

2020-2021
SCI
Undergraduate
CO-OP Handbook



Special Covid-19 Information for Co-op Students

First and foremost, the University of Pittsburgh and Swanson School of Engineering cares for your safety during these unprecedented times. No student should feel uncomfortable or unsafe going to work. If such a situation would occur for you, please contact us so that we can communicate any uncertainties to your employer. We know the companies will do everything they can to ensure your safety; however, if you as an individual are uncomfortable, it is your right to leave the site and co-op rotation. Please contact our offices with any concerns whatsoever concerning the coronavirus and the unsettling times it has caused.

We recommend compliance with CDC guidelines:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/guidance-list.html?Sort=Date%3A%3Adesc>

Be aware that your safety at work and beyond work hours can help keep you and others healthy!

Co-op Contact Information:

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John Ramirez
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Office in Sennott Square

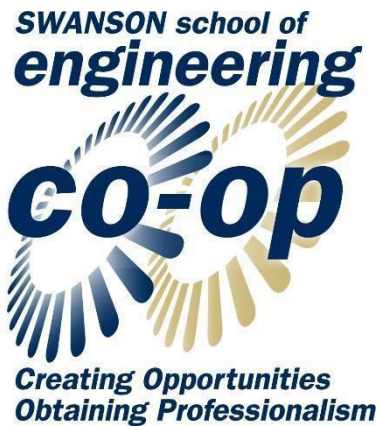
<http://www.engineering.pitt.edu/coop>
[152 Benedum Hall](#)
[Co-op Office in SSOE](#)

Please note

The Cooperative Education Program requires that you complete co-op work rotations at a company/facility which is most likely external to the University of Pittsburgh, and such company/facility will or may require a Criminal Background Check, an ACT 33/34 Clearance (if applicable) and perhaps a drug screen to determine whether you are qualified to work at the company/facility in question. Additionally, in order to become employed at the company/facility, many states will inquire as to whether the applicant has been convicted of a misdemeanor, a felony, or a felonious or illegal act associated with alcohol and/or substance abuse.

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Welcome to the University of Pittsburgh's Co-op Program, an exciting opportunity that will allow you to learn, gain experience, professional development, and financial remuneration!

With the first degrees of "Engineer" awarded in 1846, Pitt was established as the nation's sixth earliest engineering program. Keeping in stride with their "cutting edge," Pitt's Swanson School of Engineering was among the first three established co-op programs in the country. Although the Depression forced its suspension in the 1930's, cooperative education at the University of Pittsburgh was re-established in 1987. Soon afterward, the university's nationally ranked chemistry and computer science departments were added to the program, as well as students from our regional campuses. The graduate co-op program was introduced in 2011. Since 1987, almost seven thousand students have benefited from this exceptional program. Although the program is not mandatory, almost half of the undergrad students in engineering participate, along with growing numbers from our other departments, particularly SCI.

What is Co-op?

Co-op provides students with work experience relating directly to their field of study. By alternating work and school terms, the program enables students to complement classroom studies with practical experience, technical knowledge and financial reward.

Co-op is an academic program where students earn credit while working in their field of study.

All co-ops are paid a competitive wage. The average pay range for 2018-2019 was \$14-25/hour for undergraduate students. Please keep in mind that this is an average and some employers pay more or less than the average.

Nuts and Bolts of Co-op at Pitt

- SCI students must complete a minimum of two rotations to satisfy the program requirements. Some students complete three terms and thus earn three credits. The successful completion of two terms will count as the SCI capstone requirement.
- Students typically alternate between full-time work and full-time school, although some SCI student have completed double rotations.
- **Students in SCI should assume that they will complete both terms of work with the same employer, barring any unusual circumstances, which could include layoffs, cutbacks, etc.**
- Our positions are with employers who are local, national and international.
- Students who complete the co-op requirements receive certification on their transcript. **Last year, 100% of the SCI students who began the co-op program completed it!**
- Transfer students can participate in co-op.
- The one credit co-op course keeps you enrolled with a full-time status.
- Students do not pay tuition while on a co-op assignment, but a modest fee.
- Financial aid and scholarships are received during the school terms only.
- Participation in co-op will most likely not affect your participation in a study abroad program or other student activities.

Program Requirements

Students must possess a minimum 2.0 QPA overall, and should not be on term probation. If you are in doubt, please check with us or a faculty advisor. Also, required coursework for each department must be completed, as well as a co-op schedule that is signed by the student and faculty co-op advisor. Some departments allow students to begin midway through sophomore year, and some require that sophomore year is completed before the first co-op rotation. If you are in doubt regarding your academic status, see the co-op advisor in your department.

International Students

Before registering with co-op, international students are required to check with the Office of International Studies (OIS) to determine eligibility to co-op and start date. Their website is <http://www.ois.pitt.edu/> and appointments are made online.

Eligible students accepting a co-op offer must complete the necessary forms for OIS and the co-op office; additionally, the student must inform both offices of any changes in visa status, work status or work rotations.

Work Schedules

Most students alternate every term between work and school once they enter the Co-op Program, unless there are exceptions requested by the employer or by your faculty advisor. Any changes to your already approved work schedule must be requested in writing to the co-op office and approved by the co-op office.

***The following schedules show three terms; please keep in mind that participants from SCI must complete a minimum of two terms, although three or more can be completed.**

Most Common Work Rotation Options

OPTION A Year First Second Third Fourth Fifth	Fall(Sept-Dec) School School WORK School School	Spring (Jan-April) School School School WORK	Summer (May-Aug) WORK School
OPTION B Year First Second Third Fourth Fifth	Fall (Sept-Dec) School School School WORK School	Spring (Jan-April) School School WORK School	Summer (May-Aug) WORK School WORK
OPTION C Year First Second Third Fourth Fifth	Fall (Sept-Dec) School School WORK School School	Spring (Jan-April) School WORK School School	Summer (May-Aug) School WORK WORK (or graduate)

University Co-op Certification

Students from SCI who complete the program requirements can receive a special designation on their transcript.

Commitment and Ethics

Students who apply and then accept a position through the Co-op Program should be aware that it is a commitment. We expect students to honor the commitment to their employer and to the university. This means that we expect students to adhere to the co-op schedules that are prepared for them by their faculty advisors. In the event that a change is requested, we must have it in writing. When taking into account any request for changes, we will look at the individual as well as the impact on the whole program. For example, some students ask to switch rotations in order to remain through a summer. Realizing that many of our co-op applicants would like to begin their first co-op during the summer after sophomore year, we are unable to entertain many of those requests unless there are legitimate circumstances. Also, the school has committed to offering a full-time summer curriculum for our co-ops.

Academically, most students should be able to alternate smoothly. Please bring any and all concerns to our office.

Participants are expected to serve as ambassadors of the University of Pittsburgh, working to the best of their abilities, and acting in an ethical manner, both during the interviewing process and work rotations. In a recent employer survey, it was noted that employers valued ethics in an individual as much or more as a high GPA. We have found that it is a rare occurrence for a student to lose a co-op position due to lack of technical ability. Simply stated, employers look for "A" level effort.

Co-op Fees

Students who are placed through the efforts of the co-op office are required to register for the co-op fee for the first three terms of employment. In fairness to the many hundreds of students who participate in our program each year, we cannot negotiate or waive the co-op fees. Changing your status from co-op to intern will not preclude you from paying the fee. Although students pay the fees for the first three rotations, they are not required to register for co-op for any additional terms. Please keep in mind, though, that if a fourth rotation should occur during a fall or spring, you might want to be registered in order to maintain a full-time status.

Current fees per term for Pittsburgh campus students are: A co-op fee of \$305 plus pro-rata charges for the activity fee, wellness fee, and computer fee. Students pay the full safety and transportation fee. Students co-oping more than 75 miles from campus are eligible for waivers of the safety and transportation fee as well as the wellness fee. The co-op fee is the same for resident and non-resident students.

Standard university tuition rates may be found at www.ir.pitt.edu/tuition/pghpafirst.php. The co-op fee maintains full-time status and is not negotiable.

There is no fee for the credit(s) earned.

Office Hours

The co-op office is open Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and we are located in 152 Benedum Hall. We have an open door policy. Students are encouraged to visit us at any time and do not need an appointment. This unique feature of our program allows us to more successfully serve you and the type of co-op you are seeking. We are here to advise on resume writing, interviewing skills, job development and to answer any questions that you might have about the program.

Forms and Procedures

In order to register with the co-op program, you will need to submit a resume (soft copy) via email to a co-op staff member; complete online application, and upon acceptance of a position, submit an approved schedule form from your faculty advisor. You will also need to read and acknowledge completion of program guidelines and requirements. The following link will allow you to register and verify your understanding of the program.

