



OFFICE OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATION AND CAREER SERVICES

CO-OP QUICK START GUIDE

College of Science

What You Need to Know Right Now to Find a Co-op Position

About Co-op

Cooperative education at RIT is full-time, paid employment directly related to your field of study for a minimum period of 10 weeks (single quarter or “single block”) or a minimum period of 20 weeks (2 consecutive quarters or “double-block”). The completion of one or more co-ops is optional but strongly recommended for all College of Science majors EXCEPT Bioinformatics (one quarter minimum required for BS degree certification).

Co-op eligibility begins after you have completed the first two years of coursework in your academic program (Students in the Department of Chemistry are eligible for co-op after completion of the first year of coursework).

Getting Ready for the Job Search

To prepare for the co-op job search process, attend a Co-op Preparation Seminar, and/or meet with your Program Coordinator, to learn how to develop the tools (e.g. resume and cover letter) and the job search strategies (application and interview techniques) to undertake your search. You will also learn how to use RIT Job Zone, the online job posting database available through our web site at <http://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/>. You will be able to review and apply to co-op job postings and on-campus interview opportunities through Job Zone. A Co-op Preparation Seminar is offered to students every quarter except summer.

How Your Program Coordinator Helps

Program Coordinators (http://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/staff_and_advisors/Staff%20Directory.htm) in the Office of Cooperative Education and Career Services are assigned to each College of Science program and are available year round to assist and advise students with the job search process and any career-related concerns. You can meet with your individual Coordinator for personalized advisement or attend regularly offered seminars and workshops. Coordinators work closely with your academic department and foster relationships with employers to develop employment opportunities.

When to Begin the Job Search

It's never too early to begin your co-op job search! Starting two quarters before you want to co-op will prepare you to submit your resume to employers who require early resume submission (For Federal Government and many summer co-ops, start your job search at least *three* quarters in advance). The quarter right before you co-op is typically the busiest with resume submissions, interviews and related job search activities.

Create a Profile on RIT Job Zone and Develop Your Resume

RIT Job Zone is the web-based system used by the Office of Cooperative Education and Career Services and selected employers to post co-op job opportunities. You will use this same system later on to search for full-time positions upon completion of your degree. Enter the Student Portal and then login to Job Zone at <http://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/> using your RIT computer account and password. Complete your profile and store your resume in the system. See Job Zone Guide: http://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/student/stu_alum_pdfs/RITJobZoneGuide.pdf for more details. Developing a new resume is easy: see resume examples: http://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/student/stu_alum_pdfs/Resumes/SCIENCE%20Resumes.pdf or see your Program Coordinator for help with writing or revisions to an existing resume.

Learning About and Applying to Job Opportunities

Using Job Zone, you can view job descriptions and apply to all positions for which you are qualified. Create a search agent to receive notification of new job openings that match your job search profile and apply with a click of a button! Pay attention to the requirements listed by the employer. Some employers will direct you to submit your resume through the company web site – be sure to follow these directions carefully. Keep your options open and avoid limiting yourself to a specific employer or geographic location.

Employer on-campus information sessions, interviewing schedules and special events are also posted on Job Zone. You can view the details of upcoming Career Fairs and related activities, including workshops on job search topics sponsored by the Office of Cooperative Education and Career Services.

Broadening Your Job Search

The best job search is a comprehensive one. RIT Job Zone is **only one** source of co-op job openings. Look for co-op jobs utilizing other sources: your network of friends, professors, past employers, coaches, clubs and professional associations, and various web sites. We also recommend checking our student portal for other sites: http://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/student/stu_alum_pdfs/OnlineResourcesList/SCIENCEResources.pdf. Apply for positions found “on your own” and keep a record of your job applications, and make follow-up contacts as necessary.

You should always continue your search until you have been offered and accepted a position!

Prepare for Interviews

Brush up on interviewing skills and attend mock interview programs to prepare for the real thing. For sample interview questions, typical interview formats and interviewing tips, please see our web site’s link to interviewing info: <http://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/student/HowTo/interviewing.htm> Remember to send employers a brief thank you note after the interview and follow-up with employers to check on the status of your application. Make sure you have appropriate interview attire and arrive for the interview 15 minutes before scheduled time.

Accepting a Job Offer

Once you accept a co-op job offer, even verbally, you are expected to honor this commitment. You **must not** back out, or renege on the job, to work for another employer! Make sure you confirm your start and end dates, work hours and other work site expectations with your employer **prior** to starting your job.

