



COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

Academics and Industry

Partnering Together

PITT | SWANSON
ENGINEERING

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM



Partnering with Pitt's Cooperative Education Program provides employers the opportunity to recruit engineering and technical talent while also supporting an academic program.

Students alternate between school and work during co-op to commit to multiple rotations with an employer. Students are expected to progress in work responsibilities each term so training and time are maximized for both the employer and the student.

Although not mandatory, half of the engineering undergraduates participate in cooperative education. Recently, a co-op initiative was also implemented for graduate level engineering candidates. Students represent various fields:

- Bioengineering
- Chemistry
- Chemical and Petroleum Engineering
- Civil and Environmental Engineering
- Computer Engineering
- Computer Science
- Electrical Engineering
- Engineering Science
- Industrial Engineering
- Materials Science and Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering

When participating in Pitt's co-op program, engineering undergraduates alternate work and school terms, and complete a minimum of three four-month rotations prior to graduation. Computer science and chemistry majors complete a minimum of two rotations. Most of our students return to the same employer for all rotations, which gives them the opportunity to obtain an in-depth experience unlike any other. Our students bring a fresh perspective, cutting-edge technology, enthusiasm and talent to the job site, and make their own invaluable and progressive contributions. Our employer partners make certain that the students receive appropriate and challenging work. Our hope is that by the time the student is on their final alternating rotation, he or she is already acting as an entry level engineer. The co-op program is a tremendous opportunity for our employers to evaluate students over a long period of time. Additionally, it is a cost-effective means of hiring new talent into the organization. In past years, over 80% of students who receive full-time offers upon graduation have accepted.

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. At the end of each rotation, feedback is given to the student in the form of an online evaluation.

Co-ops can start any semester (spring term of January-April, summer term of May-August, and fall term of September-December). Usually the work rotations alternate, however we can be flexible with employer's needs if they balance with the student's academic schedule.

Pitt's Co-op Program offers recruiting assistance to make it easy to hire. We sponsor two co-op job fairs each year; they are held in the fall and spring of each academic year. The fairs are strictly for our co-op employers and student applicants, so you will be able to find the students you need for your co-op positions. You will also have the option to interview co-op candidates immediately after the fair. Employers can also recruit on campus, or have students interview at their facility. If you are unable to attend our fairs, we will send you the appropriate candidates through e-mail or advertise your postings directly to the audience you are seeking. Our staff works very closely with both students and employers to try and ensure a successful placement. We can also provide wage statistics and other information to ensure that your co-op program will be competitive and successful with our students.



How to Get Started

Contact Maureen Barcic, Director of the Co-op program with any questions or comments at paub2m@pitt.edu or 412-624-9882.

Complete the needed paperwork to register with the program as an employer partner. Forms can be obtained by the co-op staff or can be found online at www.engineering.pitt.edu/Coop/Employers/.

Communicate openings to Pitt's Co-op office and the best way you would like to receive resumes from interested candidates.

Benefits for Employers

1. Through the Co-op program, companies are able to evaluate and nurture prospective engineers early in their academic careers.
2. Employers benefit from the expertise and enthusiasm of students and find that the program is a cost effective way to complete projects.
3. Many employers use their co-op program as a direct means to retaining full-time engineers.
4. Gain visibility and University involvement by supporting Pitt and our students through an academic program.



The Cooperative Education Program at the University of Pittsburgh's Swanson School of Engineering, created in 1910, was the third oldest engineering co-op program in the country. The program flourished until the Great Depression forced its suspension in the 1930s. It was reestablished in 1987, and within a few years it expanded beyond engineering to include the University's nationally ranked undergraduate chemistry and computer science departments as well as the engineering technology program at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown.

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