1. <https://usr.engr.pitt.edu/CoOpStudent>

The forms are available on-line at www.engineering.pitt.edu/coop or can be picked up in the office. This handbook is also available electronically at our website (www.engineering.pitt.edu/coop), or in a hard copy by stopping in the office. When students register for co-op, it should be understood that our applicants need to be proactive in seeking a position. Additionally, our office continually job develops and circulates positions and resume request. **Your resume may be sent to employers**

where you have indicated an interest or preference. We expect you to respond to any employer inquiries within 24 hours.

We encourage students to look on their own for positions as well. We expect our applicants to respond to the office, actively apply for positions, and report interviews and offers. If you wish, we can contact any company on your behalf, even if they are not current co-op employers. The office reserves the right to remove applicants who demonstrate a pattern of non-responsiveness. Because we have so many students wanting to co-op, our attention must be directed to those who are truly interested in the co-op program.

You will also want to be sure to attend the Co-op job fairs, a place for you to meet many of our employers in person. If you have any questions as to whether or not a co-op will fit in with your academic schedule, please make an appointment with the Co-op Advisor in your department (listed below). Your co-op advisor is here to assist you with scheduling, advice, and successful completion of program requirements.

John Ramirez	Computer Science	412-624-8441	ramirez@cs.pitt.edu
Emily Morris	Computer Science	412-424-8492	emm148@pitt.edu
Alka Singh	SCI Career Services	412-624-0879	adsingh@pitt.edu
Mai Abdelhakim	Information Sciences	412-624-9331	maia@pitt.edu

Co-op Job Fair

Co-op hosts a job fair each fall and spring term. It is strongly recommended students attend to meet employers in person. Students should speak to as many employers as they possibly can during the fair, as well as request interviews. If you miss the fair, you miss many opportunities.

Finding a Co-op through Handshake

Although we mainly communicate co-op opportunities directly to students via emails, we also encourage students to view possible co-op positions on Handshake, which is the university website.

Please visit: <http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cdpa/>

If there are companies of interest, don't hesitate to contact someone at the co-op office and we can try to establish co-op opportunities with those employers.

Success in Co-op

Have a positive attitude. One of our employers once noted that he looks for "A" level work. That means:

- You are willing to work.
- You are anxious to learn.
- You are flexible.
- You expect to make a contribution.

Also, make sure that you respond to any e-mail or phone calls from either the co-op office or the employers within 24 hours. This is critical to your success in the program. Remember: You never have a second chance to make a first impression!

Resume and Interviewing Skills Assistance

The co-op office is here to assist you with your resume. We would like to critique yours before you turn it in to our office. Prepare a draft of a resume that will showcase your skills and bring a hard copy to our office for a final review. We provide examples of resumes, cover letters and a thank you letter on the following pages.

There is also an interview section in this handbook to assist you in preparation for the interview process. We have private interview suites available for student use and state-of-the art videoconferencing capability.

We can schedule mock interviews for you if you would like. Without a good resume and interviewing information skills, you will have a hard time making a good impression. You can also check our website and the library guide material on the front page of this handbook for interviewing information and upcoming workshops.

STUDENT RESUME 1

name@pitt.edu | (412)555-5555

EDUCATION

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA
B.S Computer Science GPA: 3.1

April 2021

Relevant Coursework: Data Structures, Assembly Language and Computer Organization, Introduction to Systems Software, Discrete Mathematics

Current Coursework: Algorithm Implementation, Web Site Design and Development, Formal Methods in Computer Science

SKILLS

Programming Languages: Java, Python, C, Swift, HTML, CSS

Spoken Languages: English, Portuguese, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese

Graphics: Adobe Photoshop, Adobe After Effects, Maxon Cinema 4D

HONORS/AWARDS

Dean's Honor List and National Society of Collegiate Scholars

WORK EXPERIENCE

University of Pittsburgh Computer Lab Monitor, Pittsburgh PA

- Help customers with any services offered in the computer lab including: printing and computer software

PROJECTS

Project Name 1 (Spring 2019-Present) – a prototype iPhone application of a virtual ID card

- Working with other students to identify challenges of a physical ID card
- Built using the Model-View-Controller architecture in Swift

Project Name 2 (Spring 2019) – a Sudoku application in Python

- User interface created using Tkinter
- Uses Top-Down Design to recognize solutions to a puzzle

Project Name 3 (Fall 2018) – a Unix shell program in C

- Supports basic commands such as: exit, cd, ls, pico, pwd, -l and ps -a
- Uses the fork() system call to create new process

ACTIVITIES

Pitt Challenge Hackathon – Contestant

- Built a vision test using the computer as a display and a phone has a controller
- Developed using HTML, CSS, JavaScript, JQuery and Firebase Realtime Database
- Led the web development phase

Pitt Mobile App Challenge – Developer

- Developed an application prototype that allows students to request various types of delivery services from other students
- Implemented the Google Maps API to locate online users and to find the shortest distance between two users

STUDENT RESUME 2

ADDRESS

Cell: 123-456-7890

Email: NAME@pitt.edu

EDUCATION

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh PA

Bachelor of Science: Computer Science

Dean's List

Pitt Scholarship

Expected Graduation: April 2021

2.79 GPA

Fall 2018

Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019

RELEVANT COURSE WORK

- Algorithm Implementation
- Formal Methods in Computer Science
- Data Structures
- Intermediate Programming with Java
- Discrete Structures for Computer Science
- Computer Organization and Assembly Language
- Intermediate Web Site Design and Development
- Analytic Geometry & Calculus 2
- Public Speaking

COMPUTER SKILLS/LANGUAGES

- Java, Python
- Utilization of Java/Python API
- HTML5, CSS, PHP, MySQL
- Windows 7, 8, and 10
- Linux (Ubuntu Distro)

WORK EXPERIENCE

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh PA

IT Assistant

September 2018 – Present

- Twenty hour per week part-time position
- Troubleshooting
- Fix various software/hardware issues
- Imaging/mapping machines
- Active Directory

RESEARCH

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh PA

Research Assistant, Department of Computer Science

January 2019– April 2019

- Ten hour per week part-time position
- Natural Language Processing using Python in a Machine Learning approach to analyze classroom discourse

ACTIVITIES

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh PA

Computer Science Club (CSC), Member

Pitt Outdoor Club, Member

September 2018- Present

January 2019- Present

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh PA

Resident Student Association (RSA) – Advocacy Chair

August 2018 – Present

- Manage student concerns in a timely manner
- Organize Floor Representatives for my residence hall, one for each floor

Greensburg Salem High School, Greensburg PA

Class President in both junior and senior year

August 2015 – June 2018

- Organized and planned prom and class trips for over 160 students

WORK EXPERIENCE

Dick's Sporting Goods, Greensburg, PA

June 2017 – July 2019

RESUME 3

| NAME@pitt.edu | 123-456-7890

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

BS IN COMPUTER SCIENCE

MINOR IN JAPANESE

Expected May 2021 | GPA: 3.25

Dean's List (F17, S18)

Academic Scholarship (2018-Current)

COURSEWORK

UNDERGRADUATE

- Intermediate Programming with Java
- Discrete Structures in CS
- Data Structures
- Computer Organization and Assembly
- Algorithm Implementation
- Linear Algebra
- Intro to Systems Software
- Calculus I-III
- Formal Methods in Computer Science
- Introduction to Computer Vision

SKILLS

LANGUAGES

Extensive:

Java • Python • HTML/CSS

Familiar:

JavaScript • C • MATLAB

HACKATHONS

Games4Health (Oct 2018)

Pitt Challenge (Jan 2018)

Steelhacks (Feb 2017)

EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH (TOPIC EXPLORER)

APPLICATION PROGRAMMER

March 2018 - Present | Pittsburgh, PA

Tasked to go through JavaScript, HTML/CSS, and Python code to certain issues to make the Topic Explorer more user friendly

Altered the appearance of the application to make it more comehensible to the user

Working with Javascript , HTML/CSS and Python

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH (IT DEPARTMENT)

IT SUPPORT TECHNICIAN

October 2017 - Present | Pittsburgh, PA

Provide base level IT support to non-technical personnel within the University

Consistently maintain and upgrade hardware and software in labs and public offices

PROJECTS

PROJECT NAME 1

Present

Multipurpose bot written for the Discord voice/text messaging to play music. I intend to have it also keep track of my portfolio and a few other miscellaneous tasks

Written in Python using Discord.py

PROJECT NAME 2

Present

Small program written for keeping track of the addresses, prices, and size of different apartments

Written in Java

Lead developer in group of four people

ORGANIZATIONS

PITT COMPUTER SCIENCE CLUB

August 2017 - Present

Member

INFORMATION SECURITY CLUB

January 2018 - Present

Member

Intramural Flag Football

September 2018 - Present

Team Captain

Sample Cover Letter #1

Student Name
Address
Contact Information

August 20, 2019

Dear campus recruiting,

I am interested in applying for the summer 2020 computer science co-op position with XYZ Company that I learned of through the Cooperative Education Program at the University of Pittsburgh.

