

Michigan Technological University

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Student Co-op Guide



Michigan Tech
Career Services

Congratulations on your co-op!

Co-ops and internships have been part of the Michigan Tech experience for decades. Career Services is proud to be a part of this experience by supporting our students and employers. While working as a co-op student, you have the opportunity to live in new places, meet new people, develop your teamwork skills and practice communicating, all while applying and improving your skills. Hands-on experience is a nice complement to what you have learned on campus. The memories and experiences you will have from your co-op will stay with you as you continue to grow and learn in your personal and professional lives. This a great time to make new contacts and grow your network.

The Career Services team is here to help you if you need us and are looking forward to hearing about your experience when you return to campus. No matter where you go for your co-op or what you work on, it is a learning opportunity for you to make the most of.

Go Huskies!

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Cooperative Education

Experiential education is an umbrella term that includes many areas such as co-ops and internships, as well as job shadowing, Michigan Tech's Enterprise Program, and Senior Design.

Cooperative education is an employment opportunity that is combined with an educational component. Co-ops are a joint venture between you, your employer, and Michigan Tech. Students in a full-time co-op position work full-time hours during the semester (an average of 35–40 per week) and register for 1-2 undergraduate or 1–2 graduate co-op credits (contact Career Services for information regarding part-time co-op work).



A co-op assignment typically lasts two semesters (typically spring-summer or summer-fall). The work assignments are intended to relate to your major and provide a range of experience and training. Employers provide co-op students with challenging work, and students work closely with a supervisor/mentor to learn while on the job. The supervisor completes evaluations to gauge performance. The credit earned is through Undergraduate/Graduate Cooperative Education courses (delivered via Canvas). Students are required to complete all assignments and submit a final report.

Graduating with co-op experience gives you the advantage of having worked in your field. Placement rates and salaries of students with co-op experience are higher than those without it. This experience helps you to gain confidence and practice professional skills. Employers value the experience that co-op students have. When you are confident in yourself, employers will be confident in hiring you.



Student Benefits

- Earn a competitive salary
- Gain confidence in field of study
- Maintain student status
- Clarify interests, strengths, and potential career paths
- Apply classroom concepts
- Increase opportunities for future co-ops or full-time positions
- Develop a professional network and contacts
- Work on teams
- Practice communication and leadership skills
- Set priorities and practice time management

Employer Benefits

- Students are able to work on significant long-term projects
- More time to evaluate students for future employment
- Early contact with students can lead to multiple experiences
- Immediate on-boarding with multiple co-ops or full time hires

CO-OP Eligibility

Undergraduate Students

- Must have completed their first semester at Michigan Tech
- Must have at least a 2.0 GPA and be in good academic and conduct standing
- Must receive permission from their academic advisor
- Must consult with financial aid

Graduate Students

- Must have completed at least one semester at Michigan Tech
- Must have at least a 3.0 GPA and be in good academic and conduct standing
- Must receive permission from their academic advisor

International Students

Additional United States governmental requirements apply

- Must have completed two full-time semesters in residence at Michigan Tech
- Must not completed degree requirements prior to co-op semesters
- Must obtain a Social Security number from the Secretary of State Office
- Work authorization will be handled in International Programs and Services (IPS) for CPT;
- this process can take up to 2 weeks

Co-op Abroad

Performing a co-op abroad will require securing the appropriate travel and work authorization documents. Please contact Career Services and IPS for assistance in obtaining these documents.

Military Members

Students who are, or plan to become, a part of a military organization, including ROTC, must contact their appropriate military advisor immediately to ensure that they are eligible to participate.

#IWork4ArmyFam

RECURPOST



Securing a Co-op

THE JOB SEARCH

Students are responsible for securing their own co-ops, but Career Services is available to assist with this process. A typical co-op hiring process includes the following steps:

1. SEARCH

The job search for a co-op position is very similar to any other job search (every company will have their own process). The best resources for a job search are:

Handshake (<http://www.mtu.joinhandshake.com>)

Academic advisors

Department emails and announcements

Career Fest & Career Fair (<https://www.mtu.edu/career/events/career-fair/fair/>)

Network connections

LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/>)

2. APPLICATION

A student submits an application, usually including a resume and cover letter. Once an application for a co-op position is received, the company will determine whether each applicant meets the requirements and then forwards the information to the appropriate group within the company.

