

**School of Information
Cooperative Employment Policy and Procedures**

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What is considered a Co-op?

ISTE-499

- Cooperative education at RIT is full-time, productive work (35 hours or more per week)
- Paid employment
 - There is no exception to this rule. For research-based experiences, please see the Creative, Innovative & Research Experience (ISTE-498)
- Directly related to your field of study
- In-person experiences are preferred, but remote are accepted.
- Includes formal evaluation and documentation of your performance from both student and employer
- Experiences are expected to have the student work with a supervisor who understands their field of study

Can other activities be used towards a Co-op?

ISTE-498 CIR (Creative, Innovative, or Research)

For students whose desired career path is research or entrepreneurship vs. an industry position

- Prerequisite is one industry-based co-op (ISTE-499 Undergraduate Co-op)
- Students need to develop a proposal – see your academic advisor
- Students must have completed a relevant tech course, research course, or business course (as appropriate) before pursuing this
- Students will be required to maintain an activity log, be evaluated by the person in charge, and present on their work
- Students are expected to spend approximately 35 hours per week on the effort

For more information see the ISTE-498 CIR [Guidelines](#) and the [Approval form](#).

What class are co-ops a prerequisite for?

Two co-ops (2 ISTE-499) or one co-op and CIR experience (1 ISTE-499 and 1 ISTE-498) are a prerequisite for enrolling in ISTE-500

Length of a Co-op

Summer: minimum of 12 weeks (more is always acceptable)

Fall or Spring semester: minimum of 14 weeks

Hours/week: minimum of 35 hours/week

Single Block Co-op: A single co-op block is the same length as an academic term. You may work longer -- depending on your schedule the preceding term and on your employer's needs.

Double Block Co-op: A double block is two consecutive terms of work with the same employer, without a break in between. Check with your academic advisor before committing to a double block, especially for future course planning. You and the employer negotiate the start and expected end date of the work period.

Visit the [Co-op Schedule](#) page for more details. Co-ops cannot extend longer than one year (3 terms including summer) at a time (see below regarding additional co-ops).

Eligibility for Co-op

- Co-op usually begins after you have completed the first two years of coursework in your academic program. It is common for students to go on co-op the summers after their 2nd and 3rd years, or for students to be on co-op during one academic term and one summer. Advanced courses are scheduled in a manner that supports co-ops during the academic year. Work with your academic advisor to adjust course planning as needed.
- ISTE 99 Second Year Seminar completion is required before going out on a co-op.
- Recommended Courses prior to Co-op
 - CIT: NSSA 241, NSSA 221, ISTE 230, ISTE 240
 - HCC: PSYC 250, ISTE 264, ISTE 252
 - WMC: ISTE 230, ISTE 260, SWEN 383, ISTE 340, ISTE 252
 - Flexibility is allowed case-by-case. Please email the iSchool's undergraduate program director, Dan Bogaard (dan.bogaard@rit.edu), copy in Melissa Hanna (mchics@rit.edu), and your academic advisor, a copy of the co-op job description, co-op length, co-op pay and term planning to go out on co-op.
- Academic Status
 - A student on academic probation needs to seek approval with their academic advisor before pursuing a co-op.
 - Any student up for or on any type of suspension (academic or conduct) is not allowed to accept or register a co-op, and must meet with the iSchool's undergraduate program director to discuss their co-op search.

Success of a Co-op

Simply obtaining and completing a Co-op does not guarantee successful completion. Review of the employer's final report by the iSchool is the final step in assuring that any Co-op will count towards your degree. Failure at this stage is rare, but can occur (being fired, failure to attend, lack of effort, etc.).

Additional Co-ops (above the required two blocks)

A student is allowed one additional single or double block co-op. If you wish to participate in an additional co-op you must first meet with your academic advisor to see how this would fit into your course planning. Co-ops are not to extend longer than one year (3 terms including summer). If you are interested in an additional co-op, you must be enrolled in classes for at least a semester before going out on an additional co-op

Ethical Responsibilities

Review the following requirements established by the Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education in conjunction with your academic department in order to facilitate your participation in the RIT cooperative education program.

Co-op employers expect RIT and its students to operate 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 and the Office of Career Services and Cooperative Educations' Co-op Student Agreement (<https://www.rit.edu/careerservices/students/co-op#before-co-op>). Pay particular attention to "Honoring my commitment in accepting a position and work as long as my services are required during the agreed upon period. Accepting an offer of employment is a contract between me and the employer. I cannot back

out or renege on an offer of employment once accepted.”