I am especially interested in obtaining a position with XYZ Company because of its long history as one of the leaders in the EXAMPLE industry and because of your company's wide international presence. I am currently majoring in Computer Science at the School of Computing and Information, and I have the necessary skills to thrive in this position.

I have already completed several of my major classes (listed on my resume) for the Computer Science major, and have maintained a 3.65 GPA. I also have experience in Java, C++, and Python. I believe my experience in class and coding ability in multiple languages has given me a solid base that I can build upon as a co-op student.

I'm currently a student IT Help Desk worker in the Swanson School of Engineering. I assist with troubleshooting user issues and setup of new or updated technology. I enjoy working with others and this position has helped me build customer service skills and has boosted my ability to work with other and problem solving skills.

This summer I wanted to strengthen my skills in object-oriented programming, so I worked on developing various IOS applications for the iPhone. I used my base knowledge of object-oriented programming from my Intermediate Programming with Java class and applied them on my own. My programming background along with my customer service experience and foundations in multiple coding languages help make me a great fit for the spring 2020 co-op position at XYZ Company.

I am very interested in coming onsite for an interview with XYZ Company. I look forward to hearing from you soon and thank you in advance for your consideration.

Regards, Student

Name

SAMPLE COVER LETTER #2

111 ABC Highway
Pittsburgh, PA 15555

July 1, 2019

Ms. Jane Doe

Manager, Executive Recruitment
XYZ Company 400 Fifth
Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15219 Dear Ms.

Doe,

I am interested in interviewing with XYZ Company during your October 3rd recruiting visit to the University of Pittsburgh. I am particularly interested in a career with XYZ Company because of your reputation as one of the 10 best executive training programs in your industry. As a candidate, I can offer your company strong interpersonal skills, organizational ability, and retail sales experience.

As a sales associate at Rave, I developed effective selling techniques, resulting in consistently exceeding my store's quotas. Through extensive contact with customers, assisting in merchandising, and performance of daily store operations, I gained valuable experience.

My internship at WJPA Radio and my work-study position at the University of Pittsburgh have provided me with an opportunity to develop oral and written communication skills, as well as experience in researching and analysis of data. These skills have provided me with the background for a successful and productive career at XYZ Company.

I have enclosed a resume for your review and am very interested in discussing my qualifications with you further. I will contact your office on August 2nd to arrange a mutually convenient time for a meeting. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

(Pen written signature) Joe

Retailer

Enclosure

Post-Interview Thank You Note Samples

150 Farmington Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105
August 21, 2018

Mr. John Doe
XYZ Enterprises
1931 W. Willow
Drive Chicago, IL
00178

Dear Mr. Doe,

Thank you for meeting with me this morning to discuss the media relations position at XYZ Enterprises. I would like to reiterate my interest in the position and your organization.

The enthusiasm I have felt right along about the possibility of working for you has increased with our meeting. I am more certain than ever that my qualifications and attitude will make the kind of contribution to XYZ Enterprises that you are expecting from your media relations specialist.

I will look forward to hearing your decision regarding my application.

Sincerely,
Clarence Smith

Hi Mrs. XYZ,

I wanted to thank you for your time in coming over and setting up the interview.

It was a great opportunity for me to interact with you and learn about the basic challenges that a global company like ABC Company faces. The fact that you took my inputs and discussed how they could effectively change the operations within ABC Company was a highly valued experience for me.

Thank you for considering me for the co-op and please let me know if there is any additional information that I can provide.

Yours
Sincerely,
Student Name
Computer Science
School of Computing and Information,
University of Pittsburgh

Post-Interview Rejection Letter Sample

150 Farmington Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105
August 21, 2018

Mr. John Doe
XYZ Enterprises
1931 W. Willow
Drive Chicago, IL
00178

Dear Mr. Doe,

Thank you for the offer to begin a co-op with (company name) in/on (the start date agreed upon with the employer). Unfortunately, I am unable to accept this offer. After careful consideration, I have decided that (reason for not accepting the offer), and I have decided to pursue a co-op with a different company.

I appreciate the opportunity I had to interview with you (also thank them for any extension they might have given you in order to make your decision), and I wish you luck in your candidate search.

Thank you again for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Clarence Smith

Post-Interview Acceptance Letter Sample

150 Farmington Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105
August 21, 2018

Ms. Jane Smith
XYZ Enterprises
1931 W. Willow
Drive Chicago, IL
00178

Dear Mr. /Ms. /Mrs. or To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the offer to pursue a co-op with (company name) beginning in/on (the start date agreed upon with the employer) and ending (the end date agreed upon) at a rate of (wage agreed upon). It is with great pleasure that I accept this offer. I look forward to working with your company and am confident that I will be a great asset to your team.

I have attached the hiring paperwork to this message (if they have you sign any of these prior to starting the co-op). Thank you again for this opportunity.

Sincerely,
Clarence Smith

IMPORTANT!!!

What is an interview?

Typically, an interview is used as a screening process in which you are given the opportunity to learn more about an organization. At the same time, it is the company’s opportunity to evaluate you as a prospective employee. The effective interview is the most important aspect of the employment search. In a 20- or 30- minute interview, your personality, educational background and work experience are appraised. It is usually the most decisive part of your campaign for the job opportunity you want. Initial contacts by letter, resume or application describe one’s credentials. The interview demonstrates these credentials.

<p><u>QUALITIES THE INTERVIEWER LOOKS FOR:</u></p> <p><u>Personality</u> Be genuine, self-confident, pleasant and honest. Be yourself.</p> <p><u>Articulateness</u> Express yourself clearly and concisely. Answer questions thoroughly and in a candid manner.</p> <p><u>Alertness</u> Make your answers and questions relevant and intelligent. Develop your questions prior to the interview.</p> <p><u>Enthusiasm</u> Be enthusiastic, optimistic, and show an appropriate amount of interest.</p> <p><u>Maturity</u> Express clear professional goals. Know what you want. Conduct yourself as if you are determined to get the job you are discussing.</p> <p><u>Motivation</u> Show your incentive and willingness through your desire and interest in the job opportunity.</p> <p><u>Compatibility</u> Express, through your behavior, your ability to get along with others.</p> <p><u>Preparation</u> Know relevant information about the company – location, product, and general knowledge about its business purpose. The more you know, the greater impression you will make on the interviewer.</p> <p><u>POSITIVE INTERVIEW TIPS:</u></p> <p>Some interviewers like to do most of the talking and judge you by your reactions – the comprehensive and intelligence you show. Other interviewers say very little. Their attitude is that it is up to you to sell yourself. In either case, the following tips can be of great value to you:</p> <p>Approach the interview with a positive attitude and sincere interest in the company.</p> <p>Pay attention to your appearance. You want to appear professional, so dress conservatively.</p> <p>Arrive a few minutes early for the interview.</p> <p>Allow the interviewer to initiate the conversation.</p>	<p>Be friendly, relaxed; be yourself. Maintain good eye contact.</p> <p>Communicate accomplishments.</p> <p>Do not monopolize the conversation, but be an active participant.</p> <p>Be an attentive listener when the interviewer is speaking.</p> <p>Respond to questions with more than a yes or no answer.</p> <p>Show interest through asking well-thought-out questions. Ask some definite questions about the company.</p> <p>Do not try to fill in the silent spots. You may tend to ramble.</p> <p>Display your personality and achievements, initiating as well as responding.</p> <p>Accentuate the positives. Be optimistic. Display self-confidence, ambition, and competitive attitude. Be sure your good points get across to the interviewer.</p> <p>Emphasize your special skills and interests.</p> <p><u>QUESTIONS THE INTERVIEWER IS LIKELY TO ASK:</u></p> <p>What do you know about our company?</p> <p>(CRITICAL!) Why did you decide to interview with our company? Tell me about yourself.</p> <p>What personal qualities do you possess which might distinguish you from other applicants?</p> <p>What are your basic interests and your non-job or school- related achievements?</p> <p>Why did you decide to attend college?</p> <p>How did you choose this particular school?</p>
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<p>How did you choose this particular field of study?</p> <p>What have been some of the more important aspects of your education?</p> <p>What courses did you like best? Least? Why?</p> <p>Do you feel you have done the best scholastic work of which you are capable?</p> <p>Which of your college courses were the more difficult? Why?</p> <p>What type of work interests you?</p> <p>Under what kinds of conditions do you work best?</p> <p>What jobs have you held? How were they obtained and why did you leave?</p> <p>What personal factors do you consider most important in evaluating yourself or your success?</p> <p>How do you weight career priorities such as job security, satisfaction, work hours, salary, and working conditions in evaluating your needs in a job?</p> <p>To date, what have been some of your more important work responsibilities?</p> <p>What have you enjoyed most and liked least about the work you have done?</p> <p>What work satisfaction or achievements have not been realized or at least have not been at the level that you had hoped?</p> <p>Do you have a geographical preference? Why?</p> <p>What consideration have you given to further enhance your performance and personal growth?</p> <p>How do you schedule your time? Set priorities? What are your hobbies?</p> <p>What do you consider to be strengths and weaknesses?</p> <p>What was your most difficult decision in the last six months? What made it difficult?</p> <p>Give some instances in which you anticipated problems or influenced new directions.</p> <p>How do you deal with pressure? Do you prefer working with others or by yourself? Would you prefer a large or small company? Why?</p>	<p>In what school activities have you participated? To what extent?</p> <p>How have your extracurricular activities helped prepare you for the kind of work you've done or influenced your development as a person?</p> <p>Do you think that your extracurricular activities were worth the time you devoted to them? Why?</p> <p>At this point in your life, what would you like to be doing in the foreseeable future in terms of your career goals?</p> <p><u>QUESTIONS THE INTERVIEWEE IS LIKELY TO ASK:</u></p> <p>What are the opportunities for advancement?</p> <p>Does your company have a practice of promoting on merit and of promoting within?</p> <p>Describe initial assignments in my particular area of interest.</p> <p>What opportunities will I have for professional development?</p> <p>Does your company encourage and support "continuing education" for its employees?</p> <p>Tell me about the community in which I would be employed. What will I be doing?</p> <p><u>CHECKLIST FOR CO-OP INTERVIEWING:</u></p> <p>Dress professionally for the co-op interview. "You never get a second chance to make a first impression."</p> <p>Do not chew gum, smoke, or use too much perfume or aftershave.</p> <p>Be on time for an interview. Call if an emergency prevents you from being on time.</p> <p>Bring a copy of your resume, a list of at least 3 references, pen and notebook, and list of questions to ask the interviewer.</p> <p>Know something about the company. Websites are the easiest resource, and the Co-op Office may have additional information.</p> <p>Send thank you note to the interviewer noting your interest and how you can contribute to the company.</p>
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TIPS FOR PHONE INTERVIEWS:

You should still prepare for a phone interview just like you would a face to face meeting, so research the company, review the position description if you have one, and be ready to highlight achievements from your resume.

- Find a place to take the call that will be quiet and with no interruptions if possible. You can reserve one of the interview suites in the co-op office if they are available. Contact one of the staff members to do so.
- Schedule the interview to allow yourself enough time. Don't feel pressured into scheduling quickly or trying to fit it in-between classes. Allow enough time in case the interviewer calls a few minutes late or the interview runs longer than expected.
- Use a land line if possible so that with limit any technical issues that might arise with a cell phone. The co-op interview suites do have land lines for your use.
- Keep a copy of your resume in front of you during the call, and you can also keep any notes handy (list of questions you want to ask, etc.)
- Answer by using your name. This will eliminate the need for the caller to ask for you.
- Make sure you speak clearly and slowly. When nervous, it is easy to speak too fast.
- Smile when you are speaking – it helps bring enthusiasm into your voice, especially if you are talking about something you are passionate about.
- If you are distracted, be honest about it. It is better to have a reason and be honest vs. the interviewer thinking that you are not paying attention or not interested.
- Really focus on not using slang – watch the “ums,” “ya knows” as they stand out even more during a phone conversation.
- It is better to communicate sitting vs. walking around the room, and if you can find something to look at (if you can find a picture of the interviewer from linked in, for example) or even the company's home page it might be helpful to keep you focused.
- Be convincing – and make sure you answer the questions directly and strive to show that you are a good fit for the company. Most phone interviews are pre-screening to site visits, so you can also ask what the next recruiting step would be when the phone call is coming to an end.
- Say thank you – make sure to communicate you appreciate their time, and if you didn't receive an email ask for one. You want to be able to follow up and send a thank you email 24-48 hours after the phone interview.

TIPS FOR VIDEOCONFERENCING INTERVIEWS

The standard rules of interviewing apply with video/teleconferencing interviews. You can expect the same type of questions and your body language will give the same first impression as in person. The Co-op Office offers videoconferencing capability in its interview suite. Please see a co-op employee to schedule.

Just some additional things to keep in mind:

- Arrive early and make sure you know how to use the equipment if you are using something else than your laptop or PC. Either way, you want to get set up ahead of time.
- Center yourself in the screen at medium distance. Sitting at the end of a long table might not be close enough.

- You might find a delay in receiving the audio or video but you should be able to adjust accordingly.
- Still dress professionally. Some students have just dressed professionally with a suit coat, shirt, etc. while just wearing jeans or shorts. If you do that make sure you do not stand up during the interview! Keep shirts and ties conservative and not too busy. For women, too much jewelry or make-up can be distracting as well.
- As with a face-to-face interview, you want to maintain good eye contact and do not talk too much with your hands.
- Be aware that the microphone picks up all the noise in the room. Don't tap your pen or shuffle papers. However, speak naturally as there is no need to shout.
- Make sure the camera is "off" before and after the interview. You don't want to be caught looking in a mirror beforehand or slouching and sighing after the interview is over!
- Be sure to attend at least one professional development seminar that will be hosted through the Swanson School in September.

IMPORTANT!
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CO-OP

What is Cooperative Education?

Cooperative Education is the rotation between school and full-time work assignments that relate directly to your engineering discipline. This program enables students to complement classroom studies with practical experience, technical knowledge, and financial reward.

Do I work full-time or part-time?

At the University of Pittsburgh, the student works full-time for a term, and then returns to school for full time study.

How many terms do I work?

To complete the program requirements and receive certification, computer science students must work a minimum of two four-month terms, although some students work threeterms. Students must be with the same employer for at least two of the work terms. As long as you remain with your co-op employer, you are considered a co-op student. Students who participate in the Program do not have the option of changing their status from co-op to intern to avoid paying the co-op fee. Students pay the co-op fee for the first **three** terms.

When Do I Begin?

Co-oping begins for many students upon completion of the sophomore year. Work sessions begin in May, September, or January. Junior-level students can still participate midway through the year and easily satisfy the three-term commitment.

What are the eligibility requirements?

Students must possess a minimum 2.0 QPA overall, and should not be on term probation. Also, required coursework for each department must be completed. If you are in doubt regarding your academic status, see the co-op advisor in your department. (Some co-op employers will set a higher QPA requirement.)

Is co-oping mandatory?

No, co-oping is an option for any qualified student.

What types of positions are there?

The Cooperative Engineering Education office is committed to assuring a practical work experience for each student in their field of study. We work with a wide range of companies including public and private, small and large. We have placed students nationally as well as in the Pittsburgh area. Some students have had international assignments with their co-op employers.

I'm a transfer student; can I co-op?

Yes! We have successfully placed many transfer students from regional campuses and other colleges and universities. Most transfer students begin at the main campus after the sophomore year and can begin co-op assignments after one term at the main campus. See your advisor as soon as possible to ascertain your co-op

schedule.

What are the primary benefits of the co-op program?

Practical experience, technical knowledge, financial remuneration, confidence, assurance, and better understanding of academics are all benefits of the co-op experience in addition to the academic credits earned by the student. The co-op experience has also immensely benefited graduating students in their job search. Although many students eventually accept permanent employment with their co-op employers, many others find that they have multiple offers to select from; many with a higher than average starting salary.

How do I register with the Co-op program?

The co-op office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and located in offices 152 Benedum Hall.

In order to register with the co-op program, you need to apply online. The following link will allow you to register and verify your understanding of the program. *You will also need to read and acknowledge the Statement of Understanding guidelines and requirements.* <https://usr.engr.pitt.edu/CoOpStudent>

The co-op program will post all co-op job notifications on the USR Portal. Students will gain access to the online portal once they've applied for the co-op program. Students can then search for jobs by their major and apply to jobs they're interested in. Students can either apply online through a link posted, or simply check the "send resume" box if applicable, and the co-op office will send their resume directly to the employer. Once students accept a job offer, their access will then be revoked since they will be done with the co-op search process. We ask that you not share the opportunities with other students who are not interested in participating in the co-op program.

In addition to the online application, you will need to submit a resume (soft copy). Once you accept a position, your academic advisor will need to approve your schedule. The approved schedules are provided on page 3 of this handbook.

How long will it take to get a position?

First of all, we cannot guarantee anyone a co-op position or guarantee that you will receive an offer within a specific time frame. You may be one of those students who interviews for one position, receives an offer from the company, accepts it, and thus completes the interviewing process. Most students find, though, that securing a position is a waiting game. Most offers are tendered toward the end of the term, and many students find themselves deciding between two offers. Keep in mind that it may take more than one term to secure a position. You may want to apply to the co-op office as early as possible in your college career. It is our experience that if you are interested in only certain industries or certain geographic locations, your job search can become more difficult.

Don't give up! Many students think that if they haven't heard from a company they are not desirable candidates. That is not the case. Employers are extremely busy with varied responsibilities; the co-op program is just one area for many of them. Again, most students will receive offers if they sign up for a number of companies and work with the co-op staff.

Will there be a job fair?