Before and during the application process (including leading up to CareerFEST and Career Fair events), students are encouraged to visit the Career Services office for a resume and/or cover letter review. Peer coaches and staff Career Advisors are available to help with this process.

3. INTERVIEW

The company contacts the student for an interview. Some companies will conduct a phone interview first, followed by a face-to-face interview. During an interview, the employer gets to know the applicant's personality and to determine whether they seem to be a good fit. Interviews look not just at technical skills but also assess communication, teamwork, and attitude. After the interview, the employer will then choose the applicant that seems to be the best fit.

4. JOB OFFER

Next, the company offers the student a co-op position. If you receive a job offer by phone, it is acceptable to ask for the offer in writing and take time to make your final decision. Keep in mind that a verbal acceptance is a binding agreement. Prior to accepting an offer, you may want to contact Career Services for review. You will need an offer letter with start and end dates of employment to register for the co-op course. International Students - you should answer “yes” to the following question, “Are you authorized to work in the USA for an employer?” You will need to go through the process of Curricular Practical Training (CPT) once you receive a job offer, to be authorized to work.

Offer letters need to have:

- a) Company name
- b) Specific beginning and ending dates of job offer (within range specified)
- c) Complete physical address of location where student will work
- d) Number of hours student will work each week
- e) Student’s job title
- f) Description of job duties

5. ACCEPT JOB OFFER

Students accept the offer, either during the initial conversation or after reviewing the offer letter. A verbal acceptance is considered an official acceptance. Before relocating for your co-op assignment make sure to ask what expenses the company will cover. Employers may pay for car mileage, meals, or motel costs during this process (but this varies by company).

6. BACKGROUND CHECK

Companies may do a background check once a student has accepted a position. This process may include a drug screening. Clarify with the company if you are responsible for paying any fees associated with the background check or if you will be reimbursed.

7. COURSE REGISTRATION

To be registered in a co-op course, you must fill out the appropriate co-op forms. These forms can be found here (<https://www.mtu.edu/career/students/jobs-intern/coop>). The forms then need to be submitted to the co-op office in Career Services (email them to co-op@mtu.edu). Once all the information is received, our staff will enroll you in the appropriate cooperative education course. Some employers require multiple rotation co-ops and advertise this requirement in their job posting. Students find it to be very beneficial to co-op more than once with the same employer because it allows them to gain responsibility and more experience while alternating between work and school. Other students find it is beneficial to complete co-ops with different employers, so they have the opportunity to experience different industries, corporate cultures, and projects.

The Ethics of Job Offers

Upon accepting an offer, it is unethical to continue looking for work. It is unprofessional to renege on the original offer in favor of a “better” one. Reneging is the term used when an applicant accepts a job offer and then later turns it down. The

Michigan Tech Career Services policy is that a student should never renege on an accepted offer. If a student has unforeseen events, such as health or emergencies, we will work with the student to determine the best course of action. If a student requests a co-op change due to a new, different, or better offer, Career Services will not approve the change. Once an agreement to work for a company has been made, the agreement should be considered final, whether verbal or written.

Sometimes an individual may have multiple offers at the same time. It is appropriate to ask a company if they will negotiate the terms of the offer that has been presented or request additional time to consider the offer. The company has the right to decline the request for negotiations. Begin by asking the company if they are open to negotiations. If the employer says, “no,” then a decision must be made with what had been originally proposed in the offer letter. Asking for an offer extension can be done with a simple email. Typically, two additional weeks should be the maximum amount of additional time requested.

If the employer is open to salary negotiations, then a salary range should be presented, backed up by specific evidence and examples. This evidence can take the form of average salaries found in online salary surveys as well as an explanation of the top-level skills possessed.

If declining an offer, begin by calling the company representative to decline the offer (to maintain a connection) and state that an email will be sent for written confirmation (to have a record of the declination). Follow up within 24 hours after the phone conversation with your written declination.

