittsburgh Police investigates all reported and potential criminal activity.
- Filing a report with Student Conduct Officer, Barbara Ruprecht. Her office is located at 737 William Pitt Union, 3959 Fifth Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15260 or 412-648-7910. All cases are heard on campus by a Judicial Board to determine if a person is or is not responsible for alleged violations of the Code of Conduct based on the preponderance of evidence standard. This is NOT a criminal investigation.
- Supportive services are offered at University's Counseling Center. The Counseling Center offers sexual assault services designed to assist students who have experienced sexual assault, dating violence, stalking and harassment. They are located at the Wellness Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Nordenberg Hall, 119 University Place, PA 15260 or 412-648-7930.
- Pittsburgh Action Against Rape is a community resource that offers both supportive and advocacy services to victims of sexual misconduct. PAAR is located at 81 South 19<sup>th</sup> Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203 or 412-431-5665.
- The Women's Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh is a community resource that offers both supportive and advocacy services to victims of domestic violence. You can contact the Women's Shelter at 412-687-8005. Their location is confidential.

## **Disability Services**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both the co-op office and [Disability Resources and Services](#) (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, [drsrecep@pitt.edu](mailto:drsrecep@pitt.edu), (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

## **Diversity and Inclusion**

The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, familial status, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity or other factors as stated in the University's Title IX policy. The University is committed to taking prompt action to end a hostile environment that interferes with the University's mission. For more information about policies, procedures, and practices, see: <http://diversity.pitt.edu/affirmative-action/policies-procedures-and-practices>.

I ask that everyone in the co-op program strive to help ensure that other members of the program can learn in a supportive and respectful environment. If there are instances of the aforementioned issues, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, by calling 412-648-7860, or e-mailing [titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu). Reports can also be filed online: <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/make-report/report-form>. You may also choose to report this to a Pitt faculty/staff member; they are required to communicate this to the University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion. If you wish to maintain complete confidentiality, you may also contact the University Counseling Center (412-648-7930).

## **Academic Integrity**

All students are expected to adhere to the standards of academic honesty. Any student engaged in cheating, plagiarism, or other acts of academic dishonesty would be subject to disciplinary action. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity <http://www.provost.pitt.edu/info/ai1.html>. This may include, but is not limited to the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating the University Policy.