University of Pittsburgh
Swanson School of Engineering
Cooperative Education Staff
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www.engr.pitt.edu/coop

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Since 1787, we've never stopped pushing the edge of what's possible.

Our History

With the first degrees of "Engineer" awarded in 1846, Pitt was established as the nation’s sixth earliest engineering program. Keeping in stride with their cutting edge, Pitt's Swanson School of Engineering was among the first three 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 afterward, the university's nationally ranked chemistry and computer science departments were added to the program, as well as student from our regional campuses.

The graduate co-op program was introduced in 2011. Since 1987, over seven thousand students have benefited from this exceptional program. Although the program is not mandatory, almost half of the undergraduate students in engineering participate, along with growing numbers from other departments.
Important COVID-19 Notice

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, as will we. 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.

Be aware that your safety at work and beyond work hours can help keep you and others healthy!
Welcome to the University of Pittsburgh's Co-op Program. Co-op is an exciting opportunity that will allow you to learn, gain experience, and develop professionally all while providing financial remuneration.

What is Co-op?

Co-op provides students with work experience relating directly to their field of study. By alternating work and school terms, 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 pay range for 2019-2020 was $15-22/hour for undergraduate students. Please keep in mind that this is an average and some employers pay more or less than the average.

Transfer students can and do participate in co-op.

- 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.
- Financial aid and scholarships are received during the school terms only.
- Participation in co-op will most likely not affect your participation in a study abroad program or other student activities.

Please note:

The Cooperative Education Program requires that you complete co-op work rotations at a company/facility which is most likely external to the University of Pittsburgh, and such company/facility will or may require a Criminal Background Check, an ACT 33/34 Clearance (if applicable) and perhaps a drug screen to determine whether you are qualified to work at the company/facility in question. Additionally, in order to become employed at the company/facility, many states will inquire as to whether the applicant has been convicted of a misdemeanor, a felony, or a felonious or illegal act associated with alcohol and/or substance abuse.
Nuts and Bolts of Co-op at Pitt

- Engineering students must complete a minimum of three rotations to satisfy the program requirements.
- Students typically alternate between full-time work and full-time school.
- Students earn one credit for each term worked; upon completion of terms, credits can be used toward departmental graduation requirements.

- Participating departments determine how the credits will be used.
- Students usually remain with the same employer while participating in co-op. It is possible and not difficult to change companies one time, but our philosophy is that by staying with the same company, you will receive more in-depth and challenging assignments.
- We recognize that students might wish to complete a third term in a completely different environment, and the following experiences can be included as the third term of co-op:

Students can:

1. Complete a term of research at the University of Pittsburgh, including the summer research program sponsored through SSOE
2. Complete a term of research that is full-time and paid at another university. SSOE co-op review required.
3. Complete a relevant full-time internship/co-op with another company that is willing to complete our co-op evaluation and pay our students.
4. Remain with your current co-op employer for the third term of work
5. Complete an international work experience that is full-time. SSOE co-op review required.

- Our positions are with employers who are local, national and international.
- Students who complete the co-op requirements receive certification on their transcript. Please note that 82-85% of students who begin the co-op program will complete it.

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- 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.
- Financial aid and scholarships are received during the school terms only.
- Participation in co-op will most likely not affect your participation in a study abroad program or other student activities.
Program Requirements

Students must possess a minimum overall 2.0 GPA and should not be on term probation. If you are in doubt, please check with us or a faculty advisor. Also, required coursework for each department must be completed, as well as a co-op schedule that is signed by the student and faculty co-op advisor. Some departments allow students to begin midway through sophomore year, and some require that sophomore year is completed before the first co-op rotation. If you are in doubt regarding your academic status, see the co-op advisor in your department. A listing of our co-op coordinators are on page 10 of this booklet. Students can begin the program up until the mid-point of junior year and still satisfy the three-term co-op requirement.

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.

University Co-op Certification

SSOE students who participate in the cooperative education program at the University of Pittsburgh must complete a minimum of three work rotations satisfactorily in order to receive a certificate of completion and certification on the transcript.
Forms and Procedures

In order to register with the co-op program, you will need to submit a resume (soft copy) via email to a co-op staff member; complete online application, and upon acceptance of a position, submit an approved schedule form from your faculty advisor. You will also need to read and acknowledge completion of program guidelines and requirements. The following link will allow you to register and verify your understanding of the program.

https://usr.engr.pitt.edu/CoOpStudent

The co-op faculty advisor from your department (MEMS, IE, etc.) must approve the alternating schedule once you have received a position, but we will accept your signed version until that time should you care to submit one. See the advisor list on the next page for each department.

The forms are available on-line at www.engineering.pitt.edu/coop or can be picked up in the office. This handbook is also available electronically at our website (www.engineering.pitt.edu/coop), or in a hard copy by stopping in the office. We are also able to email any needed documents, so just let us know. When students register for co-op, please understand that our applicants need to be proactive in seeking a position and we encourage you to seek positions on your own. Additionally, our office continually job develops and circulates positions and resume requests. 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.

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. If you have any questions regarding whether a co-op can fit in with your academic schedule, please make an appointment with the Co-op Advisor in your department (listed on next page). Your co-op advisor is here to assist you with scheduling, advice, and successful completion of program requirements.
Co-op Advisors by Department

Arash Mahboobin  Bioengineering  412-624-9819  mahboobin@pitt.edu
Taryn Bayles  Chemical Engineering  412-383-9970  tbayles@pitt.edu
Leonard Casson  Civil & Environmental Engineering  412-624-9868  casson@pitt.edu
Alison Oros  Computer Engineering  412-624-8003  Amm494@pitt.edu
Sam Dickerson  Computer Engineering  412-624-2163  dickerson@pitt.edu
John Ramirez  Computer Science  412-624-8441  ramirez@cs.pitt.edu
Robert Kerestes  Electrical Engineering  412-383-5251  rjk39@pitt.edu
Denise Clemente  Electrical Engineering  412-624-9120  dlc62@pitt.edu
Pat Smolinski  Engineering Science  412-624-9788  patsmol@pitt.edu
Karen Bursic  Industrial Engineering  412-624-9837  kbursic@pitt.edu
Markus Chmielus  Materials Science Engineering  412-624-8176  chmielus@pitt.edu
Ian Nettleship  Materials Science Engineering  412-624-9735  nettles@pitt.edu
Will Slaughter  Mechanical Engineering  412-624-8479  wss@pitt.edu
# Work Schedules

Most students alternate every term between work and school once they enter the Co-op Program, unless there are exceptions requested by the employer or by your faculty advisor. Any changes to your already approved work schedule must be requested in writing to the co-op office and approved by the co-op office.

