

Experiential Education Guide

For Advisors

This guide was developed to provide the academic advisors from the College of Engineering with important information about the college's experiential education program. It is intended to provide a general understanding of the program and assist with advising students.

Engineering internships and co-ops are professional work experiences in which students perform engineering-related tasks outside of the traditional classroom environment. Internships and co-ops are not required by the College, but they are highly encouraged because of the learning and developmental benefits as well as future employment possibilities that they provide. The College has worked to create a barrier-free environment so all students can participate. This includes:

- No defined start date
- No GPA requirement but the student must be in Good Academic Standing
- No tuition or fees
- Full-time student status is retained

BENEFITS

Experiential education experiences exist primarily for the student developmental benefits. Many employers expect students to have an experiential education experience before they graduate. Students that have an internship or co-op prior to graduation have more of a competitive edge for full-time positions at graduation. Employers also benefit from the real work that internship and co-op students are accomplishing while putting their technical skills into practice. While there is a significant recruiting benefit to the employers, the interns should be the primary benefactors. Some of the student benefits include:

- An enhanced career exploration and clarification of career goals
- A practical work experience that supplements classroom learning
- A more competitive edge for full-time positions at graduation
- A greater understanding and appreciation of educational needs and objectives
- An improved ability to apply knowledge and make connections between theory and practice
- Opportunities to develop interpersonal and group communication skills
- A greater sense of responsibility, self-confidence, and maturity
- Professional networking opportunities
- Internships or co-ops that are registered with an educational institution can usually be counted towards the work experience requirements needed to qualify for a professional engineering license. This is a reason it's important to register summer internships!
- Internships pay well above minimum wage
- Full-time student status is maintained without tuition and fees

TYPES OF EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

Experiential education work experiences can be summer internships or semester-long co-ops. In the College of Engineering, internships and co-ops are both academic programs and are managed equally. The primary difference

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between the two is that an internship involves at least 10-weeks duration in the summer and a co-op involves one semester of work experience or a semester and a summer.

Definitions

The definitions used to describe the various types of experiential education supported by the College are listed below.

Cooperative Education: A semester (at least 16 Weeks) or semester plus a summer (26 weeks or more) of full-time engineering related work experience. Co-ops should not involve two semesters (summer excluded) of back-to-back work experience.

Engineering Internship: A single period of full-time engineering-related work experience (at least 10 weeks) during the summer semester.

Parallel Co-ops: Experiential education experiences that meet the work time requirements of Engineering Cooperative Education programs. A student must be enrolled as a half-time student (**no more than 6-9 credits**) and be employed in an engineering related work experience that encompasses **approximately 20 hours per week**. A parallel co-op will be at least two part-time semesters in duration or a part-time semester and full-time summer with the same company. We do not allow part-time summer internships since the time is so short. Since the student is taking classes at the same time as working, it's OK for them to be out two semesters back to back. This applies only to parallel work terms.

REGISTRATION

All students should register their internships and co-ops with Engineering Career Services. While students don't need to maintain full-time student status during the summer, having their internship or co-op noted on their transcript has benefits to both the student and the college. It requires the work supervisor to provide the student with engineering-related tasks, to set learning objectives and to provide feedback to the student on their engineering competencies. The feedback is also used by the college in aggregate form for continuous improvement in the classroom. Additionally, registration allows students to count work hours towards a professional engineering license. A registered internship or co-op will also appear on the student's official transcript. Since employers know that registered internships have some college oversight, they tend to value them more than those solely noted on resumes.

The registering process is easy. The first step is to complete the Employment Acceptance Form (EAF). This is done on-line through SharePoint at

<https://iowastate.sharepoint.com/sites/engineering/CareerServices/Students/SitePages/Home.aspx> . As

an academic advisor, please verify that the student is in good academic standing, will be completing engineering-related work, and (if working over the summer) that it's at least ten weeks in duration. If the student accidentally fills the form out incorrectly, you are able to make changes. For example, if the student says they are international when they aren't, please change this so that the form will not be routed to ISSO. After you approve the EAF it will be routed to me, or ISSO if the student is an international student. I will then review it and send the student an email with registration information.

Registration Deadlines: (Exceptions for late offers – please check with Career Services)

Spring –February 1st

Spring/Summer – February 1st

Summer – May 31st

Summer/Fall – May 31st

Fall –September 1st

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Some students will get late offers. When this is the case and it's after the cut-off date to add the course through AccessPlus, a Pink Add Slip must be filled out and sent to Career Services for a signature. Late registrations must be approved by Career Services on a case by case basis.

VERIFICATION

The following steps will help you verify that a student is qualified to do an internship or co-op and to be sure the internship is engineering-related.

1. The student is in good academic standing – Not on probation (*if summer only, you may allow the student to still register – sometimes getting real experience is what the student needs most – they will be on probation for the semester they return*)
2. The position is related to course of study and is engineering related
(If Research or Disney – please ask Engineering Career Services if you're unsure)
3. Direct student to the course syllabus & how to register:
<http://www.engineering.iastate.edu/ecs/internships/how-to-register/> – Show assignments & due dates (inform them that they will get an 'F' if they don't complete all the assignments or if they get fired)
4. Approve Employment acceptance form – Let the student know that they will be receiving an email from no-reply@sharepointonline.com with registration information.