Yes! The co-op office hosts two annual job fairs for co-op employers and students during the spring and fall terms of each year. By attending this job fair, you will significantly increase your opportunities of finding a co-op position. A booklet of participating companies will be available the week of the fair and can also be found on our website. Please check with the co-op office for details on this event. Not all companies attend the job fair. The co-op office works with many employers and continues job development efforts throughout the term.

How will I know which companies interest me?

You should research any company that interests you on-line. Our job fair participants are listed on our website www.engineering.pitt.edu/coop. We also have a list of participating companies from our annual reports but please keep in mind that this list changes constantly.

In addition, the co-op office has a file on each company. We sometimes have informational brochures on each company that you can keep or borrow. We also have salary information on almost all of our employers. Please ask us for this information if it is important to you!

What if I don't have the QPA or discipline the company requests? Can I still sign up?

It is important that we follow guidelines established by the employers. However, if you are truly interested in a company for which you do not meet criteria, please let us know. We will contact that company on your behalf. Many employers will agree to consider those candidates and some have received offers!

How will I know which companies are interested in me?

Once the resumes leave our office, one of several things might happen:

- The company schedules an on-campus recruiting visit. You will be notified by email of the interview

schedule. We will expect a response from you.

- The company contacts you by telephone and discusses the position with you.
- The company offers you a plant trip based either on your resume or telephone interview. (It is imperative that you have your voicemail set up on your phone. Companies will call during business hours when you are often not available. The greeting on your phone needs to be professional. If an employer is offended by a message, they may not continue the interview process).
- The company will usually notify you by telephone or in writing to offer you a position. If the offer is verbal, be sure that you are not committing to it unless you are certain you wish to take the position. You can state that you are 'very interested, and looking forward to receiving the offer letter' if you are not 100% sure. You can also ask when the company needs a firm decision.
- Please note: All offers and plant visits should be reported to the co-op office.
- **Don't forget to check your spam. Sometimes an employer's email or offer letter is found there!**

I've never interviewed with a corporation before. Do you assist us in preparation for an interview?

Yes. We strongly encourage all students to mock interview with our staff members or someone in the Career Services Office. Additionally, we will host a mock interviewing session during the fall semester that can accommodate almost 100 students. We have found that most students who utilize this service not only feel more comfortable during the interviewing process, but ultimately receive job offers. Co-op employers sometimes offer interviewing skills workshops through Career Services or our office. Check out our important dates to see if there are any professional development workshops coming up. It's important!

Is it appropriate to send "Thank You" notes after an interview?

Yes! Particularly if you are interested in the position. A sample letter can be found in this booklet. It is appropriate to send by email or regular mail. The notes can be hand written if sent by regular mail.

If I get an offer, do I have to take it?

No, you do not. However, it is critical to turn down the position in a professional manner. There may come a day when that same company might be of great interest to you. If they've had a bad experience with you, it's possible that they won't consider you for future employment with them. Be truthful but professional. If you have absolutely no interest in the position, don't take up the interviewer's time by accepting a plant visit.

Here are two examples: we have had students register, interview, and then decline a position by saying that they will have trouble completing coursework if they co-op. First of all, schedules are in place to ensure successful completion of coursework. If you have any questions about your co-op rotations, you can speak with either the co-op office or your academic advisor. Saying that Pitt does not offer the courses is not true and only serves to hurt other applicants as well as the School.

Another example: After receiving an offer, some students have said that they do not want to move out of town, or that their parents do not want them to move. These are issues that should have been resolved before the student's first interview. We suggest that you be open, but realistic. If you absolutely know you cannot leave Pittsburgh, indicate that under Geographic Restrictions on the Interest Form. Yes, it will limit you, but it is only impeding the chances of other students who are more interested.

What if I interview and then decide that co-opping is not for me?

The first thing you need to do is notify the co-op office. We will make certain that your resume is not circulated to any additional companies, to save you the responsibility of explaining your decision to them. Do not continue to interview or go on plant trips. Tell any employers who contact you that you are no longer available, but thank them for considering you. You may also want to add that you might re-submit a resume to them during senior year.

Will I be told if I don't get the position?

Usually. However, some companies just notify the students they wish to extend the offers to for co-op employment. If you have not heard from a company you are interested in, ask someone in the co-op office. We are usually up to date on what is happening with each company.

Are all positions paid?

Yes; all positions are paid. The average starting salary is between approximately \$14-25 per hour for undergraduate students. All positions are full-time.

What if I accept a position with a company but a better offer comes along?

We ask that you consider any job offer very seriously before accepting or rejecting. If you have an offer but are waiting for a possible offer from another company, it is perfectly acceptable and in fact a good idea to call them to ascertain your status before making a decision. We are also available to help you obtain any needed information.

Once you have made your decision, however, we expect you to consider that a commitment to the company. Reneging on job acceptance may cause dismissal or suspension from the co-op program. We recommend that

students ask questions and get details regarding the position before accepting. Information can be gained from: 1. Employer

2. Internet 3. Other Students 4. Professors. 5. Co-op office. Take advantage.

Do I remain with the same employer for all work assignments?

The co-op students at the University of Pittsburgh SCI remain with the same employer for both work terms. Our philosophy is that by completing two or more terms with the same employer, the student receives increasingly challenging work assignments, and is typically performing as an entry-level computer or information scientist the last session. This is dependent upon both the student and employer's satisfaction with the program.

We expect our students to have at least two rotations with the same employer, and ideally, the student will continue to follow the approved co-op schedule even if changing employers. Please note that employers are not required to take back a student whose work performance does not meet their standards.

Can I accept a "summer only" position through your office?

No. You still pay the co-op fee if you got the position through the efforts of this office, regardless of the number of rotations spent with them or when they occur. We will contact the company to be sure of their commitment to our program. We do not have a "summers only" program. Our students usually complete the program by rotating work and school. * *Exception is if a company requires a different rotational schedule than the one Pitt offers. We will try to work with those companies when we can.

What if I lose my co-op position before I complete two terms?

If you are laid off by the employer for economic reasons, you may re-enter the program and look for another employer for the remaining terms, or you may leave the program with an "S" grade as long as your evaluations are completed. If you lose your position for poor work performance, you must meet with the Co-op Director. A determination will be made regarding any further participation in the program as well as the final co-op grade. If you are suspended for academic reasons, you must raise your GPA before continuing in the program.

If I co-op, can I still get the courses I need in order to graduate?

Yes, each student has a co-op faculty advisor and courses have been scheduled to accommodate the co-op students. Your advisor will approve a schedule form for you, which can be picked up from the co-op office. The schedules are to be completed once you accept a position; however, if you are a transfer student, or a student who is not quite on track, you will want to submit a copy of that schedule as soon as possible, so that you can let employers know what your work schedule will look like.

It is the student's responsibility to give a signed copy to the co-op office and their department. You also need to keep a copy for yourself.

Will I lose financial aid and/or on-campus housing by participating in the co-op program?

There are liaisons in both the financial aid and housing offices who will work with you to provide a smooth transition from full-time student to co-op student each term. Beginning with the FAFSA application for the 2010-11 academic year, co-op wages reported on a student's IRS return will be subtracted from any other earnings the student might have had for that tax year. This is the same practice that applies to Federal College Work-Study wages. Financial aid is generally not available to students while they are on co-op assignments; this aid will be available for the terms when students are in class. State funds (PHEAA) might be affected by earnings.

Students may live in the dormitories while on a work rotation as long as they have a current housing contract. Also, on-campus housing is contingent upon participation in the housing office's lottery system.

We can obtain a reduced meal plan for co-op students if requested. There is not a penalty to break your housing contract if you are moving away for your co-op. The housing office has bent over backwards to assist our students.

What if I accept a job outside of Pittsburgh and need temporary housing during either my school or work rotations?

Accepting a co-op position outside of Pittsburgh is a great way to broaden your horizons. It is a fantastic way for you to see what it's like to live in another part of the country or even internationally for a finite period of time. Most companies will offer some form of housing assistance for those positions outside of Pittsburgh. Inquire at the co-op office or ask the company during your interview. When you return to Pitt for classes and need a sublet for 4 months, you can let us know and we will email your housing needs to current co-ops through Blackboard. Please see the housing section on page 23 of this booklet for additional details. The housing office will allow students to break their contract and will work to make sure that you have a dorm room when you return. They cannot guarantee you the same space, but will assist every way they can. Also, the university offers a sublet site at www.ocl.pitt.edu/.

Are there any co-op fees?

Yes; engineering co-op students will be registered for a one credit course entitled Engineering 1093, the CS Co-op course. Undergraduate information science students will most likely register for an IS Co-op course within SCI. The fee for this course is \$305 plus the part-time safety & transportation fee, activity fee, wellness fee, and computer

fee. If you work more than 75 miles from campus, the wellness and transportation fees can be waived. Students will be registered for this course prior to the commencement of each work term. After completing three terms, registration for the co-op credit is optional. Regardless of whether you register or not, if you remain with your co-op employer for additional terms, we still consider you part of the co-op.

