

## CEMS CO-OP PROGRAM

The Cooperative Education Program in the College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences (CEMS) was created to enhance student education and provide opportunities that prepare students for active, productive, and successful postgraduate careers.

A co-op is an educational program where the student alternates periods of academic study with full-time employment in positions related to their academic and/or career interests. During their co-op experience, CEMS students apply knowledge gained in the classroom to practical work situations, and gain additional knowledge and skills that will enhance future coursework and career preparation. The experience also gives students the opportunity to clarify career goals and aspirations.

All co-op positions are paid though salaries may vary (see co-op compensation). Employers may or may not offer housing and transportation options.

### **Eligibility**

Participation in the CEMS co-op program is voluntary. To participate, students must be registered in the College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences at UVM, be in good academic standing, and have a GPA of 2.5 or better to participate. Students may participate in a co-op between their sophomore and junior year or between their junior and senior year. First year students, seniors, and graduate students are not eligible to apply.

### **Overview of the Program**

Employers who join the CEMS Co-op Program collaborate with the CEMS Career Readiness Coordinator to create a co-op position. Guidance and mentorship is also offered to students who wish to apply for co-ops in companies outside of the CEMS Co-Op Program (see Other Co-op Programs below). The CEMS Career Readiness Program Coordinator works closely with the employer to ensure a robust, professional co-op that benefits both the student and the company.

Students interested in a co-op position work with the CEMS Career Readiness Program Coordinator to plan their co-op experience and work with their Advisor to incorporate their coop into their degree plan. The Coordinator will work with the student to identify interests and potential opportunities, and help the student prepare application materials. The student will then apply (recommended application materials: resume, cover letter, and letter of recommendation or references) to available co-op positions of their choice on an organization's website, or through Handshake. Employers will contact applicants to let them know if they have been selected for an interview or not. The Coordinator is also available to help students prepare for those interviews.

Students will then be notified of the employment offer and will be provided a written offer letter with salary and benefit information. Students must then notify **Holly Foshier** (holly.foshier@uvm.edu) if they have accepted their offer and provide a copy of their hire letter. The student and his/her company supervisor will be required to

complete a few simple assignments to ensure a meaningful learning experience (see Assignments & Requirements below).

### **Duration & Timeline**

The duration of a co-op ranges from 9-12 months. To ensure students are able to complete necessary courses, these opportunities will typically begin in the Summer or early Fall through the following Spring. Specific start and end dates are dependent upon the needs of the company.

\*\*\*Other time periods may be possible, but must be discussed with the CEMS Career Readiness Program Coordinator.

### **Co-op Expectations**

The CEMS Career Readiness Program Expects that the Employer/Supervisor conduct the following with their Co-op Student:

1. Introduction to the organization, colleagues, and a smooth on-boarding process when the student begins work.
2. An individual assigned to the student to act as their co-op supervisor/mentor.
3. Tasks and role expectations, weekly feedback, and task completion reviews.
4. Meetings between the student and the co-op supervisor to report progress and discuss expectations and any potential areas of improvement.
5. Participation in group meetings and discussions.
6. Adequate work space/desk for the duration of their co-op that includes any tools, and equipment needed to accomplish tasks and projects.
7. Opportunities to interact with many members of the organization.

### **Co-op Compensation**

Co-ops are paid, full-time, professional positions. The hourly rate for a Co-Op is determined by the employer. Employers can choose the rate based on the student's skills and experience. The range averages \$15-28 per hour.