CO-OP Housing

Employer housing assistance varies widely. Some companies may supply housing or provide housing stipends, but most often you will be responsible for your own housing. Most employers are happy to help their employees with housing searches, so do not hesitate to ask for their assistance with the search.

How do I find housing if it is not provided:

- Reach out to your company contact
- Check local listings
- Contact students who have worked with the company
- Contact local real estate agencies
- Connect with alumni in the area





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Registration Requirements

In order to register for the co-op course students must (<https://www.mtu.edu/career/students/jobs-intern/coop-inten/forms/>):

- Complete the Student Information & Checklist
- Complete the Cooperative Education Agreement Form (company signature required)
- Submit an official offer letter to Career Services office including a start and end date (co-op@mtu.edu)
- Obtain approval from the academic advisor It is the student's responsibility to schedule a meeting with their academic advisor. This meeting along with information from financial aid will determine the number of credits needed.
- Obtain approval from financial aid. It is the student's responsibility to schedule an appointment with a financial aid representative to go over any loans, scholarships, and other financial aid. Co-op earnings may have an impact on future aid.

After these documents have been submitted, a Career Services staff member will review each student's academic and conduct standing. An offer from a company does not imply automatic registration in the co-op program.

The student must meet all the criteria prior to being registered by the Career Services team.

Once the student has met all the criteria, the Career Services staff will register the student in the appropriate co-op course with the desired credit load (1 - 2 credits).

Students must register for each semester on a co-op assignment (contact Career Services to determine what steps are necessary).

Once registered, it is the student's responsibility to pay the required tuition fees. Late registration or unpaid tuition may be assessed a late fee.

It is important to understand that the term full-time co-op is different from being considered a full-time student. While a student in a full-time co-op is considered 'full-time' by Michigan Tech, other entities, such as scholarship providers and lenders, may not recognize the student as full-time.

Tuition, Credit and Financial Aid ¹⁴

This information is meant to be an informative guide only. Since each student's financial situation is different you need to contact a Financial Aid Manager prior to registration regarding your loan repayment and scholarships.

Michigan Tech policy states that students registered in the official co-op program administered by Career Services will be considered continuously enrolled. Students that are not continuously enrolled need to check student loan deferment, scholarships, and health coverage. Any student who receives notification of repayment while on co-op should contact Financial Aid immediately to resolve the situation.

Students must pay tuition for co-op credits to be considered a continuously enrolled student. Undergraduate students taking less than 12 credits will be charged on a per-credit basis which is dependent on your student standing (i.e. sophomore, junior or senior status). For additional information regarding your student standing please refer to your MyMichiganTech account. Contact Student Billing for more information.

If the student will only be working half time (20 hours per week) then the student will be registered for 1 credit. All students are required to enroll in a minimum of 1 co-op credit, with the option of earning up to 2 credits per semester.

If you are concerned about your student status, it is best to speak with a representative of the Financial Aid Office to determine how your aid will be affected while on co-op.

If the student fails to enroll for the co-op course prior to the start of the semester, the student will incur a late registration penalty, which must be paid prior to being registered. If a student does not pay tuition on time, then there is a risk of being dropped from the course. Please be sure of enrollment status prior to leaving for the co-op assignment.

Domestic students are not required to enroll in the co-op course while working at an internship/co-op. An internship is most often executed by students during the summer semester because full-time students are not required to be enrolled during this semester. If a student chooses to do an internship/co-op during the fall or spring semester the student will not be considered continuously enrolled and may lose financial aid, health insurance coverage, and the ability to register for the following semester. Carefully consider the options before participating in an internship/co-op without being enrolled in academic courses.

In some cases, students receiving scholarships from outside agencies have been allocated their funds while participating in co-op. This is dependent on the type of scholarship and the discretion of the awarding agency. Students should contact their agency for specifics.

When the Michigan Tech Financial Aid Office becomes aware of co-op registration for a student, the aid will be adjusted accordingly. Wages earned while on co-op assignment may be treated differently than regular wages. Speak to a financial aid representative to see how co-op wages are viewed by the Department of Education, and accordingly, how they affect FAFSA results and future financial aid.