### Option A

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Any other rotation requires approval by the co-op office and faculty coordinator. Some students can graduate in August, depending on coursework availability.
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. Any requests for changes to the co-op schedule must be in writing to the co-op director. When considering requests for changes, we will look at the individual as well as the impact on the whole program. For example, some students ask to switch rotations in order to remain through a summer. Realizing that many of our co-op applicants would like to begin their first co-op during the summer after sophomore year, we need to weigh the request with impact to the other students. Also, the school has committed to offering a full-time summer curriculum for our co-ops.

Academically, most students should be able to alternate smoothly. Please bring any and all concerns to someone on our staff.

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 highly value ethics in an individual. We have found that it is a rare occurrence for a student to lose a co-op position due to lack of technical ability. Simply stated, employers look for “A” level effort.
CO-OP FEES

Co-op Fees
Students who are placed through the efforts of the co-op office are required to register for the co-op fee for the first three terms of employment. 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. Although students pay the fees for the first three rotations, they are not required to register for co-op for any additional terms. Please keep in mind, though, that if a fourth rotation should occur during a fall or spring, you might want to be registered in order to maintain a full-time status.

Current fees per term for Oakland students are: A co-op fee of $305 plus pro-rata charges for the activity fee, wellness fee, and computer fee. Students pay the full safety and transportation fee. Students co-oping more than 75 miles from campus are eligible for waivers of the safety and transportation fee as well as the wellness fee. The co-op fee is the same for resident and non-resident students. Standard university tuition rates may be found at www.ir.pitt.edu/tuition/pghpafirst.php. The co-op fee maintains full-time status and is not negotiable.

UPJ participants pay the co-op fee of $305 as well as UPJ related fees.

Both Oakland and UPJ students earn a credit each term worked (up to 3 credits), which count towards departmental graduation requirements. There is no fee for the credit(s) earned.

Wellness and Safety Fees
Fee Waivers
Students who work more than 75 miles from campus can receive refunds for the wellness and safety and transportation fees. We will email the co-op registrants each term to verify your location. If you do not respond, you may not receive your refund. Be sure to sign up for eRefunds in order to receive yours.

enables you to visit the Student Health Center, located on the first floor of Nordenberg Hall.

Supplemental Assistance
Occasionally we have students who wish to accept a position but the pay is lower than average or the lack of housing assistance makes it difficult to accept an otherwise great opportunity. Our office has some limited funds to assist students. The grants are not more than $500, and they are limited in number. Please feel free to write to the co-op director if you find yourself in need financially.
Finding a Co-op

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 never have a second chance to make a first impression!

Sophia Napolitano, Mascaro Construction

Co-op Job Fair

Co-op hosts a job fair each fall and spring term. It is strongly recommended students attend to meet employers in person. Students should speak to as many employers as they possibly can during the fair, as well as request interviews. If you miss the fair, you miss many opportunities.

Finding a Co-op through Handshake

Although we mainly communicate co-op opportunities directly to students via emails and the Co-op portal, we also encourage students to view possible co-op positions on Handshake, which is the university website.

Please visit: http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cdpa/

If there is a company you are interested in, do not hesitate to contact someone at the co-op office and we can try and establish a relationship with them. The sky’s the limit, as Julia Jones proves atop of this wind turbine, summer 2020.
Resume Skills

The co-op office is here to assist you with your resume. We would like to critique your resume before you turn it in to our office. Please prepare a draft of a resume that will showcase your skills and bring a hard copy to the office for a final review. We can also do this through email correspondence.

On the next pages, we have provided, examples of resumes, cover letters and thank you letters

Interview Skills

There is also an interview section in this handbook to assist you in preparation for the interview process. We have private interview suites available for student use and state-of-the art videoconferencing capability.

We can schedule mock interviews for you if you would like, either in person or through Zoom or Teams. 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.

Sample resumes and correspondence on following pages
Student Resume #1
1 Main Road, Pittsburgh, PA 151
(555) 555-5555 • str1@pitt.edu

OBJECTIVE
Pursue my life-long ambition of becoming a Civil Engineer by obtaining a co-op opportunity in the field for the summer 2021

EDUCATION
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA
B.S. Civil Engineering
GPA: 2.7/4.00
Sophomore Status

Current Coursework (Sophomore Year 2018-2019)
- Engineering Economic Analysis
- Introduction to Geology
- Mechanics of Materials
- Materials of Construction

Freshman Engineering Conference
Pittsburgh, PA
Steel-Free Bridge Construction with Fiber-Reinforced Polymer April 2018
Persuasive verbal presentation to industry experts and peer group
Materials included a PowerPoint deck and prize-winning poster

CERTIFICATIONS/SKILLS
Auto CAD, Autodesk Inventor, Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, JAVA, JavaScript, C, Mat lab, Minitab, Microsoft Visual Studio, UNIX

WORK EXPERIENCE
Secon Corporation, Facilities Management Canonsburg, PA
- Forty hour per week full-time position
- Small-scale project management responsibilities as Field Manager
- Entrusted to operate and train junior staff members
- Duties included construction, building upkeep, painting, and landscaping
- Was cognizant of and in adherence with all safety regulations

May-Aug 2019 & 2020

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
ASCE Board Member - Membership Chair Elect (2018), ASCE Steel Bridge Competition Member, Panther Hurling Club Co-founder, Intramural softball 2019 (short-stop), Intramural basketball 2019 (team captain)

HONORS/AWARDS
Freshman Engineering Conference Section’s “Best Poster Award 2019”, Four-time Bethel Park High School Athletic Highest Honors Scholar Award (Basketball, Baseball), Mon-Yough Science Fair First Place Award – Engineering Division, High School GPA: 4.32

COMMUNITY SERVICE
Peters Creek Baptist Church / World Servants - three consecutive summer Mission Trips to Philippi, West Virginia involving charitable projects benefiting impoverished residents (concrete work, siding, construction)
Student Resume #2
1 Main Street, Monessen, PA 15062
str2@pitt.edu • 555-555-5555

OBJECTIVE:

To obtain an engineering cooperative education position for the summer or fall term of 2021

EDUCATION:
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA
Swanson School of Engineering; Major: Chemical Engineering  
  • Pursuing an Environmental Engineering Minor
GPA: 3.794

Expected Graduation: December 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS:
BK Simon Family Scholarship  
Twelfth Annual 2018 Freshman Engineering Conference: Session A5, Mechanical Engineering Best Paper Award
Dean’s List, University of Pittsburgh
Monessen High School Valedictorian
Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizen Award, Monessen Senior High
WTAE: Clearview Student-Athlete of the Week, Monessen Senior High School
Rensselaer Award for Excellence in Mathematics, Monessen Senior High School

