Engineering Co-op and Internship Program (ECIP) Overview

“Cooperative Education” (Co-op) and “Internship” Defined

At Ohio State the terms “cooperative education” and “internship” refer to paid employment opportunities related to a student’s field of study. The Engineering Co-op and Internship Program (ECIP) partners with employers to provide students with meaningful work, supervision and support, performance feedback, and transcript documentation of work experience through enrollment in a zero credit course called Engineering 4191. Ohio State is on the semester calendar and work terms are divided into the three semesters: Autumn, Spring, and Summer. Each work term lasts approximately four months.

Cooperative Education (Co-op)

Co-ops require students to alternate full-time work experience and full-time coursework for a minimum of two work terms with the same employer. Depending on how early in the degree a student is hired, he/she may be able to work up to three terms. Most students do not co-op during their final year.

Co-op jobs should be planned so that as students progress through their coursework, their tasks increase in level of responsibility and challenge. Typically, compensation also increases with each subsequent work term.

Internships

Full-time engineering internships typically last one semester. Although summer internships are the most common, students may choose to work during other semesters, depending on the employer’s needs. Employers who need co-op, intern or part-time technical employees can recruit students by posting positions through their Engineering Career Services (ECS) online recruiting account, CareerEngine.

How Our Partnership Works

Our mission is to develop partnerships with employers that will generate opportunities for students to obtain practical engineering experience prior to graduation. In turn, employers benefit by fulfilling short-term and long-term recruiting needs with quality candidates. We need your help to achieve these goals.

Our Expectations

Employer Agreement Form

As an assurance that your organization will meet University standards for quality, safety, and equal opportunity, we will request that you complete the Employer Agreement Form before recruiting Ohio State engineering students. This is completed during the registration process.

Job Information

To help you effectively market your organization’s job opportunities and to assess the nature of the planned work assignment, we expect that accurate, up-to-date job information will be provided. This practice ensures that the positions offered are engineering-related, and that all parties (College, student, and employer) have a common understanding and similar expectations.

Meaningful Assignments

Since first-term students may have only completed introductory level engineering courses, the first work term may include a variety of basic tasks. However, as students progress through the curriculum, subsequent work terms should provide increasing challenges and responsibilities. Students must have clearly-defined job responsibilities for each work term. Satisfied co-ops and interns are more likely to want to work for you after graduation.

Reporting Hires

There are multiple ways you can report your hires: through the ECS website, through the link in your ECS CareerEngine recruiting account, or simply calling in or emailing the information.

Once we hear from you, that student’s job search account will be blocked and we will follow up with the student to make sure everything is in order for a smooth campus-to-work transition.

Future Employment Decisions

Employers determine their own selection and retention criteria. It is assumed that return assignments will be based on job performance and business needs.
Co-op Commitment

Although we expect an employer to retain a co-op student for a minimum of two separate semesters, an employer is not expected to retain a student with serious performance problems. It is expected that employers will discuss performance issues with students and with the ECIP Manager or ECS Director. See “Student Performance Evaluation” below for more information.

Safety

We expect that employers will comply with all federal, state, and local equal employment opportunity and workplace safety regulations. Students should complete the same safety training required of full-time employees.

Health Insurance

Most employers do not provide health insurance coverage for their student employees. Your offer letter should encourage students to obtain student health insurance, if they are not covered by their parents’ policy. Students enrolled in Engineering 4191 can purchase student health insurance.

Engineering 4191—Professional Practice in Engineering

Students are expected to enroll in a zero-credit course (Engineering 4191) each term they co-op or intern. Enrollment in Engineering 4191 maintains full-time status, allows students to register for classes without reapplying, protects scholarships and financial aid, qualifies them for student health insurance, and documents their experience on their transcripts.

Student Performance Evaluation

Candid, constructive performance feedback is an important part of a student’s professional development. A performance evaluation from the student’s immediate supervisor should be completed at midterm and at the conclusion of the semester, discussed with the student, and submitted to our office. Supervisors may use the appraisal form provided by our office or the organization’s form. An exit interview should be scheduled at the very end of the work term. If a return work term is unlikely, the student should be informed at that time. Ideally, the final evaluation will note areas the student has improved on since the midterm evaluation.

Early Terminations

If business need (strikes or other events) should result in unplanned early termination of a work term, it is expected that a student would be financially compensated for lost wages and housing expenses incurred for the job. If the student’s performance is unsatisfactory, please contact our office immediately.

Feedback

Please inform ECS of any problems or concerns. Your feedback will help us to better serve and educate our students and may also initiate important policy changes. We also welcome curriculum feedback, which we share with the academic departments.