All co-op students should apply for financial aid at the same time they normally would. Students are still responsible for acquiring and completing their financial aid applications (e.g. FAFSA).



"Validating existing marine energy technologies is essential to advance toward a clean energy future using the world's largest renewable energy resource. I feel fortunate to be part of a national lab that strives for efficient and sustainable renewable energies to power the world."

Tania Demonte Gonzalez
NREL Graduate Intern

Cooperative Education Courses

Some students participate in the co-op for the duration of one semester, some students participate in multiple, consecutive semesters. In order to ensure that students who are on a multiple semester co-op are not performing redundant academic work, there are four cooperative education courses available. These must be taken in sequence and each course builds on the previous co-op experience.

Undergraduate Cooperative Education

Credits may count as free or technical electives based on the academic department. Check with your academic advisor for clarification. Enrollment requires good standing, registration with Career Services, and an official offer letter from the employer.

Semesters Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

Credits: variable to 2.0; May be repeated

Restrictions: Permission of department required; May not be enrolled in one of the following level(s): Graduate

- UN 3002 Undergraduate Cooperative Education I
- UN 3003 Undergraduate Cooperative Education II (Pre-Requisite(s): UN 3002)
- UN 3004 Undergraduate Cooperative Education III (Pre-Requisite(s) UN 3003)
- UN 3005 Undergraduate Cooperative Education IV (Pre-Requisite(s): UN 3004)

Graduate Cooperative Education

Credits may count as free or technical electives based on academic department. Requires advisor approval, good standing, registration with Career Services, and an official offer letter.

Semesters Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

Credits: variable to 2.0; May be repeated

Restrictions: Permission of department required; Must be enrolled in one of the following level(s): Graduate

- UN 5000 Graduate Cooperative Education I
- UN 5002 Graduate Cooperative Education II (Pre-Requisite(s): UN 5000)
- UN 5003 Graduate Cooperative Education III (Pre-Requisite(s): UN 5002)
- UN 5004 Graduate Cooperative Education IV (Pre-Requisite(s): UN 5003)

These courses are set up to serve as a supplement to the co-op work experience. Focusing on professional development through writing and discussion is valuable. The skills you will gain will help you in the classroom and to grow your professional profile. In addition, you will have opportunities to connect with other students who are also on co-op to learn about their experiences.



Course Expectations

The expectation for participation is at least once per week. Weekly participation helps keep you in contact with your peers and provide opportunities for you to share experiences, as well as receiving tips and advice from the instructor and teaching assistant.

Outcomes (Learning Objectives)

Students will participate in online discussions with their peers to learn about other industries and companies, assist one another with challenges, and respond to questions that ask them to reflect on their professional goals and skills.

Students will receive feedback from their supervisors twice per semester. This should include a meeting with the supervisor to discuss the details regarding how to improve their performance in areas identified, as well as an opportunity for the student to provide the supervisor feedback from his or her perspective.

Students will compose a final report, including both reflective and technical components. This report will be reviewed by the supervisor.

The Experience

When you arrive at your workplace you may still feel like a student, but you are expected to be a professional. This is the start, or continuation, of your professional career and reputation. The co-op experience is an opportunity to establish yourself professionally.

Co-op salary is dependent on the major, work location, experience, and semester standing. Many students are able to save money to help pay for their college education. In addition, some employers offer tuition assistance, 401K participation, relocation assistance, and housing stipends.

Student responsibilities while on co-op

- Check your @mtu.edu email account and Canvas for co-op program communication
- Update your address in Banweb
- Maintain all University policies
- Behave ethically
- International students must comply with all federal, state, and University regulations regarding employment of international students

Employer responsibilities

- Assign major related work assignments to enhance student's academic and professional development
- Provide a supervisor to oversee the student's work
- Conduct two performance reviews per semester
- Review the student's technical report
- Support the student

Preparing for the First Day

It is important to be prepared for your first day. There are a few steps you can take to ensure you are ready.