September 2017
April 2018
December 2017, April 2018
June 2017
2017
2017
2016

COMPUTER SKILLS:
Proficient with Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
Coding languages: UNIX, HTML, JavaScript, MATLAB, and C
Experience with Image Editing Software, such as Poster Artist, and GIMP

LEADERSHIP/STUDENT ACTIVITIES:
American Institute of Chemical Engineers, Service Co-Chair  
  September 2017-Present
Pitt Outdoors Club, Member  
  September 2017-Present
Engineering Student Council, National Chair  
  September 2017-Present
  • Participated in national conventions through NAESC
  • Helped establish BOSS (Beginning Of Swanson School) freshman organization
Lions Club International, Member  
  June 2017-Present
Pitt Engineering Exponents, Member  
  February 2017-Present
Freshman Engineering Student Council, President  
  September 2017-April 2018
  • Sponsored freshman-tailored events
  • Encouraged freshman involvement with the Swanson School of Engineering
National Honor Society, President  
  March 2015-May 2016
  • Maintained and motivated all NHS members for volunteer and academic projects
  • Organized Relay for Life teams for the American Cancer Society
Student Council, Treasurer  
  October 2014-May 2016
MHS Varsity Soccer Team, Captain  
  August 2014-May 2015

COMMUNITY SERVICE:
American Cancer Society, (via National Honor Society and Engineering Student Council),  
  March 2014-April 2017
  • Participated in and helped run three Relay for Life teams
  • Fundraised through school sales and town events
Pitt Make A Difference Day, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA  
  October 2016
Salvation Army (via Leo Club), Monessen, PA  
May 2015-May 2016
  • Helped organize and sponsor three food drives at local elementary school
  • Participated in three “Ring-the-Bell” fundraisers

EMPLOYMENT:
La Eda’s Family Restaurant & Bar, Dishwasher, Monessen, PA  
  February 2014 - August 2020
STUDENT RESUME #3

School Address: 3700 O’Hara Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15261
Permanent Address: 1 2nd Street Columbus, OH 43004

Phone: 555-555-5555
Str4@pitt.edu

OBJECTIVE

EDUCATION

University of Pittsburgh Swanson School of Engineering
Major: Industrial Engineering – 67 credits completed
3.402 - Cumulative Grade Point Average

Completed Relevant Coursework: Probability and Statistics for Engineers I, Productivity Analysis, Engineering Economic Analysis, and Materials Structures and Properties
Current Relevant Coursework: Introduction to Information Systems Engineering, Manufacturing Processes and Analysis, Probability and Statistics for Engineers II

Pittsburgh Central Catholic High School
2016-4.3 Cumulative Grade Point Average

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SKILLS

- 2017 Freshman Engineering Conference
  “Environmentally-Friendly Energy: The Use of Molten Salts as Thermal Energy Storage Media in Concentrating Solar Power Plants.” The paper discussed the numerous benefits of implementing molten salts in concentrating solar power plants and provided a detailed description of the salts themselves, how the plants work and the economic costs of implementation and utilization.
  - Awarded best paper in session

- Recipient of academic scholarship from the Institute of Supply Chain Management of Pittsburgh

- Experienced in Microsoft Office, MATLAB, SolidWorks, HTML, and some C++

CLUBS AND VOLUNTEER WORK

- Society of Women Engineers- Member
- Pitt Make a Difference Day (PMADD)
  - Supply Chain Management Club- Member
- Humane Society- Dog Walker

WORK EXPERIENCE

Ricupero’s Landscaping and Construction
Lanscaprer
- Working on a lawn care crew
- Laboring for other landscaping projects

Marino Construction Company
Lanscaprer
- Responsible for lawn care and other exterior property maintenance
August 20, 2020

Dear campus recruiting,

I am interested in applying for the summer 2021 engineering co-op position with XYZ Company that I learned of through the Cooperative Education Program at the University of Pittsburgh.

I am especially interested in obtaining a position with XYZ Company because of its long history as one of the leaders in the EXAMPLE industry and because of your company’s wide international presence. I am currently majoring in MAJOR at the Swanson School of Engineering (SSOE), and some of the skills I can bring to XYZ Company include: communication, an ability to learn quickly, and considerable lab experience.

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

In the spring of my freshman year, I participated in the Freshman Engineering Conference at the SSOE. I worked on TITLE OF PAPER and (explain research that you did). We presented our paper to many faculty, peers, and people of industry. Our efforts helped us earn the ‘Best Paper’ award in our section.

Over the past 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. My programming background along with my lab experience and communication skills provide me with a solid foundation for a successful Co-op with XYZ Company.

I am very interested in coming onsite for an interview with XYZ Company. I look forward to hearing from you soon and thank you in advance for your consideration.

Regards,

Student Name
111 ABC Highway  
Pittsburgh, PA  15555

July 1, 2019

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

Dear Ms. Doe,

I am interested in interviewing with XYZ Company during your September 6th 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.

My internship at WJPA Radio and my work-study position at the University of Pittsburgh have provided me with an opportunity to develop oral and written communication skills, as well as experience in researching and analysis of data. 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 and am very interested in discussing my qualifications with you further. I will contact your office on August 2nd to arrange a mutually convenient time for a meeting. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

(Pen written signature)

Joe Retailer

Enclosure
150 Farmington Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105
August 21, 2018

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 my qualifications and attitude will 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 Mrs. XYZ,

I wanted to thank you for your time in coming over 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 and please let me know if there is any additional information that I can provide.

Yours Sincerely,
Student Name
Electrical and Computer Engineering Department
Swanson School of Engineering, University of Pittsburgh
QUALITIES THE INTERVIEWER LOOKS FOR:

**Personality**  Be genuine, self-confident, pleasant and honest. Be yourself. Articulate 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 decide 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?

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?

Do you feel you have done the best scholastic work of which you are capable?

Which of your college courses were the more difficult? Why? What type of work interests you?

Under what kinds of conditions do you work best?

What jobs have you held? How were they obtained and why did you leave?

What personal factors do you consider most important in evaluating yourself or your success?

How do you weight career priorities such as job security, satisfaction, work hours, salary, and working conditions in evaluating your needs in a job?

To date, what have been some of your more important work responsibilities?

What have you enjoyed most and liked least about the work you have done?

What work satisfaction or achievements have not been realized or at least have not been at the level that you had hoped?

Do you have a geographical preference? Why? What consideration have you given to further enhance your performance and personal growth?

How do you schedule your time? Set priorities? What are your hobbies?

What do you consider to be strengths and weaknesses?

What was your most difficult decision in the last six months? What made it difficult?

