Co-operative Education

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Langara.
THE COLLEGE OF HIGHER LEARNING.

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Co-operative Education at Langara.

Co-op allows you to alternate study semesters with paid work terms. Apply in your first year and get a head start in your career. Use this handbook as your guide to a rewarding co-op experience.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Langara's Co-operative Education Program is accredited by the Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE) and follows the standards set within the association. In order to receive a co-op designation, you must:

- Complete the prerequisite course, EXPE 2300 with a grade of "C" or higher, for acceptance into the Co-operative Education Program.
- Maintain a minimum term and overall program GPA of 2.6 (B-).
- Be enrolled full-time (nine credits) and have completed at least one full term at Langara to apply for co-op; exceptions may be made if you have transferred from another institution.

- Complete all assignments, an employer evaluation, and a presentation for each full-time or part-time work term.
- Enrol in at least one full-time academic term upon completion of the final work term prior to graduation.
- Demonstrate enthusiasm, professionalism, and a positive attitude throughout the process.
- Complete a minimum of 12 full-time weeks and 420 hours during each approved four-month co-op work term. **Note:** there is also an option for a part-time co-op where you can complete 420 hours over an eight-month co-op work term.
- If you are an international student, you must enrol in one of the programs offering a co-op designation and have a valid co-op work permit. There is no cost for the co-op work permit and application support is provided by the International Education Office.

HISTORY

Co-operative Education was introduced to Canada in 1957 at the University of Waterloo and has expanded into hundreds of post-secondary institutions since that time. In 1990, Langara College was one of the first post-secondary institutes in BC to offer a co-operative education program. Langara currently offers co-op designations to all bioinformatics, business, computer science, and recreation management students.

PRE-REQUISITES
EXPE 2300

To take co-op, you need to complete the prerequisite course, EXPE 2300: Employment Strategies for the Current Labour Market. EXPE 2300 is a combined lecture/seminar course that will provide you with knowledge to navigate today's constantly changing workplace. This course will give you a chance to learn, as well as practice, each of the steps towards attaining a job including self-assessment; resume and cover letter writing; networking and interviewing skills; and job search tactics. By completing this course, you will have the resources necessary to make a positive and lasting impression on prospective employers. The final project is to produce a professional career portfolio.

Acceptance into EXPE 2300 requires you to have one of the following:

- LET with a minimum level 3;
- LPI with a minimum 26 on the essay with one of the following: 5/10 or higher in sentence structure; 5/10 or higher in English usage; 10/20 or higher in reading comprehension;
- BC English 12 or BC English Literature 12 with an "A";
- A university-transferable english or communications course with a minimum "C-" grade, or an "S" in one ENGL 1107, 1108 or 1110; or
- Approval by department chair.

Information Release

- The Co-op and Career Development Centre will require access to your academic records to determine eligibility for the Co-op Program.
- You must give permission to Langara to release your résumé, cover letter, transcripts, and other relevant information to prospective employers for placement in a co-op work term.
- You are required to keep co-op job posting information, employer lists, contacts, and password to the Langara Co-op Program database confidential.

Registration

- All co-op courses are designated as three credits. The fee for each credit is the same as for a normal academic credit. You are responsible for all work-term related expenses such as transportation, accommodation, and meals.
- Visit **www.langara.ca/registration-and-records/tuition-and-service-fees/domestic-student-fees.html** for current rates. Note that tuition costs for third and fourth level courses are different from first and second level courses. Rates for international students can be found at **www.langara.ca/registration-and-records/tuition-and-service-fees/international-student-fees.html.** Please pay by the dates specified in Langara's Important Dates Calendar.

PROGRAMS THAT OFFER CO-OP DESIGNATIONS

- **Bachelor of Business Administration Program with concentrations in:**
  - **Accounting**
  - **Business Management**
  - **International Business Management**
  - **Marketing Management**
  - **Bachelor of Recreation Management**
- **Business Diploma Program with concentrations in:**
  - **Accounting**
  - **Business Management**
  - **Financial Management**
  - **Financial Services**
  - **Marketing Management**
- **Associate of Science Degree in Computer Science or Bioinformatics**
- **Diploma in Computer Science or Bioinformatics**

Roles and responsibilities.

