

Co-operative Education Program

Co-operative Education is a college program designed to extend occupational learning experiences for the student through supervised employment in an occupation of interest to them. Employment may be on or off campus. Co-operative Education is available in all academic and vocational areas. Co-operative Education provides the student with invaluable hands on work experience that supports personal growth and enhances professional preparation. Co-operative Education experiences can be either part-time or full-time.

I. Eligibility:

To be eligible to participate in the Co-operative Education Program the student must:

- Have a 2.0 overall grade point average and maintain the average throughout the program
- Be officially degree seeking in the Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Associate in Applied Science, or a certificate program
- Have completed a minimum of 12 semester hours of college credit with a minimum of 6 semester hours earned at FKCC (does not include college preparatory courses)
- Be enrolled in no fewer than 6 semester hours including Co-operative Education
- Have a job related to your degree program of study

II. Benefits of the Program:

To the Student

- Acquires valuable experience in field of study
- Improves self-confidence and responsibility
- Ability to network with professionals in career field
- Develops interpersonal skills and knowledge
- Earns money for educational expenses

To the Employer:

- Provides a diverse pool of potential employees
- Provides a cost-effective recruiting and training program
- Reduces employee turnover
- Provides opportunity to communicate business and industry needs to the college

To the College:

- Builds positive relationship with business community
- Increases student retention rates due to relevance of education to job requirements
- Keeps college curricula current with industry changes through input from employers

- Gains valuable input from businesses and industry concerning labor market conditions and placement opportunities

III. Steps and Requirements for Participating:

- A. The student will meet his/her Program Advisor (or instructor in the case of an Associate in Arts degree-seeking student) who will serve as his/her Co-operative Education Sponsor
- B. The student and Sponsor will discuss obtaining academic credit through Co-operative Education at his/her job site, including consideration of the nature of the work to be done and the relevance of the work experience to the student’s career goals, number of credits to be applied for, required hours of work, time frame, and reporting and supervision
- C. The Sponsor will develop a syllabus of the course, and complete an Independent Study Request form. A copy of the syllabus will be provided to the student. Credit will be given as “XXX (course prefix) 2949,” and based on the following chart:

Semester Hours	=	Work Hours per Week	X	No. of Weeks	=	Total Work Hours
1	=	5	X	16 weeks	=	80
2	=	10	X	16 weeks	=	160
3	=	15	X	16 weeks	=	240
4	=	20	X	16 weeks	=	320

Note: Students who wish to participate in the Co-operative Education Program during Summer Terms A & B (12 weeks) will have their weekly hours adjusted to reflect, as closely as possible, the number of work hours required for Fall and Spring Terms.

- D. The student will complete a Co-operative Education Learning Plan
 - 1. Schedule an appointment with your Sponsor who will assist you in completing course objectives, determining your required credit hours (1 – 4 credits), and advising on other requirements of the program
 - 2. Obtain all required signatures on Learning Plan form. Make copy of Learning Plan form and return original to Sponsor
- E. Registration process
 - 1. Complete Course Request form and obtain signature of Program Advisor or Academic Advisor
 - 2. Take completed and signed Course Request form to Enrollment Services and register for course(s). You will not be permitted to count hours worked until you have officially registered and paid all tuition fees
 - 3. If receiving financial aid, take course schedule to Office of Financial Aid for processing
- F. Additional Required Co-operative Education Program forms
 - 1. Co-operative Education Program Agreement

- Joint agreement set up among college, employer, and student as employee
2. Employer's Mid-Term and Final Evaluation
 - Evaluation of student/employee to be completed by employer at mid-point in term and end of term
 - Submitted to Sponsor
 3. Student's Final Report
 - One to two page report from student/employee to be submitted to Sponsor at end of term, and should include the following information:
 - a. Name of business
 - b. Relationship of co-operative work to college major or field of study
 - c. Benefits gained from work experience
 - d. Additional information required by Sponsor

IV. Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is co-operative education?

It is an educational partnership among the college, the business community, and the students. It provides students with a supervised on-the-job training experience related to their educational programs. Students earn credit and a grade while working full-time or part-time on or off campus.

2. What is the difference between co-operative education and college work study?

Co-operative education is an academic class that offers college credit for learning that takes place in a business and is related to the student's educational program. College work study is a financial aid program that provides jobs on campus with wages that are subsidized by federal funding.

3. Do students earn grades in co-operative education courses?

Yes, co-operative education is graded and uses the same grading system as other FKCC classes. Your grade is determined by your FKCC Sponsor and is based on your work performance, your employer's evaluation, and other assignments required by your Sponsor.

4. How do I pay for co-operative education courses?

Fees are based on the number of credits in which you enroll. Students who successfully complete a co-operative education course may receive one to four credits.

5. How will my co-operative education credits apply to my degree program?

In the AA degree co-operative education credits may be used as electives only. In an AS, AAS, or certificate program, depending on the actual degree curriculum, specific use of co-op credits will be at the discretion of the Program Advisor.

6. Can I use my current job as a co-op experience?

It's very possible that you can if your current job relates to your field of study. However, co-operative education credits cannot be earned for prior work experience.

7. Will VA benefits apply?

Approval of co-operative education courses for veteran's benefits is the same as other courses in your approved degree program. Veterans should check with the Office of Enrollment Services for clarification.

8. How many hours do I need to work each week?

You are required to work a minimum of 80 hours each semester for each credit for which you enroll.