

Cooperative Education Work Experience Course Requirements and Report Format

For Non-Degree/Zero Credit Courses

Cooperative Education Definition and Philosophy

Cooperative education is a well-known educational strategy that integrates classroom studies with learning through hands-on work experiences in a field related to the student's academic major and career goals. Cooperative education is an experiential learning process with specific education goals that include critical thinking, knowledge, communication, personal and professional growth, and career preparation. The learning model is embedded within the cooperative education course requirements.

The goal of this process is to ensure that students integrate, not simply participate in, the academic and experiential learning processes. Integration will have varying outcomes based upon the individual student, the work assignment, and the Faculty Co-op Advisor's requirements.

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Completion and submission of the Cooperative Education Learning Agreement.
2. Coordination of an on-site visit by the work place supervisor and Faculty Co-op Advisor and within the time periods indicated on the course syllabus.
3. Completion and submission of a Cooperative Education Work and Learning Report as described herein
4. An oral presentation of your Cooperative Education Work and Learning Report at your department's co-op final seminar. For the oral presentation do not assume that any equipment is available unless you make prior arrangements with your Advisor.
5. Additional requirements as added by Faculty Co-op Advisors.

The Cooperative Education Learning Agreement

Purpose: The Cooperative Education Learning Agreement is an agreement between the student, employer, Faculty Co-op Advisor, and the Division of Career Development Services. The Learning Agreement provides the framework for creating a successful work experience. Student and employer information, the cooperative education work description, the preliminary work report project outline, and an acknowledgement of the defined roles for each of the cooperative education participants are to be listed on the Learning Agreement.

The Cooperative Education Work and Learning Report

Purpose: The Cooperative Education Work and Learning Report is a document that describes the student's accomplishments and demonstrates what was learned through participation in the program. It is an opportunity for the student to express in writing the nature of the work experience performed and the learning attained from performing specific tasks while working in a professional environment. It should contain information that best demonstrates the progress and achievements as outlined in the Learning Agreement. Students must be able to state what they have learned, why it is important, and what they plan to do with the knowledge. The report process provides the student with the opportunity to identify and reflect upon the work experience across several learning areas. The report also provides the Faculty Co-op Advisor and co-op staff with a method to evaluate the knowledge gained by students.

Requirements for the Additive/Zero Credit Co-op Work Report

- One copy of the co-op work report must be submitted to the departmental Faculty Co-op Advisor and one copy must be submitted to Career Development Services to receive full degree credit for a co-op experience. Reports are due no later than the date of the final co-op seminar and may be submitted by email.
- Your professional report should be about 5 pages, excluding appendices, illustrations, charts, or computer printouts. The report is expected to be the student's own work with references to sources used to prepare the report, if appropriate.

1. **TITLE PAGE**

An unnumbered title page in the following format:

Cooperative Education Work and Learning Report

Report Title

Author's Name

E-mail address

Major

Employer

Supervisor's Name

Supervisor's Telephone Number

Career Advisor

Faculty Co-op Advisor

Date Submitted

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for:

Cooperative Education Work Experience

Course Number: _____ - _____

2. **ABSTRACT**

The abstract should provide a concise summary of the main points of the report so that the reader will know what is of major importance. It should contain no more than 250 words, single-spaced. The following information should be included:

A. Heading

- Title of report
- Author's name and major
- Employer's name and location (city and state)

B. Body

- Introductory sentence stating the project's specific objectives
- Brief statement of methods used, if appropriate
- Summary of results
- Dates of co-op education assignment

Sample Abstract

DATABASE, WEB SITE, AND SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION.

Conroy, Justine. Computer Science.

Hebron Computers Inc., Morristown, NJ

The author's cooperative education assignment involved assisting in the design and implementation of a database and development of web pages for the web site and various functional modules. Specific duties included the study of available literature on portfolio management and performance measurement criteria to develop block level designs of the various components. The author developed a performance measurement tool to verify the functionality and accuracy of the given performance measurement criteria. Various web pages were designed, the tool was implemented, and the author's work helped the process of determining the business strategy of the company.