- Now that you are an employee, it is important to do a thorough job of learning as much as you can even before you begin.
- Be sure you are aware of your department's dress code before you arrive.
- Practice the drive during your commute time to find out how much of a factor the traffic may be. Find out where to park when you arrive.
- Know who and where to report when you arrive.
- Ask Human Resources and your supervisor if you will need to bring any documentation, supplies, safety glasses, work boots etc. so you are adequately prepared for the first day on the job.



The First Day and Your First Impression

Right from the start, you are establishing yourself and making an impression. Make the best first impression with an eagerness to learn. The first day may require meetings with Human Resources, orientation activities, drug screenings or a physical examination. During the day, you may be introduced to people, your work space, and the technology necessary for your job. Make sure to ask questions, take notes and show your eagerness to be present.

Many employers provide a brief orientation to the company. Procedures vary from company to company; larger co-op employers often assign one contact person, usually within Human Resources, to provide you with the information on the company's history, philosophy, policies, and rules. If there is not a formal orientation at your company, request any applicable employment information from your supervisor or the company's co-op coordinator. Make the most of your orientation so you are prepared. The information gained will provide you appropriate resources to get your work done.

Depending on the company, a desk, phone, and/or computer may be provided. These are owned by the company and they are likely monitored in accordance with strict policies regarding usage. Do not use company equipment for personal uses.

Ask for a tour of the facility, if one is not arranged by the employer. It is important to become acquainted with the new setting. This is a good time to become familiar with the company's culture as well as the new surroundings (i.e., restrooms, cafeteria, copy machines, and meeting rooms). Remember to obtain necessary safety equipment immediately.

Many companies may offer a variety of benefits to co-op employees. Health care coverage, credit union privileges, housing, transportation allowances, or financial assistance for tuition may be available to you. Consult the personnel or Human Resources department of the company regarding benefits for which you may qualify. You are a student and an employee simultaneously; your situation differs from that of a full-time employee and you may not qualify for benefits that other employees do.

Becoming a Part of the Organization

The co-op experience is the opportunity to find out what is involved in a chosen field beyond the classroom experience.

It is natural to feel nervous or excited when starting a new job. Students who are beginning their first work assignments are often quite eager to jump into a project and apply their classroom knowledge in the work environment. Basic tasks may be assigned first in order to prove reliability and competence before inclusion in higher-level projects. No matter what tasks you are assigned, your best efforts should be given. The spirit of tackling initial tasks will be carefully noted by fellow employees. Failing to take those tasks seriously may have a detrimental effect on the progression of assignments, and, possibly, career opportunities.

Your supervisor will be selecting your job assignments. They will make a significant impact on your professional growth. Tackling problems, using time efficiently, and communicating well with others are areas where you should have opportunities to grow. Your supervisor should call attention to any problem areas or weaknesses in your work habits or attitude.

Industry changes rapidly and some students report that their work levels may be very slow at some points and then incredibly busy at other times due to new and unexpected projects and timelines. During the “slow times” seek out other projects, potentially in different departments of the company. Initiative and work ethic are noticed, and there could be opportunity to gain more knowledge about the company and industry. Co-op managers have said that initiative is the best way to make a positive impression because they are looking for self-starters.





Look for opportunities to build working relationships (not just with your supervisor). This network can be very helpful for you to discuss ideas with. When you have an idea, you can use this group to gain feedback and make changes to your plans. You will be expected to make decisions during your co-op.

Be aware of the chain of command and office roles. If you are having problems, follow the chain of command. If you are unsure of what to do, talk to a coworker, then go to your supervisor, and if further action is needed, meet with your Human Resources representative. You may contact Career Services to discuss any questions you may have.

Sometimes enthusiastic new employees ignore or circumvent their supervisors in an attempt to get things done and to progress more quickly in their assignment. Things may move a little faster that way initially, but sooner or later you will learn that such tactics are not tolerated in most organizations. It is to your advantage to work for the company by following the instructions of your immediate supervisor. Your supervisor determines your evaluation and rates you on your ability to operate within established guidelines and protocols.

Your supervisor may be called upon to account for, defend, or explain your activities to management or to coordinate your duties into a larger plan, so keep the lines of communication open. Your supervisor will be an important influence on your development and progression in your work assignment. Be careful not to solicit minute-by-minute directions and approvals; do your own thinking and seek out your supervisor when you need assistance with a problem or procedure. An attempt to find the answer should almost always be the first step.