Give some instances in which you anticipated problems or influenced new directions.

How do you deal with pressure?

Do you prefer working with others or by yourself?

Would you prefer a large or small company? 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?

Do you think that your extracurricular activities were worth the time you devoted to them? Why?

At this point in your life, what would you like to be doing in the foreseeable future in terms of your career goals?
QUESTIONS THE INTERVIEWEE IS ENCOURAGED TO ASK:
What are the opportunities for advancement?  
Does your company have a practice of promoting on merit and of promoting within?  
Describe initial assignments in my particular area of interest.  
What opportunities will I have for professional development?  
Does your company encourage and support “continuing education” for its employees?  
Tell me about the community in which I would be employed. What will I be doing?

TIPS FOR PHONE INTERVIEWS:

You should prepare for a phone interview just as you would a face to face meeting, so research the company, review the position description if you have one, and be ready to highlight achievements from your resume.

· Find a place to take the call that will be quiet and with no interruptions if possible. You can reserve one of the interview suites in the co-op office if they are available. Contact one of the staff members to do so.

· Schedule the interview to allow yourself enough time. Don’t feel pressured into scheduling quickly or trying to fit it in-between classes. Allow enough time in case the interviewer calls a few minutes late or the interview runs longer than expected.

· Keep a copy of your resume in front of you during the call, and you can also keep any notes handy (list of questions you want to ask, etc.)

· Answer by using your name. This will eliminate the need for the caller to ask for you.

· Make sure you speak clearly and slowly. When nervous, it is easy to speak too fast.

· Smile when you are speaking – it helps bring enthusiasm into your voice, especially if you are talking about something you are passionate about.

· Really focus on not using slang – watch the “ums,” “ya knows” as they stand out even more during a phone conversation.

· Be convincing – and make sure you answer the questions directly and strive to show that you are a good fit for the company.

· Say thank you – make sure to communicate you appreciate their time, and if you didn’t receive an email ask for one. You want to be able to follow up and send a thank you email 24-48 hours after the phone interview.
TIPS FOR VIDEOCONFERENCING INTERVIEWS

The standard rules of interviewing apply with video/teleconferencing interviews. You can expect the same type of questions and your body language will give the same first impression as in person. The Co-op Office offers videoconferencing capability in its interview suite. Please see a co-op employee to schedule.

Just some additional things to keep in mind:

· **Arrive early** and make sure you know how to use the equipment if you are using something else than your laptop or PC. Either way, you want to get set up ahead of time.

· **Center yourself** in the screen at medium distance. Sitting at the end of a long table might not be close enough.

· You might find a delay in receiving the audio or video but you should be able to adjust accordingly.

· **Still dress professionally.** Some students have just dressed professionally with a suit coat, shirt, etc. while just wearing jeans or shorts. If you do that make sure you do not stand up during the interview! Keep shirts and ties conservative and not too busy. For women, too much jewelry or make-up can be distracting as well.

· As with a face-to-face interview, you want to **maintain good eye contact** and do not talk too much with your hands.

· Be aware that the microphone picks up all the noise in the room. Don't tap your pen or shuffle papers. However, **speak naturally** as there is no need to shout.

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**Interviewing Checklist for CO-OP**

- Dress professionally
- Do NOT chew gum, smoke or eat
- Be early whether it is in person, video or phone.
- Call if an emergency prevents you from being on time.
- Know something about the company.
- Send a thank you note to the interviewer noting your interest and how you can contribute to the company.
- Have a copy of your resume, at least three references and a list of questions to ask interviewer.
Frequently Asked Questions

What is Cooperative Education?
Cooperative Education is the rotation between school and full-time work assignments that relate directly to your engineering 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.

How many terms do I work?
To complete the program requirements and receive certification, engineering students must work a minimum of three, four-month terms, although some students work four terms. Students must be with the same employer for at least two of the work terms. As long as you remain with your co-op employer, you are considered a co-op student. Students who participate in the Program do not have the option of changing their status from co-op to intern to avoid paying the co-op fee. Students pay the co-op fee for the first three terms.

When Do I Begin?
Co-oping begins for many students upon completion of the sophomore year. Mechanical, chemical, materials science, engineering science, computer, environmental, and electrical engineering students have the option to begin work midway through the sophomore year. Work sessions begin in May, September, or January. Junior-level students can still participate midway through the year and easily satisfy the three-term commitment.

What are the eligibility requirements?
Students must possess a minimum 2.0 GPA 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 GPA 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.
I’m a transfer student; can I co-op?

Yes! We have successfully placed many transfer students from regional campuses and other colleges and universities. Most transfer students begin at the main campus after the sophomore year and can begin co-op assignments after one term at the main campus. See your advisor as soon as possible to ascertain your co-op schedule. Sometimes transfer students will need a schedule that varies from the traditional model in order to ensure a timely graduation.

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 intensely 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.

In order to register with the co-op program, you need to apply online. The following link will allow you to register and verify your understanding of the program. You will also need to read and acknowledge the Statement of Understanding guidelines and requirements. [https://usr.engr.pitt.edu/CoOpStudent](https://usr.engr.pitt.edu/CoOpStudent)

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 positions of interest. 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 access will be revoked since they will be done with the co-op search process. We ask that you not share the opportunities with other students who are not interested in participating in the co-op program.

In addition to the online application, you will need to submit a resume (soft copy). Once you accept a position, your academic advisor will need to approve your schedule.
How long will it take to get a position?

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, us 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 that if you are interested in only certain industries or certain geographic locations, your job search can become more difficult.

Don't give up! Students sometimes think that because they haven't heard from an employer that 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 apply for a variety of opportunities and work with the co-op staff.

Will there be a job fair?

Yes! The co-op office hosts two annual job fairs for co-op employers and student applicants 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.

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. 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 sometimes have informational brochures on each company that you can keep or borrow. We also have salary information on most of our employers. Please ask us for this information if it is important to you!

What if I don't have the GPA or discipline the company requests? Can I still apply?

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 your voicemail set up on your 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, they may not continue the interview process).
· The company will usually notify you by telephone or in writing to offer you a position. If the offer is verbal, be sure that you are not committing to it unless you are certain you wish to take the position. You can state that you are ‘very interested, and looking forward to receiving the offer letter’ if you are not 100% sure. You can also ask when the company needs a firm decision.
· Please note: All offers and plant visits should 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. Additionally, we will host a mock interviewing session during the fall semester that can accommodate almost 100 students. 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 handwritten 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 they’ve had a bad 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.
If I get an offer continued...Here are two examples: we have had students register, interview, and then decline a position by saying that they will have trouble completing coursework if they co-op. Academic schedules for co-ops are in place to ensure successful completion of coursework. If you have any questions about your co-op rotations, please speak with either the co-op office or your academic advisor. Saying that Pitt does not offer the courses is not true and only serves to hurt other applicants as well as the School.