Note students do not pay the standard university resident or non-resident per-credit charges, the co-op substitutes instead. University tuition charges can be found at www.ir.pitt.edu/tuition/pghpafirst.php.

***Students working more than 75 miles from campus may be exempted from the wellness fee and the safety and transportation fee.**

Is there any negotiation with the fee?

No. If a student uses the services of this office to gain employment, the fee must be paid for the first three terms.

Is there any flexibility with the co-op rotations?

Although the majority of our students are on four-month work and school cycles, some employers have programs that require deviations from that model, which is usually an extension of the work term. If academic schedules permit, the co-op office and academic departments will usually grant approval for a change in the rotations under those circumstances. If something comes up during your tenure in our program that interferes with the alternating semesters, please email the co-op director. Additional information on this subject can be found **on page 28** of this booklet.

Can I have a work study position during co-op work rotations?

No. Students who are on co-op rotations are unable to simultaneously hold employment positions as student workers or federal work study positions with the University during that term.

Will I be drug tested before beginning an assignment?

You'll most likely be drug tested. Companies have the right to rescind the offer in the event of a positive testing. Also, many companies complete background checks, and can also rescind an offer based on the results of that check.

Can I Study Abroad and co-op?

Yes, but it takes planning. When developing your co-op schedule, the co-op office advises you meet with the Study Abroad Office in addition to your departmental co-op faculty advisor. You must inform the co-op office when you apply to Study Abroad in order to coordinate your rotation schedule.

What happens if i have multiple co-op job offers at once?

You will have to decide which offer you want to take. You will have to let the other company know that you are declining their offer and thank them for their interest. You can ask the co-op office for assistance with this and advice on how to handle having one offer on the table while you're still waiting to hear back from another company as well.

AFTER ACCEPTING A CO-OP POSITION

Congratulations on being accepted as a Co-op Professional! The privilege of participating in this program will enhance your academic career while affording you an opportunity to gain practical work experience and financial reward.

Before beginning your co-op position, notify the co-op office of your acceptance. We will have some final paperwork and instructions for you. Please make sure that you have your approved co-op schedule before coming to the co-op office to complete the acceptance paperwork.

Housing Guidelines

Housing Agreements for Engineering and SCI students participating in Cooperative Education will be implemented through the following procedures:

- All participants with current housing contracts must identify themselves to the co-op office.
- Students who are on a work assignment during the fall or spring terms who wish to cancel their housing contract for that term will require a memo from the co-op office requesting the cancellation. Please keep in mind that the housing office also has deadline dates, and that we need to abide by those dates as much as possible. Please contact the co-op office if you need a memo.
- Additionally, fall term co-op program participants must contact Panther Central to request a Housing Agreement for the spring term as soon as you are sure that you will require spring term housing. Please note that the housing office cannot guarantee the same room upon your return.
- Process the Housing Agreement by the due date with a \$325 housing deposit.
- If you are out on co-op in the spring and plan to live on campus the following academic year, you must meet all applicable deadlines to maintain any applicable housing guarantee through Panther Central. **This means that you will still need to pay your housing deposit, sign your contract, and submit your application by February 1st in order to continue to be guaranteed housing for the next year.** Please contact Panther Central with any questions.
- Students who wish to remain in the dorms during a work rotation may do so, but all students must be registered for classes in order to stay in the residence halls. The co-op course satisfies this requirement.
- Co-op students who have on-campus housing and are out on a co-op work rotation can request exemption from purchasing a full meal plan but will still be required to purchase a modified reduced meal plan which is comparable to a commuter meal plan.

The housing office address is:

Panther Central
Litchfield Towers
Lobby 3990 Fifth
Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
412-648-1100

There is an off-campus university housing site at
www.ocl.pitt.edu/

Additional Helpful Housing Hints

- *Co-op employers are not obligated to provide housing for students, though some do and many assist.
- *During interviews and when inquiring about opportunities with an employer, ask them if they offer any assistance for housing. If the position is in Pittsburgh, they might not offer anything for local students.
- *Ask employers if they have recommendations for finding housing if they do not provide it.
- *Ask co-op office if other students have or are currently co-oping at the company where you are going to work. We might be able to contact these students and see how they found housing or connect you with them.
- *If you know of friends or classmates who have co-oped, ask them how they found their housing.
- *Use Facebook, Rentjungle.com (this website also provides a 360° street view of area), Craigslist, Apartments.com, and Oodle.com to find housing near the employer. Please remember to be cautious about potential scams!
- *Contact the co-op offices at colleges and/or universities near your employer to see if they have any recommendations.
- *If you're co-oping in summer - Contact the housing offices at colleges and/or universities near your employer to see if they allow summer housing for outside students.
- *Try contacting Alumni Office to see if they can reach out to/connect you with alumni who now live in the area of interest.
- * Ask employers if they have employees who will rent out rooms to co-ops.
- *Ask to be connected with a current co-op at the company who may be from another school, if possible.

Wellness Fee

Local Co-ops less than 75 miles from campus will pay a part-time wellness fee which enables you to visit the Student Health Center, located on the first floor of Nordenberg Hall.

Supplemental Assistance

Occasionally we have students who wish to accept a position, but the pay grade might be very low, or there might not be housing assistance provided. Our office has a supplemental fund that can be available for some assistance. The grants are not large, perhaps \$250 or \$500, but if a student has a need, please write to the director with your request and we will try to assist.

Cooperative Education Financial Aid Procedures

1. If you receive financial aid, make an appointment with Karen Sciulli in the Financial Aid Office by calling 412-624-4758. You are responsible for contacting Ms. Sciulli every semester that you are out on a work rotation to ensure correct financial aid. Karen's e-mail address is ksciulli@pitt.edu. When preparing financial aid forms, list anticipated registration for fall and spring as full-time. If you know which summer will be full-time academics, and then list that as such too.
2. The Swanson School of Engineering will provide the Financial Aid Office with a roster of names of SCI students who will be out on co-op each term.
3. Provided the Co-op student meets with the financial aid counselor, the Financial Aid Office will make every effort to ensure that Co-op students receive an annual aid package comparable to other students within specific financial aid program limitations.
4. To the extent possible, students are encouraged to plan for Co-op participation as far in advance as possible. Retroactive financial aid adjustments, while possible, can be more difficult and time consuming for both the student and the Financial Aid Office.

The following guidelines apply:

1. Students must have a complete University of Pittsburgh Financial Aid Application on file with the Financial Aid Office by the published deadline each year, generally April 1 of each year.
2. Students should have a complete state grant application on file with PHEAA or their respective state agency by the agency's published deadline.
3. Student attending classes during the summer term must complete a separate University of Pittsburgh summer Aid Application. The Financial Aid Form and family tax documents need not be filed a second time for the summer term.
4. Students are advised that University requirements for normal academic progress and satisfactory academic standing apply to Co-op students. Details are available in the Financial Aid Office.

Students receiving financial aid under the following specific programs should note:

1. **Pell Grant*** -- Pell Grants are awarded for a 12-month period. Students who are eligible and have a validated SAR on file with the Financial Aid Office can receive a payment for any term for which they enroll based on actual credits of enrollment. No student can receive more than two full-time terms payments per year or the equivalent in part-time payments. Deferrals are available on a Pell Grant by contacting the Financial Aid Office.
2. **PHEAA Grant** -- PHEAA Grants are typically awarded for the fall and spring terms. Students who are eligible for a PHEAA Grant should advise the Harrisburg agency directly concerning their Co-op plans. Students who want to receive the PHEAA Grant for the summer term must file a separate PHEAA application for that time. Summer term payments are made to students at the close of the summer term, generally in August. Deferrals for pending summer PHEAA Grants are not available and students must make alternate arrangements to pay their invoices for summer.
3. **Stafford Student Loan** -- Stafford Student Loans are available to students during any term of enrollment. Depending on the student's year in school and academic standing, separate complete applications (including parents' 1040, student's 1040, FAF and University Financial Aid Supplement for a Stafford Student Loan) may need to be filed for specific terms of enrollment. Students are advised to discuss their individual eligibility for a Stafford Student Loan with a financial aid counselor. Students who may become liable for repayment of their student loan should contact the Office of the Registrar for certification of enrollment of their lender.
4. **Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, Perkins Loan, College Work Study, Provost Scholarship, Chancellors Nominee Scholarship, Impact Grant** -- Awards from any of the above programs will be made to eligible students in equal amounts for any combination of two terms during any academic year. Placement in a specific College Work Study Job is not guaranteed; however, there are employment opportunities available during three terms.

5. **Other miscellaneous grants, scholarships, or loans** -- regulations governing grant, scholarship and loan programs other than those mentioned above may vary. Co-op students are urged to discuss the specific details of each of these types of awards they may be receiving in an appointment situation with a financial aid counselor. Co-op students may need to contact some agencies directly concerning payment of funds during their Co-op enrollment.