Co-op employers expect RIT and its students to function according to accepted business ethics and standards. Further, RIT expects your behavior at all times, whether on or off campus to be in accordance with the standards articulated in the RIT Students Rights and Responsibilities Handbook: <http://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/studentconduct/rr.php> and the Co-op Student Agreement Policy: http://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/student/stu_alum_pdfs/AgreementPolicy.pdf

Reporting Your Co-op Job and Registering For Co-op

After you have accepted a co-op job, two steps are required to ensure that you will receive the appropriate co-op credit for each quarter you will be on co-op:

1. Report your co-op placement information to the Office of Cooperative Education and Career Services through our student portal.
2. Register on SIS: All College of Science students must register for co-op on the RIT Student Information System (SIS), following the same process used to register for academic courses. See the Course listings for the appropriate course number for co-op for your major. Note: co-op is for zero credit.

Your Co-op Salary and Income Tax Information

Your employer determines your compensation level. Salary rates are based on a number of variables, including your academic major, year level, prior work experiences and established company policies. There may be some room for negotiation based on circumstances. Check our web site for the latest co-op salary data listed by academic program:

<http://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/student/SalaryAndProgramInfo.htm>.

According to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS), salaries/wages paid to co-op students **are fully subject** to applicable federal and state income taxes.

Your Co-op Evaluation – Receiving Credit

To receive a “Satisfactory” (“S”) grade for co-op on your transcript, the following evaluation document must be completed and returned to the Office of Cooperative Education and Career Services:

Employer Evaluation of your performance. A link to a customized evaluation form is emailed to your employer by the Office of Cooperative Education and Career Services during the midpoint of each quarter you are on co-op. Encourage your supervisor to complete this evaluation promptly and review it with you.

International Students

International students need work authorization from the RIT International Student Services Office and cannot co-op until after three consecutive full-time academic quarters of study have been completed (<http://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/iss/>).

How Financial Aid Works While You Are on Co-op

While you are enrolled for a co-op assignment, you are not charged RIT tuition for the quarter. Therefore, with the exception of the Federal Pell Grant, you are not eligible to receive financial aid for the co-op quarter. If you are eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant for your co-op quarter, this grant will credit to your student account after the drop/add period for the quarter and after you register your co-op on the Registrars system and report your co-op on Job Zone. Financial aid

includes federal and private alternative loans as well as grants and scholarships. If you have any questions regarding your co-op earnings and financial aid, you should contact your Financial Aid Counselor at ritaid@rit.edu.

Housing While on Co-op and When You Return to Campus

Students who co-op in Rochester may stay in RIT housing. Students who co-op out of town are typically responsible for finding their own housing near the employer's location. Some companies provide housing assistance in the form of subsidies or housing allowances, or space in locations they own or rent for this purpose. Most employers will at least provide a list of apartments or housing options to assist students.

Students who return from co-op are guaranteed on-campus housing, **if they were in RIT housing prior to leaving for co-op**, however, preferences are not guaranteed. RIT Housing Operations communicates with students via email and provides information on how to apply for housing when you return to campus <http://finweb.rit.edu/housing/>.

While You are on Co-op

Stay connected with your Program Coordinator. Call or email him/her if you have any questions or concerns, or just to tell us how things are going! You will receive an electronic quarterly Co-op Newsletter, email from your academic department and receive an invitation to our office Welcome Back From Co-op Luncheon.

Be sure to check out and join the "RIT Office of Cooperative Education and Career Services" Facebook page at www.facebook.com/RITCareerServices to stay on top of upcoming events, the latest career trends, and to share your job-search advice with other RIT students.

Rochester Institute of Technology Office of Cooperative Education and Career Services

Bausch & Lomb Center
57 Lomb Memorial Drive
Rochester, NY 14623
Phone: 585.475.2301, 585.475.6905tty
Fax: 585.475.5476

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday: 8:00 am – 5:00 pm; Friday: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

Visit our office for the following services:

Personalized Advisement:

Call 475-2301 (TTY 475-6905) to make an appointment with your Program Coordinator who will assist you on a one-on-one basis with any aspect of your job search and related activities.

Walk-In Hours:

Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays 9:30am - 11:30am & 1:30pm - 3:30pm; Wednesdays and Fridays 9:30am – 11:30am. These are times set aside where one of our staff members is on duty to answer any quick questions you may have. Sign up on a first-come, first-serve basis at the Office of Cooperative Education and Career Services reception desk.

<http://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/>