

RIT | Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education

Experiential Learning Options - College of Art and Design

Experiential education has been a part of RIT's tradition of a career-focused education. It gives students the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to real-world experiences apart from their academic environment. This valuable experience builds on their educational foundation, at the same time, confirming and clarifying career goals. In the College of Art and Design there are several options for experiential education.

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What is Co-op?

Co-op or cooperative education is typically full-time, paid employment directly related to a student's major, one or two consecutive semesters/terms. (Fall semester, spring semester, or summer term). Start and end dates must coincide with RIT's recommended co-op work schedule. A co-op is a type of experiential education that allows students to gain valuable experience that helps clarify career goals, hone skills, and at the same time earn a salary. A co-op student's level of work responsibilities often are equal to an entry level employee's work responsibilities. Students register for co-op just like they would a course and it will appear on their transcript with a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory grade. Students are not charged tuition for co-op.

Who Can Co-op In the College of Art and Design?

BS	Photographic Sciences -- mandatory
BFA	All majors -- optional co-op
MFA	All majors (except Photography and Related Media) – optional co-op
MS	All majors (except Integrative Designs, Media Arts and Technology, -- optional co-op

Eligibility

Undergraduate Students must be in good academic standing with a minimum of a 2.0 GPA and have completed their sophomore year. Students are not eligible for co-op after they have completed all their degree requirements.

Graduate must be in good academic standing with a minimum of a 3.0 GPA and have completed one academic year. Students are not eligible for co-op after they have completed all their degree requirements.

Total blocks of co-op should not exceed one year or three terms (fall, spring, or summer semesters each equal one term; intersession is not counted as a term). Exceptions can be made only with departmental approval.

What is an Internship?

An internship course exposes students to the professional environment through outside job opportunities with an acceptable organization/agency/company in their field. Students will work under the guidance of a manager (ex.: artist, art director, creative director, senior graphic designer, product development manager or marketing communications manager) and perform work that is educational and meaningful for their short-term academic goals as well as their long-range career preparation.

Documentation of the experience is required and a final review is obtained from the employer. The appointed faculty advisor will meet with the student upon completion for final evaluation for a grade. Students must obtain pre-approval from their faculty advisor by completing the Internship Approval Form. Credit earned is typically applied towards elective credits.

Co-op vs. Internship – What is the Difference?

Internship experiences can vary as far as hours, level of work and responsibilities. From an employer point of view there often is no difference, but it is often important for an employer that the experience is tied to a student's academic record. As long as a job meets the definition of co-op or internship at RIT it does not matter what the employer calls the position.

Academic credit (which incurs tuition charges) is the main difference between co-op and internship. Based on a student's circumstances, if they need academic credit, then they may choose to register the experience as an internship. If they do not need academic credit, then they may choose to register for co-op, which is tuition-free.

If a student registers for an internship for a particular semester, the internship must occur during that same semester. Credit can only be awarded for an internship during the semester in which the work experience occurs.

A student's career services coordinator in Office of Career Services & Co-op is available as a resource to help them work through the options.

Information for International Students

Curricular Practical Training ("CPT")

Work experiences which are an integral part of an academic program are considered "curricular practical training." These experiences may include alternate work/study programs, internships, cooperative education, and practicum experiences. To be eligible for CPT, students must receive course credit or be in a recognized co-op program.

International students interested in participating in Curricular Practical Training should make an appointment to see an ISS advisor. Start and end dates must coincide with RIT's recommended co-op work schedule. Also, keep in mind that a co-op work term(s) cannot extend into the next semester -- past RIT's add/drop deadlines.

To apply for Curricular Practical Training, international students are required to do the following:

- I. **Register** for co-op or internship with their academic department in SIS.

2. **Report** their employment information to the Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education through the student page of the site.
3. **Get CPT Authorization.** After completing step 1 and 2, **permission** to participate in curricular practical training must be granted by International Student Services, prior to the employment start date. Students must provide ISS (in person or via email) a copy of their job offer letter/email, and will receive a new SEVIS I-20 with CPT Authorization.