THE EMPLOYER

The employer is in charge of providing challenging tasks that will help you grow as a professional and develop new skills. He or she will supervise you during the term, evaluate your work, advise you of confidentiality issues, adhere to BC Employment Standards, and participate in a site visit with you and your co-op instructor.

THE STUDENT

During your job search, you are responsible for:

- Initiating a job search at least one term prior to the co-op placement.
- Proactively applying to as many jobs as possible through C3 and/or independently.
- Inquiring through your network for job opportunities. If you receive an offer that is not shown on C3, it must be approved by your co-op instructor.
- Keeping in touch with your co-op instructor and scheduling meetings as necessary.
- Contacting your co-op instructor prior to an interview, if needed, to better understand how to prepare.
- Accepting the first job you are offered.
- Ensuring you have a valid work permit before the work term begins if you are an international student.

During your work term, you are responsible for:

- Updating placement information on Langara C3 (first assignment).
- Arranging a site visit with your co-op instructor and employer.
- Maintaining confidentiality of information unless stated otherwise by the employer.
- Following and complying with all the conditions and rules of the organization such as working hours.
- Completing all co-op assignments on D2L.
- Ensuring that your employer completes an evaluation of your performance via C3.

After your work term, you are responsible for:

- Returning to school to complete a full-time academic term.
- Completing a presentation to peers as part of the work-term evaluation process when you return to school.

THE CO-OP INSTRUCTOR

Your co-op instructor is the liaison between you and your employer and will work closely with you throughout your work term placement. They are in charge of marketing the Co-op and Career Development Centre to prospective employers, providing you with appropriate pre-employment training, conducting site visits to assist you and your employer, marking your submitted assignments, ensuring you receive fair treatment while on your work term, and addressing challenges if any are presented.

The co-op process.

Below is an overview of the process you will go through to secure a co-op position.

APPLYING FOR JOBS

- Submit a cover letter and résumé by the job posting deadline; apply through C3 or as indicated on the job posting.
- Apply to as many jobs as possible.
- You may choose to apply to any of the posted positions in your area of study. If successful, you must be willing to work wherever the job requires, and at the offered rate of pay.
- Applications are stored in your C3 account. In some cases, you may be required to apply on the company website with the link provided in the posting. In this case, we ask that you also put a copy of the application in your C3 account.
- Co-op instructors are available to meet with you to review your résumé packages before they go out to an employer.
- Remember to check email regularly for updates on interviews, placements, and messages from your co-op instructor.
- Don't contact the company directly or the person named on the job posting unless the employer has left a message for you.

INTERVIEWS

- Interview requests can be made to students directly through the Co-op and Career Development Centre. There are some employers who will call you directly. If so, you are required to immediately notify the Co-op and Career Development Centre.
- You are expected to check your email, voicemail, and C3 account frequently to see if an organization has requested an interview. Employers will often contact the Co-op and Career Development Centre to schedule interviews on very short notice so it is important for you to have voicemail linked to a contact phone number.
- Co-op will provide you with information about the interview (address, names of the interviewers, and any other relevant information) before your interview date.
- Following the interview, report back to your co-op instructor to provide an overview of the interview.
- Co-op instructors are available to help with interview skills prior to your interview with a potential co-op employer.

JOB OFFERS

- If you are successful in your job interview, the employer will make a job offer. You will be notified by the Co-op and Career Development Centre or directly by the employer.
- In a self-directed job search, the job offer may be accepted only after consultation with your co-op instructor.
- After being offered a job, make sure to fulfill all other company requirements. Examples include: background check, criminal record check, medical exam, etc.
- You can ask your employer questions regarding job details such as salary, hours of work, benefits, etc. Once you have signed your offer letter, confirm the start date, start time, location, dress code, and any other information relevant to your position.
- Remember to mail or email the signed offer letter to your employer and copy your instructor.
- If you are offered an extension of your existing co-op work term from four to eight months, you need to register in the appropriate co-op course and pay the tuition.