Engineering and University Scholarships:

6. Email Karen Sciulli at ksciulli@pitt.edu to have university scholarships applied prior to each academic term.

*Students are generally not eligible for financial aid while they are working, with the exception of a pro-rated Pell Grant.

Class Registration Process

You must be registered for the one credit co-op course, entitled Engineering 1093 for your first three rotations. If a CS student remains with the co-op for three terms, the fee will be paid for three terms. The student does not pay for the one credit but does pay the \$305* co-op fee plus miscellaneous fees listed in this handbook. The co-op office will provide permission numbers to participating students in order to enroll in the co-op course. Permission numbers are required for student self-registration and change every semester. The permission numbers will be sent to you via email before registration opens for the semester. While participating in the co-op program, you are to follow your co-op schedule and will be most likely enrolled in either co-op or full-time classes until graduation.

The credits that you earn from your co-op experience can count toward your Capstone graduation requirements if:

- The required number of terms are completed (a minimum of two terms for SCI students)
- A final project that is determined by your co-op faculty advisor is completed
- All evaluations are completed and returned

You can check with your department or our website to determine how the credits will be utilized and graded.

Sometimes students will work more than the above-mentioned required number of terms. It is not necessary to register for the co-op course for additional terms beyond three; however, it is important to remember that if this work session occurs during a fall or spring term, that you might wish to be registered in order to be considered a student with full-time status. If the additional term occurs during the summer, you will most likely not need to register for the co-op credit.

You will ultimately earn at the most a three-credit grade for co-op, and if the student registers for additional terms, it will appear on the grade report as an "S"

Students who accept a co-op position through our office and then work "summers only" will still pay the co-op fee.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are add/dropped into the co-op engineering 1093, CS co-op course, you will not receive a second invoice. You can verify the amount you owe checking your account through my.pitt.edu, or by contacting student accounts (412-624-7575, 201 Thackeray). You are responsible for settling your invoice by your due date, or you will be assessed a late fee.

While you are on a co-op work assignment, you will register for classes for the following term through your individual departments. The undergrad coordinator will be in touch with you!

Students are responsible for registering for their academic classes and responding to departmental emails and notices in a timely manner.

Fee Waivers

Students who work more than 75 miles from campus can receive refunds for the wellness and safety and transportation fees. We will email the co-op registrants each term to verify your location. If you do not respond, you may not receive your refund. Be sure to sign up for eRefunds in order to receive yours.

Summer Flat Rate

Students will receive a flat rate of tuition during the summer term if it is to their advantage.

Co-op Concerns during Rotation

If your assignment at your current employer warrants some change (increased responsibilities, change in department, etc.), contact us as soon as possible during the term in order that we can try to remedy the situation. We also have a six-week evaluation in place to circumvent such concerns, and are often very successful in dealing with any problems the student may have. SCl co-ops are expected to remain with the same employer for both rotations; however, if there is a documentation of significant issues regarding the work experience that cannot be managed, we might need to change employers for the subsequent rotation(s).

In the event of layoff, a student is strongly encouraged to use the co-op office to find another position to complete program requirements.

Resigning from Co-op

For those students who want to resign from the program altogether, we will require your resignation within 30 days of you leaving the work site. Students who wait until the end of the following term to resign are risking a poor recommendation from that employer. It is easy to do things the right way, and we are here to help with each step.

Please remember this is an academic program, and a three-way partnership.

Study Abroad

It is possible to study abroad and to co-op; however, this takes planning. When formulating your co-op schedule, the co-op office advises you meet with both the Study Abroad Office and the departmental co-op faculty advisor. When you apply for a Study Abroad Program, please advise the Co-op Office.

Changes to Your Co-op Schedule

Co-op is a two-term alternating commitment. You are expected to work the alternating rotations, and any requests for changes in the schedule must be communicated to the co-op office first, and approved by the co-op director, your faculty coordinator, and the company. Just because your employer agrees to the change does not matter. You still have to have approval from the co-op office and the faculty advisor. All requests must be submitted in writing by January 30th for the summer term, May 31 for the fall term, and September 30 for spring term.

Students who accept positions through our office will pay the co-op fee for the first three rotations, regardless of when they are.

Academic Major Changes

Placement with an organization is based on a number of factors, including academic major. Therefore, co-op employment is contingent upon pursuing the same major. Any change in major should have prior written approval of the employer.

Evaluation of Co-op Assignments and Satisfactory Co-op Grade (“S”)

Students are required to complete and submit two evaluation forms to the co-op office per term. The first is e-mailed approximately 6 weeks into the term and should be completed and returned as soon as possible. If there are any concerns with your assignment, both the co-op office and faculty coordinator would like to be of assistance. Many issues can be easily resolved, and this six- week evaluation provides us with a mechanism to assist the students in a timely manner. At this time we will also ask for your supervisor’s email, for the purpose of submitting the end of term review.

At the beginning of the last month of your work rotation term, you and your manager will receive an e-mail which will give you instructions regarding our on-line registration process through which you and your manager will submit end-of-term evaluations.

End of term evaluations must be completed each term by both the student and the employer. You cannot receive a satisfactory grade or credit for the rotation without the completion of the forms. We encourage your manager to go over the Employer Evaluation of Student with you. You will be sent a copy of your review by email. Be sure to ask for your employer’s review meeting before you leave the work site. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure completion of the required evaluations.

Taking Coursework while on a Co-op Assignment

Students are not encouraged to take coursework in addition to co-op during the first work term unless they have been scheduled to do so by their co-op advisor. In the event that a class must be taken, we do not expect the student to leave work early or re-schedule work hours.*

After the first work rotation, a maximum of one night class may be taken, as long as it is approved by your co-op employer. You will also want to get an approval from your department to make sure the class fits is appropriate and will count toward your graduation requirements. Again, we do not allow courses that will interfere with work hours.

Daytime classes are not permitted while a student is on a co-op.

*If the course is at another university, you must have approval beforehand.

Part-Time Work

Students are discouraged from working part-time with the co-op employer during academic terms. Students put themselves at academic risk and the practice of juggling part-time work and full-time academics is a practice which is not in the spirit of cooperative education.

Work Realities

We strongly discourage the use of excessive vacation or personal sick leave while on assignments unless absolutely necessary. Students are expected to work the full work term (approximately 15 weeks). Work periods include: January through April, May through August, September through December.

We have had students lose their co-op position due to absenteeism and tardiness.

The Co-op Office strongly recommends you check with your employer to discern and abide by their Internet Usage Policy.

Grading Policies

Listed below are policy updates and clarifications regarding co-op credits and term paper/senior project requirements for each engineering discipline involved in co-op.

Computer Science co-op students register for Engineering 1093.

IT IS the student's responsibility to ensure all evaluations have been completed in order to receive an "S" grade.

Final grades are as follows:

"S" grades will be given to those students who complete all work terms and complete evaluations. The CS department may add a special designation for the Capstone course.

"S" grades are issued if both employer & student reviews are received before the deadline for grade submissions. "G" grades are issued if we are missing one or both evaluations.

Unsatisfactory U" grades can be given for the following reasons:

- Work term not meeting enough weeks of work. The co-op term is 15 weeks in length. That's the expectation for the term. Let us know if your work term will not meet that criteria. We do realize that a study abroad program or an employer program date might interfere, but we would expect a minimum of 12 weeks under these circumstances.
- Unsatisfactory completion of assignment, including poor work performance, missed days, or other unprofessional work practices
- Failure to return for a work rotation without properly and promptly notifying the co-op director and the employer of your resignation. Again, this resignation needs to be received within 30 days of you leaving the most recent work term.
- Not abiding by co-op regulations as detailed in this booklet.

Students who voluntarily leave the co-op program in good standing after 1 or 2 rotations will retain their "S" grades, but the credits will not count toward departmental graduation requirements until the minimum co-op terms and any final papers/projects are completed. Good standing also includes a timely resignation as detailed above.

Students who lose their co-op positions for reasons beyond their control (i.e., strikes, layoffs) can be issued an "S" for the term or terms worked. We can also help you find a new position for the remaining term(s) to receive full credit and grade for the co-op experience.

Please feel free to call our offices if you have questions on any information regarding the term paper or handling of co-op credits.

*Per University policy, "G" grades cannot be changed after one year. If you have a "G" grade from spring to spring for instance, you will then receive an "NG" grade and that grade cannot be changed to an "S."

Removal from the Co-op Program

Automatic removal or an unsatisfactory grade may result from the following:

- Changing rotations or terms of co-op agreement without approval of co-op office.
- Receiving less than a 2.0 term quality point average for two consecutive school terms.
- Being dismissed by employer for poor work performance, failure of drug testing or other unprofessional work behaviors.
- Resigning from your position without following the steps noted on **page 27**
- Reneging on a commitment to an employer in order to take a position with another company without going through the co-op office.
- Taking an overload of coursework while on co-op.
- For International Students, failing to notify the OIS office and to abide by OIS and university policies

Co-op Probation

Probation will result if the student fails to maintain a 2.0/4.0 term grade point average.