#### *Average Co-op Hourly Pay*

Civil/Environmental Engineering - \$19.63 (Minimum \$18.00, Maximum \$22.50)

Electrical Engineering - \$23.00 (Minimum \$18.00, Maximum \$28.00)

Mechanical/Biomedical Engineering - \$20.56 (Minimum \$15.00, Maximum \$27.00)

### **Requirements & Assignments**

CEMS students who participate in a co-op during their tenure at UVM must register for a 12 credit non-billable course for each semester of their co-op experience. Students will complete and submit a learning agreement within the first two weeks of co-op employment to ensure a meaningful learning experience and to make sure all parties are clear on roles and expectations. The UVM CEMS learning agreement lists learning objectives for the student, and roles and responsibilities of the student, co-op supervisor, and Career Readiness Program coordinator. It must be signed by the student and co-op supervisor. *Note: Co-op courses act as "placeholders", and they are*

*intended to maintain students' status as active UVM students. Students do not pay tuition or earn credit for the courses.*

After the student has completed 6-8 weeks of employment, the student and co-op supervisor will be asked to complete a student evaluation form and then meet to discuss the student's progress. Finally, students and co-op supervisors will be asked to complete a final evaluation form and meet to discuss it at the end of the co-op experience. These evaluations can help a student identify areas where they need more work and things they can do to help develop as professional. Meetings to review evaluations can also be a great time to discuss career planning and training with the student.

In the event that a student is not meeting expectations, please contact the CEMS Career Readiness Program Coordinator – **Holly Foshier** ([holly.foshier@uvm.edu](mailto:holly.foshier@uvm.edu)).

### **Tuition & Fees**

Students are NOT charged tuition while on co-op UNLESS they take additional courses during that time. Students may take a maximum of 4 additional credits each semester that they are enrolled in a co-op and are responsible for paying tuition and fees for the additional credits they take.

### **Other Co-op Programs**

Students also have the option of applying to other co-op programs with employers that have not specifically partnered with the University of Vermont's College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences Co-op Program (e.g., NASA's co-op program). Application and interview processes for these programs differ, but students are still required to complete all requirements and assignments listed above including registering for a 12-credit non-billable course and completing learning agreements and evaluations.

### **Health Insurance & Health Services**

Students are required to have health insurance while participating in a co-op. Students have the option of paying for University health insurance, joining a parent's health insurance (if applicable), or using other services. If a student opts to buy the University health insurance, they are required to pay the Student Health Center Fee and are eligible to use services offered by the University Health Center. For all other health insurance options, students are not eligible to use University Health services.

### **Library, Gym, Ski passes etc.**

When a student participates in a co-op, he or she will not have access to University services including, but not limited to, the library, and gym UNLESS they are simultaneously enrolled in courses offered by the University. Students ARE still eligible to receive discounted ski passes while on co-op because they are considered full-time active students.

### **Verification of Full-time Student Status**

Students are considered full-time active students while participating in a co-op and letters verifying this status are available from the registrar upon request.

### **Taking Courses while on Co-op**

Students are eligible to enroll in a maximum of 4 credits each semester that they are enrolled in a co-op and are responsible for paying tuition and fees for the credits they take. If a student enrolls in a class while on co-op, they are eligible to use University services such as the library and gym.

### **Federal Student Aid & Scholarships**

Students are not eligible to receive federal student financial aid or scholarships while participating in a co-op whether they take courses or not. Students are still considered active students and will not lose scholarships or financial aid, but will not receive those forms of aid during the co-op experience. Students are responsible for completing FASFA applications and requirements while on co-op. All co-ops are paid to help defray costs of living during the co-op experience.

### **UVM Email and Course Registration**

Students will have an active UVM netID that will allow them to check email and register for courses while on co-op. Students are responsible for registering for the co-op course EACH SEMESTER they are on co-op.

Students will also have access to UVM email and are REQUIRED to monitor their UVM email while on co-op. All University communication will occur through UVM email including important emails about financial aid and co-op requirements.

### **Athletes**

Students who are participating in a co-op are NOT eligible to participate in athletic events associated with the University, including, but not limited to varsity sports and intramural sports.

### **Housing & Transportation**

Students are responsible for finding their own housing and transportation while participating in a co-op. Co-op students are NOT eligible for on-campus student housing.