DROPPING AN INTERNSHIP OR CO-OP

Occasionally a student will ask to drop their internship or co-op for one of any number of reasons. All drops should be sent through Engineering Career Services with notification of the circumstances before agreeing to drop the course. This is to ensure Engineering Career Services is aware of any issues and to help prevent future problems.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Internships and co-ops are "R" credit courses (zero credits) that are graded as satisfactory/fail. There are three easy-to-complete but very important assignments that must be done in order to receive an 'S' grade. Assignment instructions will be e-mailed to the student's ISU e-mail address about two weeks before each due date. The three assignments are:

- **Providing employment information, position responsibilities, and a short list of learning objectives for the work experience.** This assignment involves logging into their CyHire account (<https://cyhire.iastate.edu/students>) and completing the sections titled, 'Student Learning Objectives and Employment Information', 'Supervisor Contact Information', and 'Mentor Contact Information'.
- **Completing a Competency Survey.** Near the end of the internship, the student and their supervisor will complete a competency survey regarding the demonstration of 15 workplace competencies. The individual results are only seen by the student and are used to develop a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. To get the most benefit from this assessment, it is highly recommended that the student and supervisor discuss the results together. The College of Engineering and the departments see the combined results of all experiential education students and use this information for program evaluation and continuous improvement.
- **Completing the Work Experience Survey.** This is a short, online survey (through CyHire) that provides feedback which is used by Engineering Career Services to assess satisfaction with the work experience and identify opportunities for improvement. **See Appendix 1 for Course Syllabus**

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RESEARCH AND ON-CAMPUS WORK EXPERIENCES

In order to encourage students to pursue industry internships, research and on-campus internships are generally not registered. Employers may not value internships conducted at a university in the same way that they do a work experience in industry. They feel that interns are treated as students when they work on campus. Exceptions to this policy will be made when the following conditions are met:

- A position description is provided and Engineering Career Services approves it
- The position must be full-time
- The work primarily involves engineering tasks related to the student's major
- The skills or knowledge learned will be transferable to other employment settings
- The position provides opportunities for the intern to develop teamwork skills by contributing to team projects and demonstrating other important workplace skills
- Summer terms will only be registered with a special request from the student because:
 - They are an international student that needs to be enrolled in order to qualify for Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
 - They are in a 'formal' program or can provide us with a description of the position and objectives they will be working towards

DISNEY WORK EXPERIENCES

The **Disney Professional Program** is the only Disney program that is accepted as an engineering work experience. Any student working for Disney will need to provide his or her offer letter in order to get registration approval. The **Disney College Program** is not engineering-related work and cannot be registered as an engineering internship.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND INTERNSHIPS

International students also want to get relevant work experience but often have to work harder than domestic students to obtain a position. Below is a brief description of Curricular Practical Training (CPT), guidelines on how to obtain it, and information about the amount of CPT they can have.

F-1 Immigration Regulations

Curricular Practical Training (CPT): Period of practical training that is:

- Directly related to your current level and major field of study
- An academic component of your degree program

In order for students to be approved for CPT, they must:

- Be enrolled on a full-time basis for one full academic year
- Be enrolled in a Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral degree program
- Be making normal progress towards completing their degree
- Still be within the original beginning and end dates listed on their I-20

The amount of CPT each student can get is:

- 12 months of practical training after which they can get another 12 months if/when they move to a higher educational level

The steps a student needs to take in order to get approved for CPT are:

- Meet with ISSO and request CPT

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- Obtain job offer letter
- Have academic advisor approve EAF (Employment Acceptance Form)
- Have Career Services approve the EAF
- Register for appropriate course

This information comes from the ISSO office. Should the information change, the ISSO office supersedes anything we have written. <https://www.isso.iastate.edu/forms/CPT.pdf>

GRADES – ENTERING

Upon completion of an internship or co-op, a pass/fail grade must be entered by an academic advisor. ECS will inform advisors each student successfully completed all of their assignments.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY ADVISORS & STUDENTS

1. **When is the last day a student can register their work experience?** *(Later registrants will be reviewed)*

Registration Deadlines	
Spring	February 1st
Spring/Summer	February 1st
Summer	May 31st
Summer/Fall	May 31st
Fall	September 1st

2. **What happens if a student gets an offer after the registration deadline?**
Contact Engineering Career Services and the offer will be reviewed. ECS will work with each situation to get it registered as long as all of the qualifications are met and it's not too far past the due date.
3. **Does a midterm grade need to be entered for an internship or co-op?**
It is not necessary to enter a midterm grade. However, if your advisee is in a multiple term work experience, you will need to enter a grade for each term/semester. Ex: Spring/Summer or Summer/Fall. An 'S' or 'F' grade will need to be entered for each.
4. **Can a student go out on a co-op two semesters in a row?**
No, students may not be out on a co-op for back to back semesters (Fall/Spring or Spring/Fall).
5. **When a student does a parallel (part-time) co-op, how many hours must they work and how many credits can they take?**
A student on a parallel work experience must work 20 hours and take no more than 9 credits of coursework.
6. **What is the difference between an internship and a co-op?**
The difference is in the duration of the work experience. Co-ops are one semester or one semester plus a

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summer with the same company. Internships are at least 10 weeks in duration in the summer. They are both institutionally supervised periods of work experience primarily intended to advance the student's academic and professional development.