WORK PLACEMENT EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Comply with all conditions and rules that apply to employees in the organization.
- Exercise ethical workplace conduct.
- Set goals for learning.
- Take the initiative to enhance professional, academic, and personal skills.
- Maintain workplace confidentiality.
- Accept feedback and suggestions for improvement in a positive manner.
- Coordinate and participate in work-site visits.
- Resolve problems or issues that may arise in a prompt and professional manner.
- Advise your employer and co-op instructor of any concerns or problems with your work assignment or environment.
- Be aware of work term course requirements and assignment deadlines and complete accordingly.
- While taking additional courses during a co-op semester is not restricted, you must seek approval from your co-op instructor and work supervisor prior to registering. The co-op work term takes precedence over other courses. If you plan on taking additional courses, evening and online sections are preferred.

COMMUNICATING WITH THE CO-OP & CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

- Stay in contact with your co-op instructor as much as possible. They can provide feedback and guidance while you are in the Co-op Program. This is a unique opportunity to have a personal career coach and you should utilize this scenario to make the most of your co-op term.
- Reply to emails within 24 hours and frequently update your co-op instructor on your application process and work-term activities.

GUIDELINES FOR SITE VISITS

A site visit must be arranged in order to discuss your work progress. The meeting should be set at a time that works for you, your employer, and your co-op instructor. The meeting will typically be held at the workplace, six-to-ten weeks into each four-month work term. Site visits for out-of-town placements may be done by phone, electronically, or by video conferencing.

Site visits provide you with an opportunity to:

- Talk about the benefits and challenges of your position.
- Explore solutions to particular issues.
- Examine how to incorporate new skills when returning to academic studies.
- Receive feedback from your employer and co-op instructor.

How the site visit works:

- The employer and co-op instructor will meet to review your progress.
- The co-op instructor will then meet with you to go over the your progress.
- Each meeting takes approximately 30 minutes.

WORK TERM EXTENSION

- Co-op extensions may occur only if you are offered a four-month extension with the same employer in your original placement. Some restrictions apply for international students (see instructor for details).
- You may only extend your work term or register for the second level co-op term (back-to-back co-op terms) with the permission of your co-op instructor.

WORK TERM FAILURE

You will be assigned a "Fail" grade in the co-op course if you:

- Fail to report at the location of the specified employer.
- End a work term placement prior to completion without permission from your co-op instructor and employer.
- Are terminated from your position by the employer for any reason.
- Fail to complete the required assignments for the co-op term.

COMPLETION OF THE CO-OP PROGRAM

Two-year co-op designated programs:

- If you are in a two-year co-op designated program, generally diplomas and associate degrees, you need to complete one co-op term to earn the co-op designation on your diploma or associate degree. However, you may take up to two co-op terms.
- You must finish your diploma or degree on a full-time academic term (nine credits).

Four-year co-op designated programs:

- If you are in a four-year co-op-designated program, you must complete a minimum of three, up to four, co-op terms to earn the co-op designation on your degree.
- If you do not complete three co-op work terms for the degree, you will still have the completed work terms listed on your transcript. However, it will not be listed as you having the "Co-op Designation" on your graduation parchment.
- You must finish your diploma or degree on a full-time academic term (nine credits).

STUDENT APPEAL PROCEDURES

- You may, at any time, request a meeting with your co-op instructor to discuss concerns over your academic standing or other issues regarding participation in the Co-op Program.

International students.

International students are encouraged to participate in the Co-operative Education Program. You must, however, have the proper work permit to allow you to work in Canada. Other than this, the same rules apply to international students as to other students.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION OFFICE

International students should contact the International Education Office on campus to obtain further assistance on your application process. Please visit **www. langara.ca/international-education/** for more information.