At the end of your co-op assignment make sure to tie up any loose ends with your projects before you leave the company. If you are unable to complete your project, or if it is ongoing, discuss the status of the project with your supervisor or the person who will be responsible for continuing these duties after your departure.

If you feel there is a significant lack of meaningful, job-related work, please contact Career Services to discuss work related concerns. The staff can only offer assistance and intervene when made aware of difficult circumstances.



Succeeding in Your Co-op

Ask Questions

When you begin, your supervisor is well aware that you do not know it all, nor do they expect you to know it all. They expect you to seek answers and ask questions, so never be afraid to ask questions. However, when appropriate, you should seek to find answers first using the resources you have available. Your resources may be a co-worker, mentor, or web search. When you have exhausted your resources, then use your supervisor to ask the question, and take note of the answer. One thing to avoid is to ask the same question repeatedly. It will be important to document the knowledge you build so you can refer back throughout your co-op experience.

Professional Communication

All communication should be professional, whether an email, phone call, report or a presentation. Always reread your emails to ensure you have used a straightforward subject line, plenty of explanation, and an appropriate tone.

Effective Teamwork

Every co-op will be part of a team, or many teams, so it is important to be a valuable team member who can assist in ways that will help the team meet their goal. In school, you may be accustomed to leading the teams you are on, but as a co-op, it may be more likely that you are being led. This can be a difficult transition, so it is important that you are aware of what you can do to strengthen the team.

Find the niche you can fill. Share your ideas. Consider other perspectives. If you commit to a task, make sure you follow through to completion so the team stays on schedule.

Above and Beyond

During your time as a co-op, will it be your goal to be described as having done a good job, or do you want to be remembered as the co-op who went above and beyond? If you choose the latter, here are a few tips.

When we have asked employers how their co-ops can make the biggest impact, they all say, "Take initiative." This means that you should make sure you are on time for the projects you are assigned, and if an issue does arise, take the initiative to solve the problem. Do not wait for something to happen or others to solve it.

Also, there will be down time, so use that down time to learn more. Ask others if there is anything you can help them with. Take time to learn about other departments. Use the time to gain a deeper understanding of your work. Whatever it is, use the time to make yourself a better employee in that company. Don't sit back and wait for things to happen. Take the initiative and do something to make them happen.

Another method for ensuring you do your best work is to establish the best methods for managing both your time and the projects you are assigned. Some of your old methods may work, but the speed and number of projects you are simultaneously responsible for may require some revisions to your systems. Part of this may depend on the style of your supervisor and the amount of supervision and oversight they provide. If you are given a lot of independence, your supervisor may assume that you are able to manage the workload and project balance. A personalized system is the first step to ensuring your success, the next is to know your limits. If at any time you anticipate you will not meet a deadline, it is important to notify someone so they are not relying on you, only to find out too late. Take responsibility for your projects and time.

WORKPLACE ISSUES

As a co-op employee, you are an employee of that company, while simultaneously a student. Your day-to-day guidelines will be made clear to you through employee orientations, training, and publications. It is your responsibility to be very clear on what is expected of you as an employee of that company. As a student, you are still responsible for adhering to the Student Code of Conduct.

While we all hope that the co-op experience goes smoothly, it is important to be prepared for unforeseen circumstances. This section is aimed to offer insight into the potential difficulties that arise during a work experience. As always, co-op students are encouraged to contact Career Services if issues at the workplace occur and help in managing the situation is desired. It is best to keep the lines of communication open and to work through challenges together.

Occasionally, we do have students who have problems, such as lack of work, assignments not matching their major field of study, conflicts with other employees, etc. It is important that you try to work the problem out on your own first; however, if the problem persists, please do not hesitate to call or email Career Services. We will provide guidance and recommend courses of action. Career Services will only intervene when the student requests it. Our office will never contact a company based on a conversation with a student unless the student agrees to this course of action and is willing to put their request in writing.

