



## **Cooperative Education Frequently Asked Questions**

**FAQ: I have been working at a position for the past year that would qualify as a Co-op position. Can I apply for the Co-op Program and get retroactive credit for my past year of work?**

No, a student cannot get retroactive credit for a position.

**FAQ: I have been participating in a part-time Co-op. I want to continue with this position the next semester? Do I have to re-apply for the program?**

Yes, a student is approved to participate in the Co-op program for only one semester. If a student wants to continue a position, and have that position officially considered a Co-op position, then that student has to submit a new Co-op Agreement Form and paperwork.

**FAQ: I would like to participate in the Full-Time Co-op Work Phase but I am worried I will lose my scholarships.**

One of the advantages of participating in Co-op is that most scholarships will allow a student to participate in Full-time Work Phase, return to the university the following semester and have scholarships reinstated. However, a student can't assume that scholarships will be automatically reinstated. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate with the UNM Scholarship Office and any outside scholarship program about his/her Co-op participation and find out the procedure and guidelines for each scholarship prior to beginning the Co-op program.

**FAQ: I found a job on my own; will it qualify as a Co-op?**

As long as the job is degree-related and paid, it may qualify as a Co-op. Completion and review of the Co-op Agreement Form is the required process for establishing a job as a Co-op.

**FAQ: Is Co-op for only undergraduates?**

No. Masters and Ph.D. students are also eligible. Some UNM Schools/Colleges may or may not consider Co-op an appropriate experience for graduate level students. Please see your school or college advisor for additional information.

**FAQ: Is the Co-op process the same for non-citizens?**

Yes, however, work eligibility is determined by the Global Education Office (GEO) and is based on BCIS regulations. International students need to contact GEO for guidance on BCIS regulations and eligibility. In addition, we recommend that international students start the Co-op process early enough to allow for the additional paperwork required by GEO. International students must have I-20 completed BEFORE they can start working.

**FAQ: How many credit hours will I receive for Co-op?**

Co-op work phase is strictly “credit/no credit.” No credit hours will be given. Co-op evaluation phase is an optional, credit-bearing course available to students in many, but not all academic departments. Students work with a faculty member to complete a paper or project based on the knowledge acquired during the work phase component. Credit may be earned per work semester, depending on the student’s major and department policy.

**FAQ: Do I have to pay for a Co-op?**

No, students do not have to pay a registration fee for the Co-op program.

**FAQ: I have obtained all signatures required on the Co-op agreement, now what do I do?**

You can drop off your completed Co-op agreement at UNM Career Services along with your unofficial transcript. The Co-op coordinator will contact you once the agreement form is signed along with copies waiting for you at the front desk. An email will be sent informing you when the hold has been lifted allowing you to register for the Co-op course. At the end of the semester, student and employer evaluations need to be completed at which the student will receive a grade of “Credit or No Credit.” International students: Once the Co-op agreement is signed, a copy needs to be given to GEO as well as your unofficial transcript showing enrollment in Co-op course.

**FAQ: What happens if I do not like my Co-op work or I cannot complete my current Co-op position?**

If you cannot complete your Co-op position for any reason, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the Co-op coordinator of any changes to work status, job duties, work hours, or any situation that would alter Co-op agreement. Failure to do so will result in “No Credit” for the Co-op course and prohibit the student from participating in the future.

**FAQ: Do I need to submit a paper at the end of the Co-op or do I need to attend a class during my Co-op?**

No. You do not have to attend a class or submit a paper during your Co-op. However, at the end of the semester in which you have a Co-op, an employer and student evaluation needs to be sent in to complete the Co-op agreement. The evaluations need to be sent in by the end of the semester to receive “Credit.”