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ABOUT COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

Cooperative Education allows students to gain work experience directly related to their academic major. It is a learning experience in the workplace which couples classroom studies with employment.

The courses offer students the opportunity to:

- be placed in an employment or volunteer position
- complete assigned duties and special projects
- interact with supervisors and co-workers,
- learn work and education related skills,
- learn important employability skills to help them in their search for employment,
- be evaluated on that performance by an employer or supervisor,
- solicit a letter of recommendation from the employer,
- earn college credit and a grade.

Supervised on-the-job training relating to the following programs is available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Associate in Applied Science Disciplines:</th>
<th>Associate in Arts Disciplines:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>Art</td>
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<tr>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
<td>Biology</td>
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<td>Management</td>
<td>Journalism</td>
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<td>Office Administration</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
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<td>JOU 2949</td>
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<td>PSY 2949</td>
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STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for Cooperative Education the student must meet the following:

- Completion of a minimum of twelve (12) hours of college credit coursework;
- Courses must have been completed at LSSC or an approved institution;
- Completion of all developmental courses as required by placement test scores;
- A grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or higher;
- Complete any specific course prerequisites.
- A student interested in pursuing an education/work experience directly related to her/his academic or career goals must also be accepted by a Faculty Advisor and possess the skills needed to meet the standards of their prospective employer. The Faculty Advisor and employer will help develop learning objectives and outcomes for the student.

Cooperative Education may be repeated up to nine (9) credit hours for a student who is working toward an an Associate in Science degree. The State of Florida Articulation Agreement specifies that no more than seven (7) semester hours may be applied toward the Associate in Arts degree.

It is important for all students, who wish to transfer to a University, to research their chosen major program area to determine if the credits and grade will transfer not only to the University but also, to their specific College within the University.

HOW TO GET STARTED IN A CO-OP COURSE

If interested in learning more about Cooperative Education please contact Patti Weasel, Manager, Workforce Education Programs and Cooperative Education Coordinator, in Lake Hall Room 105, to discuss co-op possibilities. Information may be provided about cooperative education and how to arrange for a Faculty Advisor in the specific academic area.

Students may choose to complete work experience with an employer they have already contacted or receive college assistance in finding an employer. Although help is available in locating an employer, the student’s skills must be acceptable to the employer before proceeding with a Co-op placement. No guarantee of employment is made.

The cooperative education work experience must occur during the term for which you are registered.

Students should speak with the Manager Workforce Education Programs to begin planning their internship prior to the registration period for the semester they want to enroll in a co-op course. Registration is required and must take place during posted registration dates.
STUDENT CO-OP RESPONSIBILITIES

The student will:

1. Obtain an acceptable employment position or work with the LSSC Manager Workforce Education Programs, the LSSC Career Development Services and/or a faculty advisor for assistance and guidance in securing a cooperative education job placement.

2. Make an appointment prior to or during the first week of the semester to meet with the faculty advisor to develop specific learning outcomes.

3. Complete a Cooperative Education Application and submit to the Manager Workforce Education Programs.

4. Meet with your employer to complete the Learning Contract. Note that the employer must be in agreement that the student/employee will be able to perform tasks/assignments that will lead to achievement of the established learning outcomes during the course of the cooperative education employment experience.

5. Distribute copies of the completed and signed Learning Contract to your faculty advisor, job supervisor and Co-op Coordinator by the second week of the semester.

6. Maintain communication with the faculty advisor at regular intervals.

7. Have an Employer Evaluation form completed by the job supervisor near the end of the semester. (The form will be mailed or electronically delivered to the employer for completion and return the co-op coordinator.)

8. Complete a Summary of Co-op Learning Experiences for submission to the faculty advisor. It is suggested that the student maintain a journal during the Co-op experience to facilitate preparation of the summary.