Do not let the problem continue until the end of your assignment and then decide that you do not want to return to the company. Make every effort to resolve the problem from the beginning. It is not fair to the company to lose a good student because they were not made aware of a problem with their program.

Safety

It is important to realize that there are safety issues to consider at the workplace. Many of these safety topics are regulated by the United States Federal Government. The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) mandates that employers maintain a work environment that is free from hazards and in compliance with federal health and safety standards.

Employers are also required to inform employees (including co-op students) of all safety and health hazards, to establish and post written policies that discuss potential hazards, to provide safety training before the start of work, and to provide appropriate protective equipment at no cost. If an injury or sickness because of the work environment occurs, the employer's established procedures must be followed and the incident must be reported through the employer's proper channels.

In the event of work-related injury or illness, a co-op student is required to notify Career Services of this issue immediately. Michigan Tech students on co-op retain student rights and responsibilities.

Ethics

Ethical guidelines are set up by the profession as a way to establish and maintain a reputation of those that work within that profession. Often ethical issues can arise and conflicts occur when competing interests and beliefs emerge.

Often, employees belong to a profession that upholds its own ethical guidelines. Students may consider themselves in the same or a different profession than the employer and, therefore, may find themselves caught between conflicting ethical approaches or conflicting interpretations of the profession's ethical approach.

One main purpose of the co-op courses is to help identify and understand the field's professional ethical code and how it is used in the world of work. It is important to recognize that ethics and business etiquette are different. Identifying and understanding this difference is a key piece in the exploration of the professional ethical code.

Absences

Employees, including co-op students, are expected to be punctual and present for every day of work. Illness, emergencies, or other legitimate reasons to miss work must be approved by the employer with advance notice, when possible. If an issue arises that requires an absence of a week or more, then Career Services must be notified as well.

Missing work because of an injury or illness related to the work experience requires reporting the situation to the employer and Career Services.

Medical Leave

If the co-op course is being used by the student to maintain continuously enrolled status and the student is withdrawing from the co-op program for either physical or mental health reasons, then that student will follow the same procedures as withdrawing from the University. A tuition refund schedule is available at the Registrar's Office.

If the student believes that special consideration should be made for their circumstances, communication between the student, the Registrar, and Career Services can take place. Be sure to review the Registrar's Office Academic Renewal policy for readmission prior to withdrawing from the University.

Layoffs

Economic conditions greatly influence the ability of an employer to retain employees, which includes co-op students. In the event of a layoff, notification of this to Career Services will be required in order to make arrangements for completing the work term.

Unemployment Compensation

Michigan state law does not provide unemployment compensation for "services performed for a 'for-profit' employer by a student as part of a program for academic credit, i.e., 'co-op student.'"

Discharge

Co-op students are considered at-will employees and can be terminated, as any other at-will employee, at any time. Typically, dismissal from a work assignment occurs for a legitimate reason such as poor performance, incompetence, inability to perform expected tasks, unapproved absences, tardiness, apathetic demeanor, or unacceptable attitude or behavior. Maintaining open communication with the supervisor can provide insight into a supervisor's approval or disapproval of work or behavior and can help to manage any issues prior to dismissal.

Deserting a co-op

Leaving a co-op position without consulting Career Services and the employer may result in disciplinary action.



Discrimination

Michigan Technological University does not condone any form of discrimination or harassment towards students either on campus or off campus.

Although Michigan Tech makes reasonable efforts to ensure that work experiences are free of discriminatory practices, it is possible that a co-op student may experience illegal, inappropriate, and/or unethical behavior in the workplace.

If any kind of harassment, unfair treatment, or retaliatory activity is experienced on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, height, weight, marital status, genetic information, disability, or veteran status during a job interview or while employed, contact Career Services office immediately for assistance.

There is no penalty for reporting any discriminatory or harassing behavior.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a violation of federal law. The law states that “Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects the individual’s employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual’s work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.”

Sexual harassment can occur in a variety of circumstances, including but not limited to the following:

The victim as well as the harasser may be any gender.

The victim does not have to be a different sex assigned at birth from the harasser.

The harasser can be the victim’s supervisor, an agent of the employer, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or a non-employee.

The victim does not have to be the person being harassed but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.