Dates of Co-op Assignment: September 5 to December 15, 2014

3. PROJECT OVERVIEW

a. TASK ANALYSIS

Give your job title and outline the tasks in which you were involved for the co-op work period. The following is a sample listing of tasks:

Title: Assistant Account Analyst

- Prepared corporate, partnership, and individual income tax returns.
- Conducted individual income tax interviews.
- Prepared payroll tax and sales tax reports.
- Math-checked income tax returns.
- Used the in-house computer for various accounting functions.
- Researched and developed a system for evaluating the needs of a small business to determine the feasibility of acquiring an automated accounting system.
- Performed month-end and quarter-end write-ups for clients.
- Performed year-end account analyses for financial and tax clients.
- Tested and implemented an accounting software package for a personal computer.
- Researched various income tax problems.

b. PROFESSIONAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

I. General Guidelines

Provide a detailed description of the projects in which you participated. A wide range of subject matter is permissible, provided there is a connection with the work experience. Research and reading are encouraged.

Sample topic concepts are:

- The design, development, manufacture, or testing of equipment or products with which the student was associated while on the job.
- A detailed history of the development of a professional process or design with which the student was associated.
- The effect on the environment of government policies, logging techniques, soil conservation methods, or animal populations.
- An in-depth analysis and evaluation of management strategies, accounting practices, or buying procedures in a firm.

- A comparison/contrast of several writing styles, art styles, drafting techniques, recreational activities, teaching styles and techniques.

II. The project(s) section should include, as applicable:

a. Introduction

- Purpose of project and the nature of the problem being investigated.
- Scope of the project and limitations.
- Historical background regarding: (a) the investigation, and (b) the subject matter.
- Technical background regarding: (a) theory, and (b) explanation of unusual concepts, apparatus, procedures, etc.
- Acknowledgements of assistance of persons or organizations not cited elsewhere.

b. Results

c. Description of Project

Complete description of the project (s). Include an essay section, logically organized:

- Use headings and subheadings, where appropriate.
- Develop ideas logically.
- Use a paragraph for each new idea.
- Use a new section for each new major idea.
- Make clear transitions from one idea to the next.
- Show clear relationships between each section and the overall subject.
- Arrange illustrative data for maximum clarity, when included

d. Conclusions

e. Recommendations

4. WORK EXPERIENCE ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to put the co-op experience into perspective and provide other NJIT students with an in-depth picture of co-op employment opportunities. The items below are general guidelines and may be used as an outline for this section of your report. Not all are necessarily applicable in each case. This section is intended to be open-ended to provide maximum freedom of expression.

- a. Provide a brief description of the organization, kind of business or service, products, history, functions and responsibilities of various departments, how the author's department fits into the organization, physical facilities, and facts about the employer (affiliates, locations, number of employees, etc.).
- b. Job satisfaction. Was the work satisfying? Did it meet your expectations? How did it change as the work progressed? Explain.
- c. Relevance of work experience. Were your work assignments related to your field of study? How? Did the work experience help you find a special area of interest within your academic field? Did it eliminate an area of interest? How did it impact your educational goals?
- d. Which concepts and skills learned in the classroom did you find useful in your co-op experience?
- e. Responsibility. What kind of responsibility did you have while on your assignment? Did you work as a member of a team? Did you feel part of the total team effort? What was your contribution to solving the problem given to the team? Give examples.
- f. Describe any reference material you had to read, learn, or interpret in your work assignment.
- g. Briefly describe the use of technology in a project in which you were involved. Did you acquire any new computer tools/software skills during your assignment? If so, what were they?
- h. Give an example of an oral or written presentation you made on the job and what communication tools you used.
- i. Living arrangements. If you lived away from home, where did you live (apartment, residence hall, etc.)? Was it satisfactory? Did your employer provide help in finding housing and/or defraying expenses?
- j. Social and cultural opportunities. How did you spend your free time? What opportunities did you have to meet others in your age group?

- k. Co-op contrast/comparison. How was this co-op experience similar to or different from you're a previous co-op experience? Include similarities/differences in type of employer, kind of work, level of responsibility, employer's expectations, work environment, and any other relevant factors.

REPORT EVALUATION

The following procedures will be followed in evaluating the Cooperative Education Work and Learning Report:

- The report is due on the date of your department's final seminar
- You are required to submit two copies of the report, one to your Faculty Co-op Advisor and one to Career Development Services (Career Advisor)
- Reports will be evaluated on the basis of quality, including format, organization, inclusion of required sections, ability to express facts and opinions, and grammar. If, in the judgment of the Faculty Co-op Advisor, the report should be rewritten, you will be notified.
- The Faculty Co-op Advisor will evaluate the report, assign the appropriate grade

Updated: December 2014