9. At the request of the faculty advisor, prepare a current resume and cover letter.

10. Solicit a letter of recommendation from the employer.

11. Avail oneself of resources available in the LSSC Career Development Services as needed.

12. Submit all required work to the appropriate personnel by the due dates (usually finals week).

13. Receive 3 credit hours of co-op for working a minimum of 150 clock hours per semester.
   1 credit co-op = 50 clock hours
   2 credits = 100 clock hours

14. Notify the faculty advisor and coordinator if any problems are encountered at the work site and/or if it is anticipated that assignments or work duties cannot be satisfied as agreed upon in the learning contract.

Note: The faculty advisor will monitor completion of learning outcomes and may conduct a site visit with the job supervisor near the mid-point of the semester.
FACULTY ADVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The faculty advisor will:

1. Meet and/or speak with the student prior to co-op enrollment to determine the work interest and your agreement to serve as advisor of the student.

2. Develop the Learning Outcomes with the student.

3. Meet with the student and, if possible, visit the work site once at mid semester to determine the student’s progress in meeting the learning objectives. Assist in the resolution of any workplace issues as needed.

4. Review the student’s Summary of Learning Experiences, attainment of learning outcomes, the employer evaluation, the student’s resume, cover letter, and/or letter of recommendation as well as other information and documents as appropriate.

5. Determine the student’s final grade in Co-op for the semester based on items in #4 above and other assignments developed for the individual cooperative education experience.

The National Association of Colleges and employers (NACE) has developed the following definition of cooperative education/internships - a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. These learning experiences give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EMPLOYER

The employer will:

1. Interview and/or meet with the student prior to the start of any cooperative education experience to mutually discuss expectations, determine hours, outline duties, and answer any questions the student may have.

2. Per the Learning Contract, assign work projects that will optimize and benefit the students’ career experience and facilitate achievement of learning outcomes/objectives.

3. Provide job training and supervision and evaluate the student’s performance. (Evaluation form will be provided by LSSC.)

4. Prepare a letter of recommendation for the student or notify the Co-op Coordinator and/or Faculty Advisory of any reservations about recommending the student for future employment.

5. Send the completed evaluation to the Co-op Coordinator or the faculty advisor at LSSC.

CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The co-op coordinator (Manager Workforce Education Programs) will:

- Publicize the value of cooperative education courses in the college and community to attract students, faculty advisors, and employers.

- Meet with potential students and provide information about the courses to include a course section number for registration purposes.

- Assist the student through community contacts, career advisors, and other potential resources in locating employment and/or a volunteer placement if the student has not yet secured a position.

- Assist faculty advisors as needed.

- Send student evaluations to individual employers.

- Assist in the resolution of any workplace issues as needed.

- Keep informed of regulations, requirements, and common practices in Florida State Colleges cooperative education in offering the courses.

- Maintain student application and related records for cooperative education participants.
DEVELOPING LEARNING OUTCOMES/OBJECTIVES

The nine categories summarized below represent broad types of learning objectives. The examples are listed to help illustrate various types of learning outcomes that might be the result of a cooperative education assignment.

1. **Specific Job Competencies** – Particular understanding or skill the student would like to learn: surveying, operating a machine, tutoring, office management, art/design work in a special ad format, photography, cost accounting, editing, etc.

2. **Career Exploration** – First hand observation of the daily routine of professions in an area of interest, direct involvement in the types of work involved in a field, knowledge of available job opportunities, understanding of employability skills, familiarity with occupational literature and organizations.

3. **Broadening Horizons** – Understanding how the legislative process works, familiarity with the bureaucracy of public agencies, understanding why social programs often do not work well, getting a better grasp of the social role that organizations play and the values they hold.

4. **Learning About Business** – How to cope with a complex hiring process, understand fringe benefits, personnel policies, and laws concerning employment.

5. **Interpersonal Skills** – Learning how to deal with pressure and tension in work relationships, how to communicate what you know to strangers, being able to recognize when to speak and when to listen in work relationships, understanding the importance of teamwork, learning how to recognize adaptive and maladaptive behavior in dealing with another person.

6. **Learning from Environment** – Understanding the unique history and character of an area, using the special resources of an interest like music or history.

7. **Taking Responsibility** – Learning how to organize a complicated job, how to monitor one’s time and effort so that tight schedules can be met, how to complete work as a team member.