Experiential Education Options in College of Art and Design

Qualifying Work, Compensation, Opportunities, Tuition, Approval, SIS Registration, Financial Aid, Reporting Procedures, Evaluation and Grading

	Mandatory Co-op Full-time	Optional Co-op	Internship Credit-bearing
Qualifying Work	<p>Related experience.</p> <p>Mandatory Full-time Co-op: (minimum 35 hours per week), the length of a term (minimum of 10 weeks) is recommended.</p> <p>Co-op start and end dates align as closely as possible to semesters, or summer term.</p>	<p>Related experience.</p> <p>Full-time Co-op: Minimum 30 hours per week, the length of a term (minimum of 10 weeks*) is recommended.</p> <p>Part-time Co-op: 10-15 hours per week (not to exceed 20 hours), the length of a term, carrying a load of at least 6 credit hours.</p> <p>Co-op start and end dates align as closely as possible to semesters, or summer term*.</p>	<p>Related experience.</p> <p>Part-time or full-time, length of a term.</p> <p>Start and end dates align as closely as possible to semesters, or summer term.</p>
Compensation	Paid.	Typically paid. (Exceptions must be approved by academic department).	Paid or unpaid.
Opportunities	Jobs – students can search through co-op job listings through the Office of Career Services & Co-op site career platform: Career Connect, or find on own.	Jobs – students can search through co-op job listings through the Office of Career Services & Co-op site career platform: Career Connect, or find on own.	Students can search through internship listings through the Office of Career Services & Co-op site career platform: Career Connect, or find on own.
Tuition	No tuition charged for co-op.	No tuition charged for co-op.	Tuition charged for credit hours the same as any other course.

	Mandatory Co-op Full-time	Optional Co-op	Internship Credit-bearing
			<i>Note: For more info, students should visit Student Financial Services Billing Information.</i>
Approval	Pre-approval through academic department required.	Academic department approval is not required.	Pre-approval through academic department required.
Registration and Reporting	<p>Registration and reporting a co-op is required prior to the start of the co-op. SIS registration is done through the student's academic department.</p> <p>Reporting employment is done through the Office of Career Services & Co-op site.</p> <p><i>Note: Full time student status is maintained (as relates to housing, Pell Grants, gym, etc.).</i></p>	<p>Registration and reporting a co-op is required prior to the start of the co-op. SIS registration is done through the student's academic advisor in Student Services.</p> <p>Report employment through the Office of Career Services & Co-op site.</p> <p><i>Note: Full time student status is maintained if registered for full time co-op (as relates to housing, Pell Grants, gym, etc.).</i></p>	<p>Receive approval in advance by faculty advisor. Register in SIS as Internship class.</p> <p><i>Note: A student must be registered for the class during the same semester in which the work occurs.</i></p>
Financial Aid	<p>Typically students do not get financial aid as they are not paying tuition. Exception may be Pell Grants.</p> <p><i>Note: Students should meet with their financial aid counselor to verify this information as it relates to their aid or to discuss any questions they may have related to this topic.</i></p>	<p>Typically students do not get financial aid as they are not paying tuition. Exception may be Pell Grants.</p> <p><i>Note: Students should meet with their financial aid counselor to verify this information as it relates to their aid or to discuss any questions they may have related to this topic.</i></p>	<p>Financial aid status would stay the same.</p> <p>If credit hours exceed 18 credits additional charges will be assessed.</p> <p><i>Note: Students should meet with their academic advisor and financial aid counselor to verify this information as it relates to their aid or to discuss any questions they</i></p>

	Mandatory Co-op Full-time	Optional Co-op	Internship Credit-bearing
			<i>may have related to this topic.</i>
Evaluation	Initiated by the Office of Career Services & Co-op evaluation system. Employer is sent a Work Evaluation to complete and submit online. Student is sent a Work Report to complete online. Academic department chair (or assigned faculty) has access to review.	Initiated by the Office of Career Services & Co-op evaluation system. Employer is sent a Work Evaluation that they complete online. Career services coordinator in the Office of Career Services & Co-op and academic department has access to review.	Currently initiated by student's academic department. Evaluation from employer or samples of student work with written summary and meeting with faculty advisor required to receive a letter grade.
Grading	Managed by academic department chair or assigned faculty. Appears on transcript with a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory grade. The academic department assigns grade based on Employer Work Evaluation and the completed Student Work Report.	Undergraduate programs: Completed by career services coordinator in the Office of Career Services & Co-op. Graduate programs: completed by academic department chairs. Appears on transcript with a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory grade. A Satisfactory grade is given if student successfully completes the co-op.	Managed by academic department chair or assigned faculty. Receive grade and credit hours. <i>Note: Credit can only be awarded during the semester in which the work experience occurs, consistent with RIT policy.</i>

** Work start and end dates: 10-week minimum, aligning with RIT semesters/terms. Students are permitted to start as early as the first day of the break before their co-op semester/term begins, and end by the first day of classes of the following semester/term.*

12/2/20

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