In order for international students to have the right to hold a valid co-op work permit, you must be enrolled in one of the following programs:

- Bachelor of Business Administration
- Bachelor of Recreation Management
- Business Diploma
- Associate of Science Degree in Computer Science or Bioinformatics
- Diploma in Computer Studies or Bioinformatics

OBTAINING A CO-OP WORK PERMIT

Co-op work permits are tied to your study permit and there is no extra cost to get one.

In order to obtain a co-op work permit you must:

- Ensure you are in good academic standing and have a valid study permit.
- Request a letter from the Co-op and Career Development Centre that will be attached to your co-op work permit application.
- Complete your application for a co-op work permit through **www.cic.gc.ca**.

AFTER OBTAINING A WORK PERMIT

- Apply for a Social Insurance Number (SIN) to be eligible to work in Canada.
- Upload a copy of your Work Permit to C3. **Note:** you may not start your work term without the work visa being on file with the Co-op and Career Development Centre.
- Once these steps are completed, you will be given access to Langara C3 and can start searching and applying for jobs.
- International students registered in a full-time co-op course are automatically considered full-time students and are not required to register in other courses to maintain that status.

Be sure to have your social insurance number ready prior to your employment start date. Employers must request and view an employee's SIN card and record the number within three days of starting employment.

Co-op & Career Connector.

The Co-op and Career Connector (C3) is a Symplicity database system that matches job postings with the area of study of individual co-op students. After finishing the co-op pre-requisite course (EXPE 2300) and submitting your co-op application on C3, you will be given access to co-op job postings.

GETTING STARTED

Follow the steps below to set up your C3 account:

- Log into C3 and follow the prompts.
- Review the personal profile tab and contact the Registrar's Office if anything needs to be updated. A picture and any groups you belong to can also be uploaded here.
- Fill out the academic profile and state your expected graduation date.
- Select whether or not you want to include your résumé in the résumé book for employers. You can do this in Privacy Settings. **Note:** if you choose this option, even if you apply for the position, your résumé will not be sent to the employer for a job posting where the employer chooses to receive applications by the "Accumulate Online" option.
- To apply for co-op the first time, you need to complete an online application (located under the Short Cuts menu) and upload your résumé and transcript.
- To apply for co-op in subsequent terms, you only need to upload a new transcript.
- Before applying to a co-op position posted on C3, you need to upload a résumé and cover letter targeting the job you are applying to.

JOB POSTINGS

To access co-op job postings, click on the "Jobs" tab. Jobs can be searched by:

- Jobs I qualify for (all or screening only).
- Majors or concentrations.
- Position type.
- Industry.
- Keywords or Job ID.
- Saved job opportunities under "My favorites."
- Cumulative GPA range.
- The "Advanced Search" tab under "Jobs" to restrict job search to specific industries, location, etc.
- The "Applications" tab under "Jobs" (this is valuable if you want to review older applications that no longer appear on the system and that you already applied for).

Note: the C3 system is also used for graduate, part-time, volunteer, and SWAP jobs. Co-op jobs are identified by the position type "Co-op/Curricular".

SHORTCUTS	
Jobs I Qualify For	This section showcases the different job opportunities available to you. It is important to understand that after a deadline has passed, the job posting will be removed from the listing.
My Job Applications	Once you have applied to a job posting on C3, you will be able to review all of your saved applications for future reference.
Work Experience Placements	This describes the job you have accepted. It links to the job posting and hosts further information about your goals and work term assignments.
Document Library	The document library provides further information regarding the Co-op Program. Resources include: • Co-operative Education Program terms and conditions. • A self-marketing package for independent job searches. • The international work permit checklist. • A worksheet to help you prepare for a behavioural/competency interview. • The Co-op and Career Connector how to guide.
Documents	There are three main types of documents that can be uploaded - résumés, cover letters, and transcripts. International students will also need to upload their work permits as document type "other". A maximum of 10 documents can be uploaded, so you may need to delete older documents in order to upload newer ones. If you have used the documents to apply for a job on C3, you no longer need to keep them in your documents section as they will remain attached to the job posting.