8. **Research Skills** – How to seek information and organize facts into a persuasive argument or course of action, and how to relate academic knowledge to the demands of a particular job.

9. **Special Projects** – Investigation, analysis and the planning and implementation of a special project or a specific problem solving task at the workplace.
SUMMARY OF CO-OP LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The following guidelines may be helpful to the student in writing a Summary of Co-op Learning Experience.

1. Keeping a well-written journal or a calendar of daily activities can be very helpful.

2. Briefly describe where one works and the assigned job responsibilities.

3. Address each learning outcome as delineated in the Learning Contract and discuss the specific experiences that enabled one to accomplish the objective or supported progress toward achieving the objective.

4. Describe or explain any significant learning experiences that were not anticipated.

5. Discuss if the co-op work experience changed one’s future plans regarding career interests or educational focus.

6. Discuss if the co-op experience strengthened one’s thinking toward a career goal.

The written Summary of Co-op Learning Experience report should be 3-5 pages (word processed, double-spaced, 12 point font) and may address areas beyond the guidelines.

This Summary report, resume, letter of recommendation, and/or other requested assignments should be submitted to the Faculty Advisor or Co-op Coordinator at the beginning of final exam week (or by an alternate faculty assigned deadline).

Remember when you are working for an employer, you are not only representing yourself; but you are also representing Lake-Sumter State College. Please adhere to professional standards of appearance and demeanor so that this is a positive experience for you, the college, and the employer.
GRADING PROCEDURES – SAMPLE ONLY

The following sample grading procedures have been established to aid in understanding how the grade will be determined for the cooperative education work experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graded Item</th>
<th>Suggested Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplishment of learning objectives stated on the Learning Contract as evaluated by the Faculty Advisor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. SUMMARY OF LEARNING EXPERIENCES</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A review of the learning outcomes and their effects on personal growth and development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. EMPLOYER EVALUATION</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An evaluation of your work habits and learning objectives completed by the job supervisor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. OTHER ASSIGNMENTS</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resume, resume cover letter, letter of recommendation or other requirements as assigned by the faculty advisor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Faculty Advisor may adjust the above criteria as needed at the beginning of the semester and share the information with the student and co-op coordinator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>RATING</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>92-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>81-91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>71-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>61-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>60 or less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cooperative education was the “brainchild” of Herman Schneider who implemented his ideas at the University of Cincinnati in 1906.
Frequently Asked Questions

1. Should I talk with the Co-op Coordinator first or the person I want as my Faculty Advisor?

If you talk with the Cooperative Education Coordinator first, you will receive information about the courses and, after discussing your academic area, you will be referred to a faculty advisor. If you see a faculty member first, you will be referred also to the Co-op Coordinator. Either choice will get you to the right place.

2. Where is the Cooperative Education Office? How do I make contact?

The Cooperative Education Coordinator is Patti Weasel, Manager Workforce Education Programs. She is located in the Lake Hall, Room 105. Telephone contact is 435-5042. Questions can also be e-mailed to weaselp@LSSC.edu.

3. When should I make contact?
Contact the Co-op Coordinator during the semester before you want to enroll in a cooperative education course. You will need to make arrangements for the Co-op and then register just as you do for your other classes.

4. How do I register for a Co-op? Do I have to pay a fee?

You will register for Co-op as you register for other classes. However, the course will not appear in the schedule until the Co-op Coordinator gives you a section number, and the correct course prefix and number. To get this course number, you must have all required materials submitted to the Co-op Coordinator and be approved for the course.

Tuition payment will be made as with your other classes. If a three credit Co-op is being taken, you will pay for three credit hours.

5. Do I need to have a job prior to doing cooperative education or will LSSC find an employer for me?

If you have a job related to your academic major or you have already contacted an employer who will work with you on a learning experience, LSSC can arrange a Co-op with that employer. If you do not have a work placement, LSSC staff will help you find one. You will have to interview and be acceptable to the employer. No guarantee is made on finding an employer for each student in the desired field.

