

Questions & Answers

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 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 Career Services 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 position 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, a college degree alone may not be enough to land an entry-level salaried position.

Most employers require work experience and a college degree.

For more information or questions, contact

Career Services - Gaiser Hall 108

Carolyn Johnson, Co-op/Internship Coordinator

(360) 992-2391 | cjohnson@clark.edu

or

Your Co-op Faculty Instructor for relevant department