ACCESSING C3

After logging into myLangara, C3 can be accessed by clicking on the "Students" tab and then on "Langara Co-op & Career Connector" under "Student Resources" on the right hand side of your screen. Sign in using your Student ID and myLangara password. You can also visit the site directly at **https://langara-csm. symplicity.com** to login.

Important information.

STUDENTS WORKING OUTSIDE OF BC

You will require additional medical coverage if you only have the provincial health plan. Ensure that you maintain your provincial insurance when you are out of province and reactivate it when you return.

REVENUE CANADA

Although Langara considers co-op students as full-time, Revenue Canada does not. Therefore, co-op students cannot claim the full-time education tax credit for the months of their co-op term. Please note that the Co-op and Career Development Centre cannot provide information about taxation or answer specific tax questions. For more information, contact the Canada Revenue Agency directly at **www.cra-arc.gc.ca/**.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS

Most students who are registered full-time (nine credits) in the fall semester and who are members of the LSU are automatically covered by the LSU Health and Dental Plan. Coverage is good for one year, from September 1 to August 31. If you register in any other term or enrol in the fall semester with fewer than nine credits, self-register at: **http://ihaveaplan.ca/rte/en/LangaraCollegeLSU_Health_HowMuchDoesItCost_SelfEnrolment&random=875**.

If you are an international student, you must be covered by the British Columbia Medical Service Plan (MSP) or have equivalent coverage. Apply for MSP as soon as you arrive in Vancouver. Application forms are available on the MSP site or from the International Education Office. The process takes about four months. Make sure you have coverage from your home country or private medical insurance to cover you until MSP is in place. Visit **www.langara.ca/international-education/accepted-students/medical-insurance.html** for more information.

STUDENT LOANS

Langara offers a variety of assistance programs for students, such as StudentAid BC, the Out-of-Province Student Loan, Canada Student Grant for Part-Time Students, Emergency Loans, and more. To find out more about financial aid options, please go to **www.langara.bc.ca/student-services/financial-aid/assistance.html**.

Students will maintain an interest-free status for each four-month work placement and will continue to have interest-free status for up to six months. In the case of an eight-month work term, you will be required to start repaying your loan during the final two months of your second back-to-back co-op term. However, if you are taking two additional evening or online courses during the second work term, it will fulfill the full-time requirement to keep student loan repayment from activating.

WORKING INTERNATIONALLY

If you secure an international co-op work placement, you are required to secure any legal work and travel documents prior to your departure to the country of destination. If working outside of Canada, you must declare and pay taxes in the country where you are employed, and may be subject to additional taxes when reporting your earnings to the Canadian government.

U-PASS

To begin using U-pass BC, you can obtain a Compass Card from the Bookstore or any authorized Translink fare dealer. Once a compass card is obtained, you can log into the U-Pass BC Compass website at **www.langara.ca/upass** to activate it. When loading is complete, you will be able to tap in and tap out of transit with the Compass Card for travel in that month.

Contact Us

CO-OP & CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
Room C121
Tel: 604.323.5480
Fax: 604.323.5955
Email: coop@langara.ca

For more information regarding co-op opportunities and information sessions visit **www.langara.ca/co-op**.

For access to career workshops and resources visit **www.langara.ca/coop-and-career-development**.

Connect with @langaraCCDC on Facebook and Twitter for job postings, updates, and more.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION OFFICE
The International Education Office provides assistance to international students and is located in the A Building in Room A107. They can also be accessed by phone at 604.323.5023, by email at international@langara.ca or by website: **www.langara.bc.ca/international-education**.

BC EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS BRANCH
For information on employment related issues, visit **http://www.labour.gov.bc.ca/esb**.

WORK SAFE BC
WorkSafeBC promotes workplace health and safety for the workers and employers of BC and enforces BC's Occupational Health and Safety Regulations. Visit **www.worksafebc.com** for more information.