Cooperative Education Policies

The College of Engineering Graduate Cooperative Education Program (co-op) is one option for experiential learning and is available to selected students enrolled full-time at Northeastern University in a degree-granting program. Students registered only in a graduate certificate program are not eligible.

The goals of cooperative education are to:

- Apply knowledge and skills in new, authentic contexts
- Develop new knowledge and skills
- Integrate and use the deepened knowledge and skills in your academic programs
- Reflect on and articulate how you used your knowledge and skills, how you gained new knowledge and skills, and how “theory and practice” work together

Students who wish to participate in co-op must meet the eligibility requirements and follow the guidelines that follow. Co-op is not guaranteed for any student; students must compete and be selected for a limited number of co-op opportunities. These guidelines apply to all graduate students in the College of Engineering.

Eligibility Requirements

1. Students must successfully complete Career Management for Engineers (ENCP 6000) or Introduction to Cooperative Education (EECE 6000) (depending on their major). Students MUST meet all co-op eligibility requirements to enroll in Career Management for Engineers (ENCP 6000) or Introduction to Cooperative Education (ENCP 6100)). A complete list of requirements is found on the Graduate School of Engineering website (http://www.coe.neu.edu/co-op-advantage/graduate-co-op).

2. To be eligible for co-op, College of Engineering graduate students must be:
   - Enrolled full-time at Northeastern University
   - Meet the minimum GPA and minimum semester-hour requirements for their program described in the table below, as applicable
   - Meet all English-language requirements described in the table below, as applicable
   - Have no disciplinary or academic probation issues and no incomplete courses (i.e., no I grade in their records)
   - Have at least one term left in their program after completing co-op (i.e., students must return to Northeastern to take courses for at least one term prior to graduating)
   - Have a valid I-20 (for international students)

3. Co-op performance standards encourage professional and ethical behaviors throughout the co-op search process and during the co-op term and address co-op related issues that may involve performance. In the event that a situation arises that requires special consideration, the College of Engineering Co-op Standing Committee may be consulted.

4. Students who are dismissed from or resign from a co-op job for circumstances under their control will receive a U (unsatisfactory) grade for co-op work experience and be ineligible for other future co-op experiences.

5. Students must receive academic and co-op advisor approval prior to accepting a placement.

**Electrical and Computer Engineering**

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<td>Minimum IELTS requirement</td>
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Note: If below TOEFL/IELTS requirement at matriculation, a new TOEFL/IELTS meeting requirement is needed.

Required preparation courses
- ENCP 6100 or EECE 6000

Minimum number of semester hours completed 16 SH

**Bioengineering, Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Engineering and Public Policy, Environmental Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Data Analytics, Operations Research and Mechanical Engineering**

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Required preparation course
- ENCP 6100

Minimum number of semester hours completed 16 SH


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Minimum TOEFL requirement

Minimum IELTS requirement

Required preparation course
- ENCP 6000
Guidelines

1. For the purposes of these guidelines, internships, practicums, clinicals, cooperative education, residencies, or similar programs, are all treated as a co-op and are not considered separate experiences in the Graduate School of Engineering. See below for a special note for international PhD student internships only (NOT part of the co-op program).

2. Students may not hold a graduate stipend assistantship at the university during the semesters planned for co-op.

3. Students may participate in co-op activities with a single company for a four-, six-, or eight-month period. The total duration of co-op experience cannot exceed eight months or be shorter than four months. Co-ops are aligned with academic terms (fall, spring, and full summer or summer 1 and summer 2). For purposes of determining the length of a co-op, it is based on the terms participated in—a co-op in any one term is a four-month co-op (full summer, fall, or spring); six-month co-ops are spring and summer 1 or summer 2 and fall; eight-month co-ops are two consecutive terms (spring and full summer or full summer and fall); fall and spring co-op is not allowed.

4. Students on four-month co-op assignments are allowed to have their co-op extended to a maximum of eight months (aligning with terms as stated above—fall and spring co-op is not allowed), provided they have approval from their academic and co-op advisor.

5. Co-ops are required to be full-time (35+ hours per week) and, thus, students are allowed to take at most one course during the fall and spring semesters while participating in co-op activities; students are required to seek approval from their co-op coordinator prior to registering for a course during a fall or spring co-op term. Students participating in co-op during the full summer are only allowed to take a single course over the entire summer (i.e., a full summer, summer 1, or summer 2, not one in each period); students are required to seek approval from their co-op coordinator prior to registering for a course during a summer co-op term.

6. Students are permitted to participate in one co-op experience as a graduate student. A student who is in the process of seeking a cooperative education experience and is disqualified because of violation of co-op performance standards described in guideline number 3 above is ineligible to seek a future cooperative education experience. In other words, the student forfeits the opportunity to participate in co-op.

7. Students who wish are allowed to create their own co-op placement outside of NUcareers but must meet all the requirements and follow all the guidelines.

8. Final decision regarding any exceptions to the above requirements needs to be approved by the co-op faculty of the appropriate program.

Seattle Campus MSIS Students Only

Seattle multidisciplinary graduate engineering students only are permitted to participate in a second co-op experience. In addition to the collegewide graduate co-op eligibility requirements and guidelines, the supplemental second co-op must additionally meet the following requirements:

1. The student must obtain the second co-op on their own, without access to the NUcareers co-op database.
2. Total co-op length for the two co-op experiences combined cannot exceed eight months.
3. The first and second co-op experiences may not occur in consecutive fall and spring terms.

4. Students must receive academic advisor and faculty co-op coordinator approval prior to initiating a search for a second co-op position and also before accepting a second co-op position.

International PhD Student Internships

An internship at Northeastern is a special case of experiential learning that applies only to international PhD students. Like co-op, it is classified as Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for F-1 visa holders or Pre-Academic Training (pre-AT) for J-1 visa holders. An internship must be integral to a student’s research or dissertation. As such, the student’s research or dissertation would suffer greatly without this experience. Generally, because of the close relationship to the student’s research or dissertation, internships are arranged by the student’s faculty advisor. Further, it is incumbent upon the faculty advisor to sign and verify that this experience is integral to the student’s dissertation or research as part of the CPT approval process, allowing the student to have this experience. Paid or unpaid internships have the same requirements. Internships are never authorized in a student’s final semester. CPT internship requests must be approved by the student’s academic advisor, department chair, and the Graduate School of Engineering.

Internships, Co-op, and Pre-OPT

A position that a student finds on their own in a field related to their program of study, to provide funding during the summer, or to supplement their income does not qualify for internship CPT authorization, though the position might qualify as a co-op or Pre-OPT experience—provided the student meets all the qualifications for the relevant authorization. Like co-op, internships are not part of a jobs program, even if they do provide experience that would be beneficial to employment after graduation. The key is that any internship must have a very direct and strong relationship to the student’s research or dissertation.