Examples of sexual harassment include physical sexual assault/violence, demands for sexual favors in exchange for positive job evaluation or promotion, and/or unwanted attention, touching, patting, and pinching. Other examples include sexual verbal comments/abuse, sexual innuendo, and/or telling sexually explicit jokes. Sexual harassment is very serious and should be reported to Institutional Equity or Career Services immediately to establish a safety plan. There is no penalty for reporting any discriminatory or harassing behavior.

Dealing with Sexual Harassment:

Document all instances of harassment and report them immediately. Let the harasser know that you do not agree with their actions. If you feel unsafe doing this, then contact your supervisor, or, if your harasser is your supervisor, another employee you trust.

Talk to your Human Resources representative.

File criminal charges with the local police.

Please discuss any perceived sexual harassment with Institutional Equity or Career Services to establish a safety plan. There is no penalty for reporting any discriminatory or harassing behavior.

Disciplinary Action

A co-op student is still a representative of Michigan Tech. Future co-op students’ opportunities are dependent on current co-op students’ performances. In order to continue a high functioning co-op program, a strong relationship between co-op students and employers needs to be maintained. Work quality, work ethic, and personal ethics are key to upholding this relationship.

Each student that receives an unsatisfactory job performance review will be assessed individually, and disciplinary action - if necessary - will be decided upon per situation. Depending on the severity of the situation, the student could receive an oral or written warning, probation from the co-op program, or suspension from the University.

Refer to Dean of Students’ Conduct Policies and the Undergraduate Catalog of Academic Policies and Procedures for further assistance.

Continuing Your Professional Development

When students return to campus after a co-op, they have a new perspective on coursework and the skills required for professional success. Make sure to use the knowledge that you gained and to share your experiences with students, staff, and faculty.

To further your professional development, you may want to participate in these opportunities on campus:

- Career Services: <https://www.mtu.edu/career/events/>
- Study Abroad - <http://www.mtu.edu/international/study-abroad/program/>
- Pavlis Honors College - <http://www.mtu.edu/honors/>
- The Enterprise Program - <http://www.mtu.edu/enterprise/>
- Student Government - <http://usg.mtu.edu/usg/membership>
- Organizations - <https://www.involvement.mtu.edu/organizations>

co-op@mtu.edu | www.mtu.edu/career
906-487-2313 | 220 Administration Building
1400 Townsend Drive | Houghton, MI 49931

Michigan Technological University is an equal opportunity educational institution/equal opportunity employer, which includes providing equal opportunity for protected veterans and individuals with disabilities.



Important University Contacts

Academic and Community Conduct

310 Administration Building
906-487-2951
www.mtu.edu/conduct/

Career Services

220 Administration Building
(906) 487-2313
co-op@mtu.edu
www.mtu.edu/career/

Cashier's Office

103 Administration Building
(906) 487-2247
student-billing@mtu.edu

Co-op Program

220 Administration Building
(906) 487-2313
co-op@mtu.edu

Fees, Payment

103 Administration
Building
(906) 487-2247
student-billing@mtu.edu

Graduate School

414 Administration
Building
(906) 487-2327
gradadms@mtu.edu
www.mtu.edu/gradschool/

Info, Campus Switchboard

(906) 487-1885

Institutional Equity

308 Administration
Building
906-487-3310
www.mtu.edu/equity/

International Programs and Services

200 Administration Building
(906) 487-2160
www.mtu.edu/international
ips@mtu.edu

Registrar's Office

130 Administration Building
(906) 487-2319
registrar@mtu.edu

Scholarships, Financial Aid

103 Administration Building
(906) 487-2622
finaid@mtu.edu
www.mtu.edu/finaid/

Student Billing

1st Floor Administration Building
(906) 487-2393
student-billing@mtu.edu
www.mtu.edu/student-billing/

Student Health Insurance

214 Lakeshore Drive
(906) 487-1088
hrwebmaster@mtu.edu
www.mtu.edu/hr/students/insurance/

Withdrawal, Dean of Students

130 Administration Building
(906) 487-2212
deanofstudents@mtu.edu
www.mtu.edu/deanofstudents/