

NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING – CORPORATE RELATIONS
COOPERATIVE EDUCATION/INTERNSHIP EMPLOYER AGREEMENT

This agreement provides a basis for mutual understanding between the Employer and NMSU Office of Experiential Learning in matters relating to the employment of cooperative education and internship students enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate degree program. The Office of Experiential Learning's Cooperative Education and Internship Program Office is responsible for monitoring and reporting all students' Cooperative Education and Internship work experiences.

DEFINITION

Cooperative Education (Co-op) is a formalized program under the direction of a postsecondary institution to optimize learning in an alternate setting. Cooperative Education and some internship work assignments provide experience-based learning for college students through paid employment in practical, curriculum-related work assignments structured toward the students' declared major as well as interests, abilities, and aptitudes while meeting employers' needs. These work assignments may also be classified as internships by the employer.

Co-ops and Internships epitomize the partnership which exists among the educational institution, the employer, and the student. In order to satisfy the varied needs of these participants, the NMSU Program provides two different plans.

ALTERNATING PLAN: Characterized by alternating periods of full-time employment with full-time college attendance. The alternating plan may include two or more periods of employment (academic semesters-fall, spring & summer).

PARALLEL PLAN: Characterized by part-time employment (10-29 hours per week) undertaken while enrolled in classes at NMSU on a full-time basis.

PURPOSE OF THE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION/INTERNSHIP RELATIONSHIP

The anticipated result of this agreement is that each party will assist the other in accomplishing its program objectives. For the institution, it is necessary to ensure that objectives are primarily educational in nature. For the employer, the objectives aim toward the enrichment of curriculum and experiential learning for the student, while meeting short-term staffing needs. Mutual support between the parties of these primary objectives may result in many other benefits, not only to the parties of the agreement, but also to each participating student.

RESPONSIBILITIES

In accordance with the provisions and responsibilities outlined in this Agreement, the University and the Employer will work together to ensure that the academic and work experience aspects of the Cooperative Education and Internship Program are carried out to the mutual satisfaction and to the benefit of the student participants, the University, and the Employer. As evidence to this:

The Employer agrees to:

1. Designate a staff member to act as the liaison to the University.
2. Inform the University of available work opportunities at least three (3) weeks in advance of the anticipated hiring date and provide adequate job descriptions.
3. Inform the University which students have been selected for the internship/co-op experience.
4. Select eligible students referred by the University without discrimination on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status.
5. Inform the University's Co-op and Internship Coordinator of adverse actions taken with intern/co-op student as necessary for proper administration of the program.
6. Provide the student with a full orientation to company policies and procedures and the student's specific role and responsibilities in the organization.
7. Relate work assignments as fully as possible to each student's major area of study and make every effort to maximize the student's learning from his/her experience.
8. Offer meaningful supervision throughout the term of employment to include performance reviews and constructive feedback for improved performance.
9. Complete Cooperative Education/Internship Student Evaluation each semester.
10. Inform the University of any change in the student's employment status, including employment and termination dates, promotions, and adverse actions.
11. Provide paid experiences for the student that is at least equivalent to the prevailing federal minimum wage.
12. Carry worker's compensation policy to cover students in the event of illness or injury while on the job due to some employment condition.

The University agrees to:

1. Designate the following staff member as the liaison to the Employer:
Name: Audria Lujan
Title: Co-op/Internship Program Coordinator
2. Create campus awareness and interest in experiential learning and inform all potential student candidates of the Employer's cooperative education and internship employment opportunities.
3. Provide the Employer with a pool of qualified candidates. (Employer reviews selected resumes/applications and decides whom to interview and/or hire).
4. Furnish the Employer with requested information about the student's field(s) of study, academic standing, and other pertinent information.
5. Provide a format for feedback from the Employer on the student's performance and the Cooperative Education and Internship Program.
6. Maintain current files of information on student participants and the Employer.
7. Inform the Employer of any changes in the student's academic status (i.e., grades, change in major, change in career plans, failure to maintain required standards of the University), and give the Employer any feedback from the student regarding his or her perspective of the job, reactions to evaluation, or other related matters.
8. Maintain communication with the Co-op/Internship student and Employer as necessary throughout the work assignment.

9. Assist students with goal setting that is appropriate to their particular needs.
10. Assist students with career planning and development, and disseminate occupational information to assist students in making informed choices, plans, and adjustments.
11. Assist students in the preparation of personal objectives to achieve while on their Co-op work assignments.
12. Assist new employers in developing and implementing a Cooperative Education or Internship Program.

CONDITIONS OF STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

1. Student Eligibility

The student must:

- Be enrolled in a degree seeking program on a full-time basis and must be pursuing a major field of study closely related to the job for which he/she is being considered.
- Be in good academic standing with the University (i.e., at least a 2.0 undergraduate or 3.0 graduate grade-point average on a 4.0 scale), and have completed at least 28 semester hours if an undergraduate. Employers may set higher standards for applicants.
- Be enrolled as a full-time student (12 credits for undergraduate students and 9 credits for graduate students) in the semester prior to the internship or co-op assignments.
- Be enrolled in the University's Cooperative Education and Internship Program.
- Be eligible to seek legal employment in the United States or satisfy requirements for practical training in accordance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (except in cases where the work assignment is located outside the United States).
- Be recommended to the Employer by the University's Cooperative Education and Internship Program as meeting program requirements.
- Meet the Employer's employment selection requirements (e.g., academic, security clearance, etc.)

2. Student Work Schedules

- Schedules may involve alternating periods of full-time study and full-time work or the student may work on a part-time basis (10-29 hours per week) while enrolled in classes at NMSU (usually full-time).
- Work periods may include spring, summer, fall semesters or a combination of spring and summer or summer and fall semesters.
- The Employer and the University acknowledge that the Employer retains the right to establish and administer personnel policies and procedures within the organization.
- The Employer may terminate the student at-will in accordance with its applicable employment policies.

3. Pay and Benefits

- Students should be paid in accordance with regular pay schedules which address experience and educational preparation and should receive payment for authorized overtime.
- Students are eligible for paid holidays that fall within their work periods if company policy qualifies them for such pay.
- When not in pay status, students may be placed on leave-without-pay.
- Payment of travel to and from the work assignment and educationally

related expenses is at the discretion of the Employer.

- Worker's compensation will be provided by the employer in the event that the student becomes ill or injured while on the job or due to some employment condition.

4. **Student Performance Evaluation**

- Student Performance evaluations are required for Co-op and Internship students to ensure that the work assignment is supportive of the academic learning process and the student's career planning efforts.
- A Student Performance Evaluation form will be provided by the University for the employer for each student on a work assignment to assess the student's performance. This appraisal is included in the student academic and Co-op/ Internship Program file.
- If a student's overall performance at the time of the evaluation falls below "*Meets Requirements*," the student's work assignment may be discontinued or the student may not be invited by the employer to return for subsequent work assignments.