

Master of Library and Information Science Co-operative Work/Study Program *The Employer Perspective*



Western's library and information science co-operative work/study program, begun in 1979, formally integrates a student's academic study with paid work experience.

Students gain exposure to the professional environment, an opportunity to use and develop newly acquired skills, and practical experience that will contribute to their training as professionals.

Employers gain enthusiastic, adaptable, temporary employees with up-to-date skills.

Benefits

- Students are available for placement year-round. Work terms are January-April, May-August and September-December.
- Co-op students can provide temporary assistance for peak periods, maternity or other leaves, and for the completion of special projects requiring qualified personnel.
- Co-op students bring to your organization knowledge of current technology, enthusiasm and a willingness to work.
- Co-op is a cost-effective means of evaluating potential employees. If a co-op graduate is later hired to a permanent position, significantly less training time is required.
- Co-op placements can be part of your institution's recruitment strategy.
- Your organization may be eligible to receive a tax credit from the Ontario government. The Co-operative Education Tax Credit (CETC) provides eligible Ontario employers with a refundable tax credit of up to \$3000. For more information please visit <http://www.rev.gov.on.ca/en/credit/cetc/>.
- Students are permitted to participate in one or two work terms (up to 8 months in total).

Overview

- A co-op placement is an arrangement between the employer and the student employee facilitated by the Co-op Office. The program requires a **minimum work term of 14 weeks** which corresponds to the academic semester. Terms of employment are established by the employer. By mutual agreement, a student may be reappointed to a second work term, with approval of the Co-op Office.
- **Salary** is set by the employer. The Co-op Office is able to advise on the range of current rates (presently \$18-22 per hour). Benefits are set by the employer but normally are those required by law.
- **Work assigned** to co-op students may encompass a wide range of jobs from special studies that include surveys, indexing or cataloguing projects, to setting up Web pages on the Internet, database design or regular archival, library or information science work.
- Employers in the public or private sectors are encouraged to post positions with the LIS Co-op Program. Any bona fide employer can be a co-op employer, provided the work is related to the academic discipline of the student. It should be noted, however, that a **qualified individual** is required to **supervise/mentor** the work of the co-op student for the duration of the work term.
- As the co-op experience is a competitive employment process, students are flexible as to the location and type of employment. All communication between employers and students is mediated by the FIMS Co-op Office.

The Hiring Process

- You submit your job description to the FIMS Co-op Office by e-mail (fims-coop@uwo.ca), including:
 - a contact name, title, and address
 - background information about your organization
 - an outline of job responsibilities
 - the required qualifications
 - the rate of pay
- We send you an application package that includes resumes from interested applicants.
- You choose which candidates you wish to interview and forward the list to the Co-op Office.
- We work with you to schedule convenient interview times and locations. *
- You conduct interviews for the position at Western or by telephone.
- You rank those students to whom you are prepared to offer a position.
- Co-op placements are made on the basis of the rankings submitted by both employers and students. **
- A match is made based on a mathematical calculation of the rankings. To learn more about the ranking system and placement process, go to <http://www.fims.uwo.ca/mlis/co-op/rankingsystem.pdf>. Match results are announced by the last week of the interview month.

* All interviews are arranged by the Co-op Office. Students do not contact employers. Communication with employers regarding co-op matters (student eligibility, interviews, rankings, salaries, etc.) is handled through the Co-op Office.

** Students also rank those employers with whom they are prepared to accept a position. Ranking an employer or student indicates a commitment to accept the one by the other. All rankings are confidential and must not be divulged.

The Co-op Timeline (Specific dates are set each term)

Work Term	Jobs Posted	Application Deadline	Interviews	Ranking/Match Results
January – April	Sept. – Mid-October	Mid-October	November	Late November
May – August	Jan. – Mid-February	Mid-February	March	Late March
Sept. – December	May – Mid-June	Mid-June	July	Late July

Employer Evaluation Process

Employers evaluate students on their on-the-job-performance. In addition, the Manager of Graduate Student Services monitors the progress of students through an on-site or telephone interview with supervisors and students each term. The co-op employer/co-op program relationship provides an open avenue for feedback in order to ensure that the program is responding to the specific needs of both employers and students.

Each student is required to submit a mid-term and a final report. The final report is evaluated for accuracy by the employer and forwarded to the Manager of Graduate Student Services.

For Further Information

If you have questions or comments about the Co-op Program or wish to discuss hiring a student, please contact us.

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