6. I have a part time job and want credit for it. May I earn cooperative education credits for my current position?

To be able to use your present job for a Co-op learning experience, the situation would have to meet three criteria:

- The job needs to relate to your academic major or career choice and be identified as a cooperative education course at LSSC.
• You must be acquiring significant new skills or knowledge or developing a recently learned skill related to your academic field of study.
• You must be receiving increased levels of responsibility and/or expanded duties related to your academic field of study.

7. Are there Associate of Arts (AA) cooperative education opportunities at LSSC?

Co-op experiences exist for AA students; however, the AA student needs to be aware of some additional items:

Check with your prospective transfer College/University to determine if they will accept cooperative education course credit and the grade. While most Universities will accept co-op credit as a part of the A.A. Degree’s elective hours, a specific college within the University may not accept the grade or credits. Cooperative education credits will be evaluated individually at the University. This may alter your GPA.

Universities offer Cooperative Education and Internships at higher grade levels than those offered at state colleges. If your program permits you to complete only one Co-op course, you should check with the University to find which is of greater benefit to your studies and career.

To find the requirements for transfer in your academic major and if they allow for an additional three credit hours, check the requirements of your anticipated major at your prospective University and college carefully.

8. I really just want a job. Do I have to do Co-op?

No, all jobs do not have to be through Co-op but they may be suitable for co-op.

9. I want to learn more about my career choice but I do not have time to do a Co-op. Is there assistance for me?

Yes. An LSSC Career Advisor may assist you to research your career choice and receive information about job shadowing, part-time jobs, and other resources to help you learn more. Please visit Career Development Services website for further information and to schedule an appointment: http://www.lssc.edu/academics/cds/Pages/default.aspx

10. Must I have completed all my developmental classes before I do Co-op?

Yes. It is important to employers that Co-op students are able to speak, write, and read well in addition to having the ability to complete mathematical problems as the need arises. LSSC policy states the developmental classes should be completed before enrolling in college level courses.

11. I cannot meet with the Cooperative Education Coordinator during regular office hours. What can I do?

Please contact Ms. Weasel at 435-5042 or via email at weaselp@LSSC.edu to arrange for a meeting at a time and campus location that better meets your needs.
12. **Will I be paid by the employer for my work?**
Cooperative Education placements can be paid or unpaid. If a student has no preference, LSSC can arrange for a volunteer assignment.

If in a paid position, the student should be paid at the same rate and time as the other employees completing similar work tasks. No student will be placed in a position at a rate below the minimum wage. Students usually work less than full-time and therefore may not be eligible for some employee benefits.

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**Cooperative Education Prerequisite Courses**

**Common Eligibility Criteria:**
1. Student must have completed 12 hours of college credit coursework
2. Student must have completed all required preparatory courses
3. Students must complete any specific course prerequisites as outlined below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Area</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Prerequisite Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer Information Technology</td>
<td>CGS 2949</td>
<td>Computer Information Technology</td>
<td>CET 1485 - Networking Essentials</td>
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<td>CET 1179C - A+ Essentials</td>
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<td>OST 2336 - Business Communications</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Co-requisite: COP 2700 - Database Analysis &amp; Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>Criminal Justice Technology AAS</td>
<td>CCJ 2949</td>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
<td>CCJ 1001 Introduction to Criminal Justice</td>
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<td>CCJ 1020 Introduction to Criminology</td>
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<td>CIL 2100 Criminal Law</td>
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<td>CIL 2102 Criminal Procedure &amp; Evidence</td>
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<td>CJE 2331 Ethics in Criminal Justice</td>
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<td>Business Administration AAS</td>
<td>MAN 2949</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>MNA 1100 Human Relations in Business &amp; Industry</td>
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<td>MAN 2021 Principles of Management</td>
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<td>OST 2336 - Business Communications</td>
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<td>Office Administration</td>
<td>OST 2949</td>
<td>Office Administration</td>
<td>OST 1100 - Keyboarding &amp; Document Formatting</td>
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<td>OST 1854 Microsoft Office Introduction</td>
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<td>OST 1940 - Office Management Practicum</td>
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<td>OST 2336 - Business Communications</td>
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