



## CLARK COLLEGE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver, WA 98663-3598

### WHAT IS CO-OP/INTERNSHIP?

Cooperative Education (Co-op)/Internship – this work experience is a partnership among employers, students, and the college, designed to provide students with on-the-job training, college credit, and in most cases, wages. Co-op/Internship is an integral part of degree and certificate programs that enhances the educational process for students by integrating classroom instruction with hands-on experience. This union results in a learning experience not available in the classroom, and an enriched work experience.

The Co-op/Internship office, in Career Services, helps students find resources for Co-op/Internships related to their major course of study. Under the supervision of their Co-op Faculty/Coordinator and employer, students connect work and study by developing a set of individualized Learning Objectives.

Every year over 200 Clark College students work for employers such as Clark Public Utilities District, Vancouver Clinic, Bonneville Power Administration, Columbia Machine, Walt Disney World, and many others.

If you would like more information please contact:

**Clark College, Career Services**

**Internship Coordinator**

**(360) 992-2154**

**[careerservices@clark.edu](mailto:careerservices@clark.edu)**

# ADVANTAGES OF CO-OP/INTERNSHIP

## ADVANTAGES TO THE EMPLOYER

*“Clark College is an institution that I can depend on when searching for qualified-diverse applicants of outstanding moral fiber, motivation to get the job done, and dependability to finish the tasks at hand for the good of the project.”*

Agency Recruiter, Bonneville Power Administration

*“The Walt Disney World College Program gives Clark College students the opportunity to expand their knowledge and develop a unique insight into one of the most renowned companies in the world. Through this program, students at Clark College have the opportunity to participate in educational courses and earn college credit. They can also gain exposure to several different career paths through our informal networking events. It is truly an experience that will allow Clark College students to develop both personally and professionally.”-*

Walt Disney World College Program Recruiting

Every year, more area employers enjoy the advantages of hiring Clark College Co-op/Internship students. Your business may also benefit because the Cooperative Education program provides:

- Cost-effective recruiting tool for potential career employees
- Access to pre-screened, motivated students who possess a wide range of skills
- The opportunity to meet immediate, long-range, or temporary (3 month minimum) personnel needs
- Professional guidance of trainees by Clark College instructors
- Opportunity to participate in and influence the educational process
- The chance to perform public service and reap the benefits of an enhanced public image

## ADVANTAGES TO THE STUDENT

*“Doing this co-op has been a real eye-opener for me because it allowed me to see if I still wanted to pursue the degree for this field. Experiencing it has made me more determined to seek out my degree in human resources management.”*

May Wiger, Human Resources Intern

- College credit toward a degree or certificate
- Reinforces classroom learning and increases motivation to learn
- Valuable work experience related to career goals
- Integrates theory with practical job experience
- Establishes productive work habits and attitudes
- Enhances academic and overall college experience
- Money for college expenses

# RESPONSIBILITIES

## EMPLOYER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The majority of responsibility within the Co-op/Internship program rests with the student. However, the employer's participation does require:

- The willingness to work with students
- Selecting students according to the organization's standard hiring procedures
- Helping the student and College Co-op Faculty/Coordinator formulate learning objectives (the student's personalized goals for betterment at work) at the beginning of each quarter
- Providing a safe working environment
- Acquainting the student with the standards of your business and field
- Reporting changes in the student's employment status to the College Faculty/Coordinator
- Signing the Training Agreement/Learning Objectives Form
- Evaluating the student's work performance

## FACULTY/COORDINATOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of Clark's Co-op Faculty/Coordinators is to provide students with the means to cross the bridge between academic training and the working world. His/her role is to:

- Help develop placement sites for Co-op/Internship students
- Give student permission to register for Co-op/Internship program
- Assist students in setting clear and measurable learning objectives
- Meet at the workplace once or twice each quarter with students and employers
- Facilitate employer evaluation of students at the end of each quarter
- Assign credits and a grade based on completion of course requirements

## STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Students also have obligations to their employers and Co-op Faculty/Coordinator.

Students must:

- Complete a successful job interview
- Be enrolled in course work related to the job
- Obtain permission to register from Co-op Faculty/Coordinator
- Register for Co-op 199
- Enroll in Co-op/Internship Work Experience Seminar, when appropriate
- Complete Co-op/Internship Training Agreement/Learning Objectives form
- Meet regularly with Co-op Faculty/Coordinator to discuss progress
- Complete academic assignment (journal, documentation of work, summary paper, etc.)
- Notify Co-op Faculty/Coordinator of changes in job status
- Notify employer of pending absences from work
- Fulfill individual program requirements

# Help Students Get the Most Out of their Co-op/Internship Experience

The co-op/Internship experience should be productive for all involved. Employers may assist students and help themselves by:

- Telling your new student trainee exactly what you expect in matters of dress and behavior as well as the procedures your business follows
- Communicating with the student and Co-op Instructor regularly
- Assigning an experienced employee as a mentor
- Letting other employees know the Co-op worker is there to learn
- Giving students the responsibility to originate, develop, and complete work projects

Cooperative Education/Internships are available year-round. For specifics on programs within your business's field, contact the Co-op/Internship office at (360) 992-2964. Either way, the program follows the quarter system, with each quarter approximately 10 weeks long.

## A Word about Student Evaluations

Students earn credits and grades for their Co-op/Internship participation. Your careful evaluation of a student's progress and performance is an important component in a student's final grade and learning process. Your evaluation also becomes part of the student's reference file for future employment, so it is recommended that employers take time to discuss their evaluations with students.

## Termination

Every attempt is made to match a student carefully with the work environment and job description. However, difficulties do sometimes arise. Termination may occur:

1. In case of general employee layoff
2. If the student is unable to satisfactorily meet the requirements of the Co-op/Internship position (tardiness, absenteeism, inappropriate behavior)
3. In the case of an inappropriate non-learning work environment

If requested, the Clark College Co-op/Internship office will provide assistance to the employing organization and to the student to find a replacement or position that is more suitable for all parties involved.

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