

Frequently Asked Questions about Cooperative Education Internship

Cooperative Education Internship Program

The Cooperative Education Internship Program at WCSU provides students with an opportunity to gain career-related experience in their field of study while also earning academic credit and, in most situations, a competitive salary. The "hands-on" experience through cooperative education internship provides practical experience prior to graduation and an effective career planning tool for participating students.

Undergraduate students at Western who have earned at least 45 credits in good academic standing are eligible to apply for cooperative education internship. Positions are available on a part-time (10-20 hours weekly) or full-time (40 hours weekly) basis. It is recommended that students seeking a cooperative education internship apply at least one semester before they want to work.

All majors at Western are eligible to apply for the Cooperative Education Internship Program.

FAQ'S

(MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION INTERNSHIP PROGRAM)

1. How do I start the application process for Cooperative Education Internship?

Schedule an appointment to meet with a staff member to complete and review the cooperative education internship application form by calling 203-837-8265.

2. Do I need a resume?

Yes! A resume is required for all cooperative education internship candidates and is utilized as you apply to each potential employer. The notification process for cooperative education internship openings begins only after your resume has been submitted. (Many workshops and individual sessions are available to help you begin writing a resume.)

3. Will I receive college credit for my cooperative education internship experience?

Credit is awarded based on a formula of 50 hours = 1 credit. In most cases, cooperative education internship credit is applied toward free electives. You must register for credit upon receipt of a cooperative education internship position (as CED 297) through a separate registration card given out by the co-op staff.

4. How many credits can I earn through cooperative education internship?

Students may earn a total of 18 credits through the cooperative education internship program during their academic career. A maximum of 12 cooperative education internship credits may be earned in any one semester.

5. Am I given a grade for the cooperative education internship?

A pass/fail grade is given for CED 297. Students are required to attend the cooperative education internship seminar meeting during the semester, keep a journal, write a five page reaction paper, and submit evaluations.

6. Am I guaranteed a cooperative education internship job?

Although the cooperative education internship program has provided excellent cooperative education internships over many years, there is not a guarantee of cooperative education internship employment. Shifts in the economy may affect the availability of cooperative education internships and student performance during an interview is a factor in decisions

made by employers. Because selection for cooperative education internships is competitive, students are encouraged to apply as soon as they are eligible. They should also take advantage of the numerous Career Development Center services to prepare for this job search process including resume workshops and resume critiques, interview workshops and mock interviews. CDC Workshops and Info Sessions

7. What are the cooperative education internship work blocks?

There are three cooperative education internship work blocks at Western. They are:

Spring: January 1 - May 15

Summer: May 15 - August 15

Fall: August 15 - December 15

Western students may also participate in the two six-month blocks offered by some employers. These blocks are January 1 - July 1 and July 1 - December 15.

8. What kind of cooperative education internships are available?

Cooperative education internship students at WCSU have worked in all areas represented by the academic disciplines at the University.

Some recent cooperative education internships have included:

Pre-Professional Accountant, Webmaster, Marketing Assistant, Reporter, Laboratory Technician, Management Trainee, Public Relations Representative, Human Resources Intern, Programmer, Financial Analyst, Operations Assistant, PC Help Desk Aide, Design Assistant, Database Administrator, Residential Counselor, Assistant to OSHA Coordinator, Mayoral Aide, Legal Assistant, Tax Preparer, Software Technician, Production Assistant, Corporate Communications Intern, Probation Associate, Zoning and Land Use Assistant, Customer Service Representative, Market Researcher, Fund-Raiser and many more.

Most cooperative education internships obtained through Western are within driving distance of the University or a student's permanent home and many are within a 30-mile one-way commuting distance.

9. Do participating employers ever hire cooperative education internship students after the cooperative education internship term has ended?

Employers are not bound to hire cooperative education internship students after the cooperative education internship work block has ended and, similarly, students are not expected to remain after their cooperative education internship has concluded.

However, depending on factors such as date of graduation, work performance and available funding, many cooperative education internship students have become regular employees at the firm in which they completed their cooperative education internship assignment. National statistics indicate that over 40% of co-op students are offered permanent positions with their co-op internship employers upon graduation. Additionally, graduates of cooperative education internship programs are hired at higher salaries and promoted faster than other employees.

10. Who should I contact for more information?

Call Anthony Ciarleglio, Director of Cooperative Education, at 203-837-8265.