School of Engineering and Applied Sciences
State University of New York at Buffalo

Co-operative Engineering Education Program

Some Frequently Asked Questions

What is Co-operative Engineering Education?
Cooperative Engineering Education is the rotation between school and full-time work assignments that relate directly to the discipline. This program enables students to complement classroom studies with practical experience, technical knowledge, and financial renumeration.

Do I work full-time or part-time?
Co-op students work full-time during each of the three Co-op Work Sessions (in the standard model). The Program begins after the Junior year. The following Summer and Fall semesters (total 7 months) are spent in industry [Work Session 1: 4th week May - 3rd week August; Work Session 2:1st week September - 2nd week January]. In the Spring semester, the student returns to campus for the first term Senior year. The succeeding Summer semester is spent in industry [Work Session 3: 4th week May - 3rd week August]. In the Fall semester, the student returns to campus for the second term Senior year.

What will be the impact of taking the Senior year out of sequence?
Most Senior level courses are stand-alone, and thus the Co-op student will not be adversely affected by being out of sequence. For the two-semester type courses, these may well be modularized so that they can be taken by the Co-op student out of sequence.

How do I get into the program?
Juniors are eligible to apply for the program. To qualify academically, a student typically should rank in the upper half of the class after the Fall semester of the Junior year. Students should visit the program office (215D Bonner Hall) to review information from Co-op companies and to obtain program information and enrollment forms. The Co-op Program Department Representatives may also be contacted:

Electrical and Computer Engineering
Dr. David M. Benenson
215D Bonner Hall
645-2422 Ext. 1200

Dr. Shambhu J. Upadhyaya
129 Bell Hall
645-2422 Ext. 2141
Will each student be guaranteed a job?
We cannot guarantee anyone a co-op position. A student should sign up for a number of opportunities in their areas of interest. The chances of receiving a Co-op offer will depend on your areas of interest, the number of candidates with whom you will be in competition how well you are prepared for a particular kind of work, and your interests and abilities as revealed in the interview. The general state of the economy and of the particular organization will also be a factor.

Are all positions paid?
Yes; all positions are paid. Students will be employees of the sponsoring company.

What is sought from students and employees?
Participating organizations are asked to provide three supervised work assignments that relate to the Co-op student’s interests and educational background. Co-op students are asked to complete these assignments at a level consistent with their preparations.

What contact is there between SEAS and students on the job?
During each Work Session, a program representative will visit and confer with each student and their company supervisor. At the end of each Work Session, each Co-op student submits two reports: a descriptive summary of the work, and an evaluation both of the work experience and the organization. Further, each supervisor submits an evaluation of the student’s performance on the job both to the student and the Co-op office.

What are the advantages of spending all three Work Sessions with the same organization?
Co-op students will spend their Work Sessions with the same organization. The student will find that there is continuity in the work experiences. Depending upon the company-prepared job descriptions for the Work Sessions, the student can progress to more challenging assignments with increasing responsibility or can move to different jobs in order to acquire an overall view of the organization’s operations and the work performed by its engineers.

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