Another example: After receiving an offer, some students have said that they do not want to move out of town, or that their parents do not want them to move. These are issues that should have been resolved before the student's first interview. We suggest that you be open, but realistic. If you absolutely know you cannot leave Pittsburgh, indicate that under Geographic Restrictions on the Interest Form. Yes, it will limit you, but it is only impeding the chances of other students who are more interested.

**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 between approximately $15-22 per hour for undergraduate students. All positions are full-time.
**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 final 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 may 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.

**Do I remain with the same employer for all work assignments?**

The co-op students at the University of Pittsburgh usually remain with the same employer for all work assignments. Our philosophy is that by completing three or more terms with the same employer, the student receives increasingly challenging work assignments, and is typically performing as an entry-level engineer by the last session. This is dependent upon both the student and employer's satisfaction with the program. We do recognize, though, that some students would like to experience an altogether different opportunity prior to graduation. Please see the following approved experiences for a third term of co-op:

Students can:

- Complete a term of research at the University of Pittsburgh, including the summer research program sponsored through SSOE
- Complete a term of research that if full-time and paid at another university. SSOE co-op review required.
- Complete a relevant full-time internship/co-op with another company that is willing to complete our co-op evaluation and pay our students.
- Remain with your current co-op employer for the third term of work
- Complete an international work experience that is full-time. SSOE co-op review required.

Please review our section on “changing co-op employers” in this booklet. We expect our students to have at least two rotations with the same employer, and ideally, the student will continue to follow the approved co-op schedule even if changing employers. Please note that employers are not required to take back a student whose work performance does not meet their standards.
Can I accept a "summer only" position through your office?

No. You still pay the co-op fee if you got the position through the efforts of this office, regardless of the number of rotations spent with them or when they occur. We will contact the company to be sure of their commitment to our program. We do not have a “summers only” program. Our students usually complete the program by rotating work and school.

* * *Exception is if a company requires a different rotational schedule than the one Pitt offers. We will try to work with those companies when we can.

What if I lose my co-op position before I complete three terms?

If you are laid off by the employer for economic reasons, you may re-enter the program and look for another employer for the remaining terms, or you may leave the program with an “S” grade as long as your evaluations are completed. If you lose your position for poor work performance, you must meet with the Co-op Director. A determination will be made regarding any further participation in the program as well as the final co-op grade. If you are suspended for academic reasons, you must raise your GPA before continuing in the program.

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 approve a schedule form for you. The schedules are to be completed once you accept a position; however, if you are a transfer student, or a student who is not quite on track, you will want to submit a copy of that schedule as soon as possible, so that you can let employers know what your work schedule will look like.

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.

Will I lose financial aid and/or on-campus housing by participating in the co-op program?

There are liaisons in both the financial aid and housing offices who will work with you to provide a smooth transition from full-time student to co-op student each term. Beginning with the FAFSA application for the 2010-11 academic year, co-op wages reported on a student's IRS return will be subtracted from any other earnings the student might have had for that tax year. This is the same practice that applies to Federal College Work-Study wages. Financial aid is generally not available to students while they are on co-op assignments; this aid will be available for the terms when students are in class. State funds (PHEAA) might be affected by earnings.

Students may live in the dormitories while on a work rotation with a current housing contract. Also, on-campus housing is contingent upon participation in the housing office's lottery system.

We can obtain a reduced meal plan for co-op students if requested. There is not a penalty to break your housing contract if you are moving away for your co-op. The housing office supports co-op and has assisted our students as much as they can.
**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. 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 Canvas. Please see the housing section of this booklet for additional details. The housing office will allow students to break their contract and will work to make sure that you have a dorm room when you return. They cannot guarantee you the same space, but will assist every way they can. The university offers a sublet site at [www.ocl.pitt.edu/](http://www.ocl.pitt.edu/)

**Are there any co-op fees?**

Yes; engineering co-op students will be registered for a one credit course entitled Engineering 1090P (Pittsburgh campus) or 1090J (Johnstown campus) and international co-op students (working internationally) for Engineering 1092. The fee for this course is $305 plus the part-time safety & transportation fee, activity fee, wellness fee, and computer fee. Students will be registered for this course prior to the commencement of each work term. After completing three terms, registration for the co-op credit is optional. Regardless of whether you register or not, if you remain with your co-op employer for additional terms, we still consider you part of the co-op.

Note students do not pay the standard university resident or non-resident per-credit charges, the co-op substitutes instead. University tuition charges can be found at [www.ir.pitt.edu/tuition/pghpafirst.php](http://www.ir.pitt.edu/tuition/pghpafirst.php).

**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 for the first three terms.

**Is there any flexibility with the co-op rotations?**

Although most students are on four-month work and school cycles, some employers have programs that require deviations from that model, which is usually an extension of the work term. If academic schedules permit, the co-op office and academic departments will usually grant approval for a change in the rotations under those circumstances. If something comes up during your tenure in our program that interferes with the alternating semesters, please email the co-op director.

**Can I have a work study position during co-op work rotations?**

No. Students who are on co-op rotations are unable to simultaneously hold employment positions as student workers or federal work study positions with the University during that term.

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

You'll most likely be drug tested. Companies have the right to rescind the offer in the event of a positive testing.

Also, many companies complete background checks, and can also rescind an offer based on the results of that check.
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. Please make sure that you have your approved co-op schedule before coming to the co-op office to complete the acceptance paperwork.

Housing Guidelines

Housing Agreements for Engineering and School of Arts and Sciences students participating in Cooperative Education will be implemented through the following procedures:

- All participants with current housing contracts must identify themselves to the co-op office.
- Students who are on a work assignment during the fall or spring terms who wish to cancel their housing contract for that term will require a memo from the co-op office requesting the cancellation. Please keep in mind that the housing office also has deadline dates, and that we need to abide by those dates as much as possible. Please contact the co-op office if you need a memo.

**AFTER ACCEPTING A CO-OP POSITION**

- Additionally, fall term co-op program participants must contact Panther Central to request a Housing Agreement for the spring term as soon as you are sure that you will require spring term housing. Please note that the housing office cannot guarantee the same room upon your return.
- Process the Housing Agreement by the due date with a $325 housing deposit.
- If you are out on co-op in the spring and plan to live on campus the following academic year, you must meet all applicable deadlines to maintain any applicable housing guarantee through Panther Central.

This means that you will still need to pay your housing deposit, sign your contract, and submit your application by February 1st in order to continue to be guaranteed housing for the next year. Please contact Panther Central with any questions.