Planning when to go

Discuss with your academic advisor. To Schedule an Appointment:

- Login to SIS or myCourses and click the Starfish icon  **(<https://sis.rit.edu/info/welcome.do> or <https://mycourses.rit.edu/index.asp>)**
On the “My Success Network” page, click the drop down arrow next to your advisors name Click the “Schedule” link
- Call or stop by the School of Information: 585-475-2700; GOL 2100

Difficulties in finding a co-op

- What you should be doing for your search:
 - Know what you want; have a plan
 - Finding a job is a job, itself. Put in effort.
 - Be prepared to send out at least 100 resumes
 - Use sites such as, Career Connect, Handshake, LinkedIn, Glassdoor, indeed.com
 - Research your leads and add a cover letter - Job Search Tools for tips on Cover Letters found [here](#)
- Resources
 - Co-op website is a great resource! <https://www.rit.edu/careerservices/students/get-experience>
 - Resume Tips: <https://access.vault.com/resume-tips>

Still having difficulties?

Reach out to your career services coordinator:

Angela Pezzimenti

Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education

Bausch & Lomb Center

acpoce@rit.edu

585-475-5464

NTID Supported Students

Regina Kiperman-Kiselgof, Senior Employment Advisor

NTID Center on Employment (NCE)

Office# 2814, Bld# 60

VP 585-286-4610; Fax: 585-475-7570

Erica Fleischman Roethel, Senior Employment Advisor (HCC)

NTID Center on Employment (NCE)

Office# 2812, Bld# 60

VP 585-481-8148; Fax: 585-475-7570

NTID Career Fair: <https://www.rit.edu/ntid/nccc/students>

NTID Website: www.rit.edu/ntid/coops/jobs

Declaring Your Co-op

Report Online through the Co-op Office

- Go to: www.rit.edu/reportco-op

OR

- Go to: **Student Home** <https://www.rit.edu/careerservices/students/co-op>
 - “Report Your Co-op” found on the left side of the page



- Log in with your RIT username and password
- Complete the form

Approval Process (4-6 working days)

- The co-op office will verify and approve your employment with the company
- Your department gets an update of your job recorded with Career Services
- Once approved, your home department will then register you in SIS
- **Keep an eye on your SIS enrollment, once you see your co-op has been enrolled (ISTE 499), you should then drop yourself from any other enrolled classes**

Verification of co-ops not found in Career Connect

Most co-ops found in Career Connect for your program are already verified, and co-ops will also go through a thorough verification process once you report it.

If you find a co-op outside of Career Connect, please email a co-op job description, co-op length, and co-op pay to the iSchool's undergraduate program director for approval **before** accepting the job offer and reporting your co-op.

Co-op Employer Evaluations and Student Work Reports

The Office of Career Services & Cooperative Education sends a Co-op Evaluation Link to employers via email near the end of a student's co-op term. It is the employer's responsibility to rate the student's performance at work, add comments, and submit it back to the university. Please make sure to remind your supervisor about the evaluation towards the end of your co-op.

Students have to submit a Work Report about their experience that their academic department reviews. Students can complete their Report through the co-op site:

<https://www.rit.edu/careerservices/students/co-op>

Click on "**Pending**" to get started.

IMPORTANT: Please complete your work report by the end of your co-op term for timely grading.



Grading for Co-ops

Co-ops will be reviewed and graded by a student's home department on a rolling basis. Grades are pass/fail.

Cooperative Education Abroad

For more information, please contact:

Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education

INTLEXP@mail.rit.edu

585-475-2301

Contact Policy and Preferences: Email

In an effort to prepare you for the professional world, the iSchool office will NOT respond to emails that are not written in a professional manner. Emails to professors, staff, or potential employers should always include the following:

- A subject line summarizing the content of your email (e.g., ISTE 99.01 Resume Assignment)
- Salutation/to line: address your emails professionally by using prefixes such as Prof., Dr., or their names (e.g., Dear Ms. Hillman,)
- Class reference: which class are you inquiring about? Many professors/staff/supervisors work with many students, be specific.
- Your questions, statements, or concerns written in comprehensible English. Please do not use casual abbreviations (e.g., LOL, BRB, etc.)
- Use a professional signature at the end of your emails. You can create a signature in your email client.

For example:

John Smith, BS Web and Mobile Computing, May 2024

Rochester Institute of Technology

john.smith@rit.edu | 555-555-5555 | <https://www.linkedin.com/in/johnqsmith>

RIT Non-Discrimination Statement

RIT does not discriminate. RIT promotes and values diversity within its workforce and provides equal opportunity to all qualified individuals regardless of race, color, creed, age, marital status, sex, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, veteran status, or disability.