

# CLARK COLLEGE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (CO-OP/INTERNSHIP) PROGRAM

## Questions & Answers

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### **WHAT is Co-op work experience?**

Cooperative Education (Co-op) Work Experience is a partnership created among the employer, student (you) and Co-op faculty coordinator offering you a unique opportunity to:

- ♦ Establish a connection between education and work
- ♦ Earn college credits toward a degree/certificate
- ♦ Explore your career interests and plans
- ♦ Receive valuable on-the-job training

### **WHO is eligible for Co-op work experience?**

- ♦ Any current Clark College student may participate in the Co-op program

### **WHY should you consider Co-op work experience?**

- ♦ Opportunity to apply skills and knowledge learned in the classroom to real world situations
- ♦ Practice and enhance interpersonal and technical skills
- ♦ Develop work place accountability and learn work environment realities
- ♦ Opportunity to network and develop professional contacts
- ♦ Career exploration – evaluate your career options
- ♦ Graduate with training-related work experience on your resume.
- ♦ Earn money for college expenses with paid positions
- ♦ Earn college credits towards degree/certificate
- ♦ Get your foot in the door
- ♦ Achieve a competitive edge

### **WHERE can Co-op work experience be done?**

- ♦ Anywhere in the U.S., including your hometown.
- ♦ You may seek to develop your own Co-op
- ♦ Many employers offer valuable internship opportunities to gain career related experience. You can search employer websites for information
- ♦ Utilize the Career & Employment Services Center for assistance
- ♦ Consult with your Co-op faculty coordinator for ideas
- ♦ Your current job may qualify for Co-op credits

### **HOW do you register?**

- ♦ Co-op work experience credits are listed in the class schedule as a 199 course (BTEC 199, BUS 199, HDEV 199, etc.)
- ♦ Contact the appropriate Co-op faculty coordinator in your major to inquire about eligibility and to obtain permission-to-register.
- ♦ In addition, register for the companion class listed in the schedule. Unless noted otherwise in the class schedule, HDEV 195, 198 or 200 (choose 1).
- ♦ If you don't know who the coordinator is for your major, contact the Co-op office at 992-2391
- ♦ You **must** have an approved Co-op job before registering for credits.

### **WHEN can Co-op work experience be done?**

- ♦ You may participate in any or all academic quarters: fall, winter, spring and/or summer (Some departments may vary, check with your Co-op faculty coordinator)

### **How is credit earned and does it count toward your degree?**

- ♦ Ratio is usually one credit per 30 hours worked over the course of the quarter, up to a maximum of 5 credits each quarter
- ♦ Students have the option of earning 1-5 credits per quarter for their work experience and an additional 1-2 credits for attending a required companion class. (see schedule)
- ♦ A maximum of 15 Co-op credits is possible while at Clark.
- ♦ Co-op credits are required for some degrees; for others, they may be used as elective credit and are transferable to most four-year institutions.
- ♦ Requirements vary and you should inquire if you have any doubts about their applicability.

### **How are Co-op Experiences compensated?**

- ♦ Paid positions are possible, but not guaranteed
- ♦ Excellent training and experience is available for students willing to take an unpaid position, particularly in journalism, media, computer technology, and political science.
- ♦ Volunteer positions are also valuable sources for quality work experience
- ♦ Some unpaid positions offer a stipend

### **How do students rate their Co-op Experience?**

*"I was able to walk away with a practical understanding pertaining to many of the theories taught in the classroom. Overall, this was an excellent opportunity that facilitated my decision to move ahead with a career change."*

*"Having objectives/activities to strive toward this quarter has made possible further advancements in my job."*

*"The internship helped me to evolve in my career goals, and opened me up to so many other options in life."*

*"It would be hard to learn about diversity, guest relations, communication, problem solving, having a positive attitude and so many more things without being in an actual work environment."*

**Graduates with a Co-op Work Experience have a competitive edge.**

**In today's competitive society, sometimes a college degree alone is not enough to land an entry-level salaried position. Most employers require work experience and a college degree.**

*For more information or questions, contact*

The Career Services - PUB 002

*Co-op Coordinator*

360-992-2902 ▪ [careerservices@clark.edu](mailto:careerservices@clark.edu)

Or

**Your Co-op faculty coordinator for relevant department**

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