- Students who wish to remain in the dorms during a work rotation may do so, but all students must be registered for classes in order to stay in the residence halls. The co-op course satisfies this requirement.
- Co-op students who have on-campus housing and are out on a co-op work rotation can request exemption from purchasing a full meal plan but will still be required to purchase a modified reduced meal plan which is comparable to a commuter meal plan.

The Housing office is:
Panther Central
Litchfield Towers Lobby
3990 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Phone: (412) 648-1100
Additional Helpful Housing Hints

*Co-op employers are not obligated to provide housing for students, although many will assist in relocation.

*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 been on a co-op, 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. Please remember to be cautious about potential scams!

*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.

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, located on the first floor of Nordenberg Hall.
Cooperative Education Financial Aid Procedures

1. If you receive financial aid, make an appointment with Karen Sciulli in the Financial Aid Office by calling 412-624-4758. You are responsible for contacting Ms. Sciulli every semester that you are out on a work rotation to ensure correct financial aid. Karen’s e-mail address is ksciulli@pitt.edu. When preparing financial aid forms, list anticipated registration for fall and spring as full-time. If you know which summer will be full-time academics, and then list that as such too.

2. The School of Engineering will provide the Financial Aid Office with a roster of names of students who will be out on co-op each term.

3. The Financial Aid Office will make every effort to ensure that Co-op students receive an annual aid package comparable to other students within specific financial aid program limitations.

The following guidelines apply:

1. Students must have a complete University of Pittsburgh Financial Aid Application on file with the Financial Aid Office by the published deadline each year, generally April 1 of each year.

2. Students should have a complete state grant application on file with PHEAA or their respective state agency by the agency’s published deadline.

3. Student attending classes during the summer term must complete a separate University of Pittsburgh summer Aid Application. The Financial Aid Form and family tax documents need not be filed a second time for the summer term.

4. Students are advised that University requirements for normal academic progress and satisfactory academic standing apply to Co-op students. Details are available in the Financial Aid Office.

Students receiving financial aid under the following specific programs should note:

1. Pell Grant* -- Pell Grants are awarded for a 12-month period. Students who are eligible and have a validated SAR on file with the Financial Aid Office can receive a payment for any term for which they enroll based on actual credits of enrollment. No student can receive more than two full-time terms payments per year or the equivalent in part-time payments. Deferrals are available on a Pell Grant by contacting the Financial Aid Office.

2. HEAA Grant P -- PHEAA Grants are typically awarded for the fall and spring terms. Students who are eligible for a PHEAA Grant should advise the Harrisburg agency directly concerning their Co-op plans. Students who want to receive the PHEAA Grant for the summer term must file a separate PHEAA application for that time. Summer term payments are made to students at the close of the summer term, generally in August. Deferrals for pending summer PHEAA Grants are not available and students must make alternate arrangements to pay their invoices for summer.
3. **Stafford Student Loan** -- Stafford Student Loans are available to students during any term of enrollment. Depending on the student's year in school and academic standing, separate complete applications (including parents' 1040, student's 1040, FAF and University Financial Aid Supplement for a Stafford Student Loan) may need to be filed for specific terms of enrollment. Students are advised to discuss their individual eligibility for a Stafford Student Loan with a financial aid counselor. Students who may become liable for repayment of their student loan should contact the Office of the Registrar for certification of enrollment of their lender.

4. **Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, Perkins Loan, College Work Study, Provost Scholarship, Chancellors Nominee Scholarship, Impact Grant** -- Awards from any of the above programs will be made to eligible students in equal amounts for any combination of two terms during any academic year. Placement in a specific College Work Study Job is not guaranteed; however, there are employment opportunities available during three terms.

5. **Other miscellaneous grants, scholarships, or loans** -- regulations governing grant, scholarship and loan programs other than those mentioned above may vary. Co-op students are urged to discuss the specific details of each of these types of awards they may be receiving in an appointment situation with a financial aid counselor. Co-op students may need to contact some agencies directly concerning payment of funds during their Co-op enrollment.

Engineering and University Scholarships:

**Email Karen Sciulli at ksciulli@pitt.edu to have university scholarships applied prior to each academic term.**

*Students are generally not eligible for financial aid while they are working with the exception of a pro-rated Pell Grant.*
Class Registration Process

You must be registered for the one credit co-op course, entitled Engineering 1090P (1090J for Johnstown) for your first three rotations; international co-op experience for 1092 (working internationally). The student does not pay for the one credit but does pay the $305* co-op fee plus miscellaneous fees listed in this handbook. The co-op office will provide permission numbers to participating students in order to enroll in the co-op course. Permission numbers are required for student self-registration and change every semester. The permission numbers will be sent to you via email before registration opens for the semester. While participating in the co-op program, you are to follow your co-op schedule and will be most likely enrolled in either co-op or full-time classes until graduation.

The credits that you earn from your co-op experience can count toward your departmental graduation requirements if:

- The required number of terms are completed (a minimum of three terms for engineering students)
- A final project that is determined by your co-op faculty advisor is completed
- All evaluations are completed and returned

Many students will receive a letter grade for their co-op experience. You can check with your department or our website to determine how the credits will be utilized and graded.

Sometimes students will work more than the above-mentioned required number of terms. It is not necessary to register for the co-op course for additional terms; however, it is important to remember that if this work session occurs during a fall or spring term, that you might wish to be registered in order to be considered a student with full-time status. If the additional term occurs during the summer, you will most likely not need to register for the co-op credit.

You will ultimately earn at the most a three-credit grade for co-op, and if the student registers for additional terms, it will appear on the grade report as an “S”

If you accept a position through the efforts of the co-op office, you will pay the fee for the first three terms that you work. Co-op students will be registered for the co-op class and pay the fee for each term worked up to and including three terms; for any additional terms, students will have the option of registering for the credit or not. If a student decides to register for the 4th term, an “S” will be issued for that term, and the transcript will indicate that a student participated in co-op for 4 terms.

Students who accept a co-op position through our office and then work “summers only” will still pay the co-op fee.

Summer Flat Rate

Students will receive a flat rate of tuition during the summer term if it is to their advantage.
**Fee Waivers**

Students who work more than 75 miles from campus can receive refunds for the wellness and safety and transportation fees. We will email the co-op registrants each term to verify your location. If you do not respond, you may not receive your refund. Be sure to sign up for eRefunds in order to receive yours.

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**Changing Co-op Employers**

While most of our students remain with the same company for all rotations, some of our students either wish to change companies, or find themselves needing to find a new employer.

