

# COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Cooperative Education is a program offered through Career Services, located in Willard Hall, Room 100. This academic program integrates classroom study with career-related work experiences. Co-op work experiences are paid, full-time, six-month positions related to academic and career interests. Co-op is an optional and, in most cases, non-credit program.

CCSU's program, the largest in Connecticut and one of the largest in New England, combines five months of on-campus study with six months of paid Co-op employment. Thus, students apply textbook learning to on-the-job training. The money earned often helps students finance their University educations.

Co-op students are assigned to a Cooperative Education coordinator who guides their career development and develops appropriate Co-op placements. In the Co-op Career Development Seminar students receive instruction in skills that make the difference in today's job market: résumé writing, interviewing techniques, career planning, and job-seeking strategies.

Through participation in the Co-op program, students can graduate with up to two years of career-related work experience and, possibly, with a job offer. A sizeable number of Central Connecticut State University's Co-op students are offered permanent positions with their Co-op employers upon graduation. Nationwide, graduates of Co-op programs are hired at higher salaries and promoted faster than other employees. For students unsure of a career, Co-op is a no-risk way to test job options. For those set in their goals, Co-op provides a direct route from campus to career.

## How Co-op Works

- Co-op work blocks run from January through June (Group A) and from July to December (Group B).
- Students may participate in either one, two, three, or four Co-op work blocks.
- Students must enroll in a Co-op Career Development Seminar during the semester prior to the first work experience.

## Enrolling in the Co-op Program

Once enrolled at Central Connecticut State University, the first step in becoming a Co-op student is to visit the Career Services website at [www.ccsu.edu/career](http://www.ccsu.edu/career) and select "Orient Yourself." Then, choose "Cooperative Education" from the menu.

This tutorial provides details about how the program works, how to enroll, and the benefits a student can expect as a Co-op student at Central Connecticut State University. After reading the tutorial, students should call 860-832-1630 to meet with a coordinator to formally enroll in the program. This gives students an opportunity to ask questions and receive current literature. Students should plan to enroll in the program at least one semester prior to the first planned work block. Group A students must apply no later than the third week of the fall semester; Group B students must apply no later than the third week of the spring semester. Applying a semester in advance of the work block ensures: 1) a place in the program; 2) sufficient time for the Co-op staff to develop appropriate Co-op positions; and 3) sufficient time for students to complete the Career Development Seminar prior to their work experiences.

## The Career Development Seminar

The Career Development Seminar is designed to teach students life-long career skills. They learn to write a résumé, interview effectively, make career decisions, explore occupations and discover where the jobs are in their fields. This one-credit course is taught by the Career Services staff.

## Cost and Eligibility

The Co-op program is available to all full- and part-time students in good academic standing. Currently, it costs \$400 per year to be enrolled in the Co-op program. Students are billed \$200 per semester.