7. Can students do an internship or co-op with an employer that does not recruit at ISU?

Yes. As long as the position the student accepts is related to his or her major and the company has read and signed the expectations form with our office, Engineering Career Services.

8. When a student returns from a work term, will they be able to retain their space in the residence hall?

There are several options available for students when it comes to retaining space in their current residence hall. It is best that they stop by 2419 Friley Hall to find out more about these options before leaving for your internship.

9. How do students find a place to live while out on a work term?

Housing information can be acquired from the employer.

10. What impact does the Experiential Education program have on scholarships and financial aid?

The timing of scholarships and amount of financial aid may be altered. Check with the financial aid office (located in Beardshear Hall) and the scholarship offices (1st floor of Marston Hall) for specific information. Scholarships are usually put on hold until the semester you return. Students should not lose a scholarship because of an internship.

11. How do students register for classes while out on an Experiential Education experience?

If a student didn't receive his or her RAN number via e-mail, the academic advisor can resend it.

12. Are students considered full-time students while working in an Experiential Education position?

Yes! Once students have filled out the Employment Acceptance Form, the Engineering Career Services Office will give them information to register for an "R" credit course. There are no tuition or fees assessed when registered for an internship or co-op class. The class is a satisfactory/fail course.

13. Can international students be involved in the Experiential Education programs?

Yes, but some employers require U.S citizenship, permanent residency, refugee, or temporary resident status for participation; therefore, opportunities may be limited. Please refer international students to the ISSO office in order for them to complete the correct paperwork as soon as possible.

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APPENDIX 1 – COURSE SYLLABUS

Engineering Internship, Co-op or Summer Program Syllabus

TO ENROLL IN AN INTERNSHIP, CO-OP OR SUMMER PROGRAM, YOU MUST MEET ONE OF THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTIONS:

Cooperative Education (398): A single work period of engineering related full-time employment of at least one semester or one semester plus one summer.

Internship (396): A single work period of engineering related full-time employment of at least 10 weeks.

FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS FOUND ON THE ENGINEERING CAREER SERVICES WEBSITE:

<http://www.engineering.iastate.edu/ecs/internships/> The instructions include the submission of an “Employment Acceptance Form.”

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successfully completing your internship or co-op, you should have:

1. Gained an understanding of the engineering workplace
2. Developed and demonstrated workplace competencies necessary for professional and academic success
3. Enhanced your career exploration and better clarified your professional goals
4. Increased your competitiveness for full-time engineering employment

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Student Learning Objectives and Employment Information.** Log into your CyHire account (<https://cyhire.iastate.edu/students>). Complete the sections titled “Student learning objectives and Employment Information”, “Supervisor Contact Information” and “Mentor Contact Information” (mentor information is optional).
2. **Competency Survey.** You and your supervisor will fill out an assessment regarding your demonstration of 15 workplace competencies during your internship. Complete this survey near the end of your co-op/internship.
3. **Student Evaluation of Company and Experience Survey.** When you log into your CyHire account, you will be directed to complete a survey. You won’t be able to do anything else in your CyHire account until this survey has been completed. This evaluation provides the Engineering Career Services office with information regarding your overall work experience. All answers are confidential so please be as honest and give as much information as you can.

Course Deadlines

Term	Student Learning Objectives & Employment Information	Competency Survey	Student Evaluation of Company & Experience
Spring 2013	Feb 11, 2015	April 1, 2015	May 1, 2015
Spring/Summer 2013	Feb 11, 2015	July 15, 2015	Aug 5, 2015
Summer 2013	June 10, 2015	July 1, 2015	Aug 5, 2015
Summer/Fall 2013	June 1, 2015	Nov. 11, 2015	Dec. 9, 2015
Fall 2013	Sept 9, 2015	Nov. 11, 2015	Dec. 9, 2015

COMMUNICATION

- Engineering Career Services (ECS) will communicate assignment instructions and deadlines via your ISU email account. All e-mails will come from ecscoop@iastate.edu.
- If you have problems or questions, contact ECS (ecscoop@iastate.edu, 515-294-9536) or the course coordinator.

GRADING

- THIS IS A SATISFACTORY/FAIL COURSE.
- YOU MUST COMPLETE THE THREE COURSE REQUIREMENTS BY THE DEADLINES IN ORDER TO RECEIVE A SATISFACTORY (S) GRADE. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN A FAILING (F) GRADE.
- This course will appear on your transcript.
- If you are terminated due to performance or conduct, you will automatically receive an “F” grade.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- While you are enrolled in the course, you are considered to be a full-time student. This may be important to you for insurance, student loans, and/or other purposes.
- There is no tuition or fees for these courses.