If your assignment at your current employer warrants some change (increased responsibilities, change in department, etc.), contact us as soon as possible during the term in order that we can try to remedy the situation. We also have a six-week evaluation in place to circumvent such concerns and are often very successful in dealing with any problems the student may have.

If at the completion of the semester you still want to change companies, you are free to do so.

In order to change positions, the student must submit a letter of resignation via email to the employer and copy the co-op office on the email. Under no circumstances will we work with a student on a “wait and see” premise; in other words, the student cannot hold onto his or her assignment until something better comes along. Resignation letters must be submitted to the co-op office and the co-op employer **within a month** of the student leaving the work site. It’s easy to change employers the right way. You don’t want to risk losing a good recommendation with your previous employer or put yourself in jeopardy with the co-op program.

If things don’t work out with your first employer, as earlier stated, students have the option to resign and seek another position. In order to receive the co-op certification, students must be with one employer for at least two terms of work. We will assist the students in finding another position with the expectation that they will be adhering to their initial approved co-op schedule and have officially resigned from their co-op employer. If a student decides to deviate from the approved schedule and obtain another opportunity on their own, the co-op office will determine if the offer can be accepted for the subsequent rotations.

In the event of layoff, a student is strongly encouraged to use the co-op office to find another position to complete program requirements.
**PLEASE NOTE:** If you are add/dropped into the co-op engineering course, you will not receive a second invoice. You can verify the amount you owe checking your account through my.pitt.edu, or by contacting student accounts (412-624-7575, 201 Thackeray). You are responsible for settling your invoice by your due date, or you will be assessed a late fee.

While you are on a co-op work assignment, you will register for classes for the following term through your individual departments. The undergrad coordinator will be in touch with you!

Students are responsible for registering for their academic classes and responding to departmental emails and notices in a timely manner.

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**Changes to Your Co-op Schedule**

Co-op is a three-term alternating commitment. You are expected to work the alternating rotations, and any requests for changes in the schedule must be communicated to the co-op office first, and approved by the co-op director, your faculty coordinator, and the company. Just because your employer agrees to the change does not matter. You still need approval from the co-op office and the faculty advisor. All requests should be submitted in writing by January 30th for the summer term, May 31 for the fall term, and September 30 for spring term.

Please understand the rationale behind the alternating rotations; the School offers a full load of courses during the summers and we must have the students in the classroom in order to offer the courses; we have many students awaiting a placement, and by someone remaining in the position, or asking for additional summer work rotations other than those already scheduled, it can hurt those waiting for their chance to participate. For these two reasons we are strict about students changing rotations. If your employer is requiring the change, please have your company contact us.

Students who accept positions through our office will pay the co-op fee for the first three rotations, regardless of when they are.

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**Resigning from Co-op**

For those students who want to resign from the program altogether, we will require your resignation within 30 days of you leaving the work site. We have had some unfortunate situations where students have applied for other positions, study abroad, and research, only to tell us and the companies very late in the term that they will not be returning, because they wanted to see if the other positions would come through before they resigned. Not only could this impact a positive reference, it can leave the employer without a co-op and sometimes very frustrated.

This practice is not professional and satisfactory grades might not be issued as final grades under these circumstances. Please remember this is an academic program, and a three-way partnership.
**Academic Major Changes**

Placement with an organization is based on several factors, including academic major. Any change in major should have approval of the employer.

**Evaluation of Co-op Assignments and Satisfactory Co-op Grade (“S”)**

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 should 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. In this review we will ask for your supervisor's email, for the purpose of submitting the end of term review.

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 or credit for the rotation without the completion of the forms.** We encourage your manager to go over the Employer Evaluation of Student with you. You will be sent a copy of your review by email. Be sure to ask for your employer’s review meeting before you leave the work site.

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure completion of the required evaluations, but we will certainly help when needed.
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. If it is necessary for a class to be taken, we do not expect the student to leave work early or re-schedule work hours.

After the first work rotation, a maximum of one night class may be taken, as long as it is approved by your co-op employer. You will also want to get an approval from your department to make sure the class is appropriate and will count toward your graduation requirements. Again, we do not allow courses that will interfere with work hours.

Daytime classes are not permitted while a student is on co-op except in an extreme circumstance.

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

Part-Time Work

Students are discouraged 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.

Best Practices at the Work Site

We strongly discourage the use of excessive vacation or personal time while on assignment. Students are expected to work the full work term of approximately 15 weeks.

Work terms are generally
January through April,
May through August and
September through December.

Please let us know if an illness precludes you from completing your assignment. Our employers have been very understanding in these circumstances.

Consider disclosing any disabilities that might help you succeed in the workplace with a special accommodation.

Be certain to check with your employer to discern and abide by their Internet Usage Policy.
Grading Policies

Listed below are policy updates and clarifications regarding co-op credits and term paper/senior project requirements for each engineering discipline involved in co-op.

Engineering co-op students will be registered for Engineering 1090P or 1090J, international co-op experiences for Engineering 1092, and Computer Science co-op students for Engineering 1093.

Be sure that all evaluations have been completed in order to receive an “S” grade.

Final grades are as follows:

Students completing the minimum three-work rotations successfully and departmental final project requirements will receive a letter or “S” grade for these three credits. Each engineering department will develop the specific objectives and requirements for the term paper and/or final project. The co-op office does not issue the final grade; your final grade is determined by your co-op faculty advisor. Credits count toward departmental graduation requirements.

In most departments a final project is required to use the credits as either a technical or professional elective.

Students who opt out of the final project but who have successfully completed the three work sessions will maintain their “S” grades for co-op and will receive certification.

“U”, “G” or “NC” grades can be given for the following reasons:

- 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.

- Unsatisfactory completion of assignment, including poor work performance, missed days, or other unprofessional work practices

- Failure to return for a work rotation without properly and promptly notifying the co-op director and the employer of your resignation. Again, this resignation needs to be received within 30 days of you leaving the most recent work term.

- Not abiding by co-op regulations as detailed in this booklet.

Students who voluntarily leave the co-op program in good standing after 1 or 2 rotations will retain their "S" grades, but the credits will not count toward departmental graduation requirements until the minimum 3 co-op terms and the final papers/projects are completed. Good standing also includes a timely resignation as detailed above.

Students who lose their co-op positions for reasons beyond their control (i.e., strikes, layoffs) can be issued an "S" for the term or terms worked. We can also help you find a new position for the remaining term(s) to receive full credit and grade for the co-op experience.

Please feel free to call our offices if you have questions on any information regarding the term paper or handling of co-op credits. We do understand that sometimes situations arise including sickness, hospitalization, etc., and we are willing to work with students under these circumstances.