Cooperative education students receiving less than a 2.0 grade point average for any term, regardless of the overall GPA, will automatically be placed on probation with the Cooperative Engineering Education Program. The student's co-op employer will be notified if a work rotation is immediately following the probation.

Students need to alert the co-op office immediately upon receiving their grades for the term if they earned below a 2.0 GPA. Failure to do so can put your co-op in jeopardy.

Students on probation for one term may still participate in the program as long as they have permission from:

The Cooperative Engineering Education Office
Their Undergraduate Co-op Coordinator and
The Company of employment

Any student who receives less than a 2.0 for two terms can be dismissed from the Cooperative Education Program. A student on probation who begins a work term may still be dismissed even if they are already at the work-site. Dismissed students forfeit all Cooperative Engineering Education Fees once the add/drop period has ended.

Layoffs/Strikes

Co-op students will be treated the same as regular employees in the event of lay-offs. The student is then encouraged to use the co-op office to find another position to complete the Program requirements.

Conditions of Employment

Students are responsible for confirming all conditions and dates of employment, keeping in mind that a term is about 15 weeks in length. Note you should be working on site and in a professional environment, not remotely unless approved by the Director of the Co-op program.

Legal Requirements

Students must have a social security number and have social security tax deducted from their salaries. Students who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents must have approval from the OIS office to co-op.

Term Paper/Project

Co-op participants from SCI will work with their department advisor to complete any Capstone requirements.

Co-op Certification

Students completing a minimum of two work terms in good standing under the Co-op Program are eligible for certification upon graduation from the University of Pittsburgh. This certification is noted on the student's transcript.

Recognition Dinner

Each year we honor our co-op graduates at a dinner where they are awarded a Certificate of Program Completion by the Dean. Family, employers, and faculty and staff are invited to this event.

Post Graduate Report

We will ask you to complete a post graduate survey. This survey is confidential, but we do ask for salary information so that we can give an average range to our graduates when they are receiving full-time offers. We appreciate the completion of this form. We hope to hear from you through the years!

Each of our Industry Partners follow our Program Guidelines for Employers:

General

1. The co-op program is a three-way partnership involving the school, employer, and student. We ask that you apprise us as soon as possible of any issues regarding work schedules, job performance, layoffs, and permanent job offers upon graduation.

Assuming that the student's work performance is satisfactory and economic conditions are viable, the employer is expected to commit to a minimum of three alternating work periods for the successful completion of the co-op experience.

2. Job assignments must be related to the student's major field of study. Diversification is encouraged to afford the student a range of training and experience. The technical level should increase as the student demonstrates competency and progresses through the program.
3. Students cannot switch from the cooperative education program to summer, permanent, or part-time employment. 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.

Requesting that the student work part-time while on a full-time academic rotation, or begin working full-time prior to graduation can put the student in academic jeopardy and is not in the spirit of the program. We realize there may be some exceptions to this guideline, and ask that you work with the co-op office with any requests outside of the original co-op schedule.

It is fundamental to the University of Pittsburgh Cooperative Engineering Education Program that the students alternate work periods with academic sessions. Deviation from the original work-school rotation cycle should be made only with agreement from the University of Pittsburgh. This includes students working double rotations or requests from employers to complete an assignment on a part-time basis.

Additionally, students should not be taking daytime classes while on a co-op assignment. If there is an exception to this, we will notify you. Students have schedules in place to ensure that they can work full-time, and only in an extreme case would a daytime class be permitted. We appreciate your support. Students are permitted to take one night course on the second or third co-op terms as long as it does not interfere with work responsibilities.

Co-op positions are considered professional in nature and may therefore require overtime, weekends, or irregular hours. We do not allow students to work part-time for other employers while on a co-op rotation without the employer's permission.

4. We ask that you do not approach us with a request to refer either only minority, only non-minority, only female or only male students for co-op positions with your organizations. We are committed to placing our co-op students without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicaps or status as veteran.
5. Students on term probation may still participate in the program as long as they have permission from:
 - a. The Cooperative Education Office
 - b. Their Undergraduate Co-op Coordinator
 - c. The Company of Employment

Any student on co-op probation should not work two consecutive terms, but should return to school after the first rotation.

Any student who receives less than a 2.0 for two terms can be suspended from the Cooperative Engineering Education Program. A student on probation who begins a work term may still be dismissed even if they are already at the work-site. The employer reserves the right to either terminate or continue employment of the dismissed student.

6. The Co-op Coordinator and/or the Director may visit the work site and review the program.
7. Students should be working on-site in a professional environment while on rotation. Working remotely is not encouraged since part of the co-op experience is to be involved in the company culture, team meetings, etc.

Students should work as close to 15 weeks on a rotation as possible.

8. Employers may receive requests for "at work" photographs of co-op students. The photographs are for various publicity activities.

Specifically

1. Please complete and return to the co-op office the "Employer Information Form" prior to the referral of students for employment consideration.
2. Written job offers with details and conditions of employment should be issued to the students with copies to the appropriate university and company officials.
3. If you have difficulties contacting candidates by telephone, please do not hesitate to contact us at 412-624-9826 or by email to assist you. Students often have hectic, irregular schedules; therefore, it may be easier for us to reach them.
4. Initial work assignments should include an orientation to company policies and procedures.
5. Employers are expected to assign students to qualified supervisors who share an interest and enthusiasm for developing new employees.
6. Each co-op student must be evaluated by the employer on the form provided by the Engineering Cooperative Education office. The completed evaluation form should be discussed with the student and returned to the co-op office within the specified time period.
7. Approximate start dates for co-op work assignments are May 1, September 1, and January 1. Students should expect to work about 15 weeks each term, working full-time hours.

Please let us know if you have any employer related issues. We are here to help.

The University of Pittsburgh's Title IX Office is committed to ensuring that students, staff and faculty are not only provided with all options available to them related to the Title IX process, but also are supported over the course of this process. Title IX prohibits **sexual violence and sexual misconduct** which can affect the educational or campus environment. The University has a responsibility to ensure the safety of our students and campus community.

Whether or not a person chooses to participate with a University investigation, he or she still has the right to interim measures to assist in getting back to class and work. Additionally, anyone coming forward under Title IX will be protected from any form of retaliation related to the matter.

If you have any questions regarding the Title IX process, you can contact the Title IX office directly.

Options for filing complaints and seeking resources, which can be pursued simultaneously:

- File a report with the Title IX office. They are located on the 5th floor of Craig Hall at 200 South Craig Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15260 or 412-648-7860. The Title IX office can provide you with options and resources available both at the University and in the community.
- Filing a report with the University of Pittsburgh Police. They are located in the Public Safety Building at 3412 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15260 or 412-624-2121. The University of Pittsburgh Police investigates all reported and potential criminal activity.
- Filing a report with Student Conduct Officer, Barbara Ruprecht. Her office is located at 737 William Pitt Union, 3959 Fifth Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15260 or 412-648-7910. All cases are heard on campus by a Judicial Board to determine if a person is or is not responsible for alleged violations of the Code of Conduct based on the preponderance of evidence standard. This is NOT a criminal investigation.
- Supportive services are offered at University's Counseling Center. The Counseling Center offers sexual assault services designed to assist students who have experienced sexual assault, dating violence, stalking and harassment. They are located at the Wellness Center, 2nd Floor Nordenberg Hall, 119 University Place, PA 15260 or 412-648-7930.
- Pittsburgh Action Against Rape is a community resource that offers both supportive and advocacy services to victims of sexual misconduct. PAAR is located at 81 South 19th Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203 or 412-431-5665.
- The Women's Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh is a community resource that offers both supportive and advocacy services to victims of domestic violence. You can contact the Women's Shelter at 412-687-8005. Their location is confidential.

Disability Services

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both the co-op office and [Disability Resources and Services](#) (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, drsrecep@pitt.edu, (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, familial status, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity or other factors as stated in the University's Title IX policy. The University is committed to taking prompt action to end a hostile environment that interferes with the University's mission. For more information about policies, procedures, and practices, see: <http://diversity.pitt.edu/affirmative-action/policies-procedures-and-practices>.

I ask that everyone in the co-op program strive to help ensure that other members of the program can learn in a supportive and respectful environment. If there are instances of the aforementioned issues, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, by calling 412-648-7860, or e-mailing titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu. Reports can also be filed online: <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/make-report/report-form>. You may also choose to report this to a Pitt faculty/staff member; they are required to communicate this to the University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion. If you wish to maintain complete confidentiality, you may also contact the University Counseling Center (412-648-7930).

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to adhere to the standards of academic honesty. Any student engaged in cheating, plagiarism, or other acts of academic dishonesty would be subject to disciplinary action. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity <http://www.provost.pitt.edu/info/ai1.html>. This may include, but is not limited to the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating the University Policy.