*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."
Removal from the Co-op Program

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

- Changing rotations or terms of co-op agreement without approval of 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 following the proper steps.
- 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.

Co-op Probation

Probation will result if the student fails to maintain a 2.0/4.0 term grade point average.

Cooperative education students receiving less than a 2.0 grade point average for any term, regardless of the overall GPA, will automatically be placed on probation with the Cooperative Engineering Education Program. The student's co-op employer will be notified if a work rotation is immediately following the probation.

Students need to alert the co-op office immediately upon receiving their grades for the term if they earned below a 2.0 GPA. Failure to do so can put your co-op in jeopardy.

Students on probation for one term may still participate in the program as long as they have permission from:

The Cooperative Engineering Education Office Their Undergraduate Co-op Coordinator and The Company of employment

Any student who receives less than a 2.0 for two terms can be dismissed from the Cooperative Education Program. A student on probation who begins a work term may still be dismissed even if he/she is already at the work-site. Dismissed students forfeit all Cooperative Engineering Education Fees once the add/drop period has ended.
Layoffs/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.

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. Note you should be working on site and in a professional environment, not remotely unless approved by the Director of the Co-op program.

Co-op as Professional Environment
Because we view the co-op program as a professional learning experience, we expect the student to be at the worksite. We do not support co-ops working from home. During the last rotation of co-op, there may be some flexibility with this.

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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.

Term Paper/Project
To complete the academic requirements of the Cooperative Engineering Education Program, each student must submit a term paper and/or poster presentation to the co-op advisor from their department. The departments decide upon the co-op letter grade or a pass/fail grade.

If submitting a paper, it must be on cooperative engineering education both in general terms and specific terms regarding their own co-op experience. The general section should discuss the student's own work experience including: the educational value of the co-op; the relationship between the job and college; which courses were the most helpful; and the overall value of participating in co-op. The student will then receive a final grade for the cooperative engineering education credits. Please note: Specific details and grading procedures from each department on what the paper should encompass are available on each department's website.
Study Abroad
It is possible to study abroad and to co-op; however, this takes planning. When formulating your co-op schedule, the co-op office advises you meet with both the Study Abroad Office and the departmental co-op faculty advisor.
When you apply for a Study Abroad Program, please advise the Co-op Office.

Student and Work Study Positions during the Co-op
Students who are on co-op rotations are unable to simultaneously hold employment positions as student workers or federal work study positions with the University during that term.

Post Graduate Report
We will ask you to complete a post graduate survey. This survey is confidential, but we do ask for salary information so that we can give an average range to our graduates when they are receiving full-time offers. We appreciate the completion of this form. We hope to hear from you through the years!

Co-op Certification
Students completing a minimum of three work terms 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.

Recognition Dinner
Each year we honor our co-op graduates at a dinner where they are awarded a Certificate of Program Completion by the Dean. Family, employers, and faculty and staff are invited to this event.
Each of our Industry Partners follow our Program Guidelines for Employers:

General

1. The co-op program is a three-way partnership involving the school, employer, and student. We ask that you apprise us as soon as possible of any issues regarding work schedules, job performance, layoffs, and permanent job offers upon graduation.

Assuming that the student's work performance is satisfactory and economic conditions are viable, the employer is expected to commit to a minimum of three alternating work periods for the successful completion of the co-op experience.

2. Job assignments must be related to the student's major field of study. Diversification is encouraged to afford the student a range of training and experience. The technical level should increase as the student demonstrates competency and progresses through the program.

3. Students cannot switch from the cooperative education program to summer, permanent, or part-time employment. There is a philosophy to cooperative education that the rotation between school and work benefits both the student and employer due to the progression in academics coupled with exposure to the work environment.

Requesting that the student work part-time while on a full-time academic rotation or begin working full-time prior to graduation can put the student in academic jeopardy and is not in the spirit of the program. We realize there may be some exceptions to this guideline and ask that you work with the co-op office with any requests outside of the original co-op schedule.

It is fundamental to the University of Pittsburgh Cooperative Engineering Education Program that the students alternate work periods with academic sessions. Deviation from the original work-school rotation cycle should be made only with agreement from the University of Pittsburgh. This includes students working double rotations or requests from employers to complete an assignment on a part-time basis.

Additionally, students should not be taking daytime classes while on a co-op assignment. If there is an exception to this, we will notify you. Students have schedules in place to ensure that they can work full-time, and only in an extreme case would a daytime class be permitted. We appreciate your support. Students are permitted to take one night course on the second or third co-op terms as long as it does not interfere with work responsibilities.

Co-op positions are considered professional in nature and may therefore require overtime, weekends, or irregular hours. We do not allow students to work part-time for other employers while on a co-op rotation without the employer's permission.

4. We ask that you do not approach us with a request to refer either only minority, only non-minority, only female or only male students for co-op positions with your organizations. We are committed to placing our co-op students without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicaps or status as veteran.

5. Students on term probation may still participate in the program as long as they have permission from:
   a. The Cooperative Education Office
   b. Their Undergraduate Co-op Coordinator
   c. The Company of Employment
Industrial Partners continued

Any student on co-op probation should not work two consecutive terms, but should return to school after the first rotation.

Any student who receives less than a 2.0 for two terms can be suspended from the Cooperative Engineering Education Program. A student on probation who begins a work term may still be dismissed even if he/she is already at the worksite. The employer reserves the right to either terminate or continue employment of the dismissed student.

6. The Co-op Coordinator and/or the Director may visit the work site and review the program.

7. Students should be working on-site in a professional environment while on rotation. Students should work as close to 15 weeks on a rotation as possible.

8. Employers may receive requests for "at work" photographs of co-op students. The photographs are for various publicity activities.

Specifically

1. Please complete and return to the co-op office the “Employer Information Form” prior to the referral of students for employment consideration.

2. Written job offers with details and conditions of employment should be issued to the student with copies to the appropriate university and company officials.

3. If you have difficulties contacting candidates by telephone, please do not hesitate to contact us at 412-624-9826 or by email to assist you. Students often have hectic, irregular schedules; therefore, it may be easier for us to reach them.

4. Initial work assignments should include an orientation to company policies and procedures.

5. Employers are expected to assign students to qualified supervisors who share an interest and enthusiasm for developing new employees.

6. Each co-op student must be evaluated by the employer on the form provided by the Engineering Cooperative Education office. The completed evaluation form should be discussed with the student and returned to the co-op office within the specified time period.

7. Approximate start dates for co-op work assignments are May 1, September 1, and January 1. Students should expect to work about 15 weeks each term, working full-time hours.

Please let us know if you have any employer related issues. We are here to help.
Title IX

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 5th 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, 2nd 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 19th 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, (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:


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. 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](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.