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DIRECTIVES FOR CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION, INTERNSHIP, AND PRACTICUM DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of these Directives is to assist Faculty and staff in the implementation of co-operative education, internship, and practicum opportunities at Ontario Tech, by providing direction around identifying and developing these programs and/or program components.

DEFINITIONS

2. For the purposes of these Directives the following definitions apply:

“Co-operative Education” refers to programs that provide a significant opportunity for career exploration, development and exposure to varying work environments. Co-operative Education Programs, or co-op(s), are programs that integrate three or more Work Term periods through the course of a student’s studies, and result in a degree designation upon successful completion of both academic and co-operative education program requirements.

“Internship” refers to an opportunity that provides a student with a single discipline-specific work experience or placement that is normally supervised and structured, and for academic credit. Internships may occur in the middle of an academic program or after all academic coursework has been completed and prior to graduation. Internships may be paid or unpaid and can be of any length, but normally have a minimum length of 12 weeks.

“Major Program Modifications” refers to modifications that constitute a significant change to the design and delivery of an existing program, as defined in the University’s Institutional Quality Assurance Process Policy.

“Practicum” refers to a part-time/short term intensive, practical experience in a professional setting relevant to a student’s subject of study. A practicum is a curricular or co-curricular, practice-based work experience that is in a supervised setting. Normally, a practicum is supervised by an experienced registered or licensed professional, and may contribute to the practice-based work needed for professional accreditation or licensure.

“Work Term” means a period of applied work-based learning that is part of a student’s overall academic program. Students may participate in a series of Work Term placements as part of their Co-operative Education program.

To be designated as a Work Term, the placement will:

- a. Require that students be in clear academic standing with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.3, and have completed at least 24 credit hours to be eligible to participate. Programs and Faculties may elect to require additional qualification standards as they see fit, including but not limited to a higher minimum GPA. The program and faculty specific requirements will be clearly communicated to students on the relevant Co-operative Education website.
- b. Normally be a minimum of 12 weeks and/or 420 hours full-time paid experience.
- c. Be recorded as three credit hour course; and
- d. Be graded on a pass/fail basis that is recorded on the transcript but not included in the calculation of the grade point average.

SCOPE AND AUTHORITY

3. These Directives apply to faculty and staff, at the undergraduate and graduate level, who are involved in the implementation and/or development of co-op, internship and practicum opportunities.
4. The Provost, or successor thereof, is responsible for overseeing the implementation, administration and interpretation of these Directives.

DIRECTIVES

Co-operative Education, Internships and Practica are all experiential learning opportunities that are aimed at providing students with work-integrated learning tailored to suit the specific disciplinary and professional context of their respective programs. The development and implementation of each must be consistent

All Ontario Tech Co-operative Education, Internships and Practicum programs must be developed in accordance with the university's [Curriculum Change Procedures](#).

5. COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

- 5.1. Co-operative Education Programs, or Co-op(s), are programs that integrate three or more Work Term periods through the course of a student's studies. These programs provide a significant opportunity for career exploration, development and exposure to varying work environments.

When including a Co-op in the development of a new academic program, please refer to the [New Program Procedures](#).

To add cooperative education to an existing academic program, proposals must be developed as a Major Program Modification in accordance with the university's [Curriculum Change Procedures](#) and include New Course electronic proposals for each Work Term (e.g., Work Term I, Work Term II, Work Term III).

To be designated as an Ontario Tech Co-operative Education Program, the following criteria must be met:

- a)** Include a Co-operative Education designation on the transcript and degree parchment.
- b)** Require that students have completed at least 24 credit hours and be in clear academic standing with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.3 to be eligible to participate in the program. Programs and Faculties may elect to require additional qualification standards as they see fit, including but not limited to a higher minimum GPA. The program and Faculty specific requirements will be clearly communicated to students on the relevant Co-operative Education website.

Work Term placements are competitive. Possession of the minimum requirements does not guarantee a Work Term placement.

- c)** Involve either alternating periods of academic study with Work Term placements, or consecutive Work Term placements up to four Work Terms or a total of 16 months.
- d)** Require the successful completion of a Work Term report and employer evaluation for each Work Term placement that receives a pass/fail grade that is recorded on the transcript.
 - i.** For consecutive work terms with the same employer, a progress report must be submitted at the end of each Work Term, and final Work Term report at the end of the placement's duration.
- e)** Meet the following criteria, which are consistent with the current accreditation requirements as set out by the Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada (CEWIL Canada):
 - i.** Each Work Term meets the requirements defined above and is developed in partnership with the employer and approved by the cooperative education program as a suitable learning environment.
 - ii.** The student is engaged in productive work for which the student receives remuneration.
 - iii.** The co-op curriculum supports student learning goals, personal evaluation, and reflection.
 - iv.** The student's performance in the workplace is supervised and evaluated by the student's employer.
 - v.** The student's progress during their Work Term is monitored by the cooperative education program.

- vi. Both work and academic terms are full-time and follow a formalized sequence. The total amount of co-op work experience is normally at least 30% of the time spent in academic study. For programs of two years or less the total amount may be a minimum of 25%.
- vii. Cooperative education programs begin and end on an academic term.
- viii. The student completing multiple Work Terms is normally exposed to the work environment during more than one season of the year.

6. INTERNSHIP

- 6.1.** Internships provide a student with one work experience or placement that is normally supervised and structured.

When including an Internship in the development of a new academic program, please refer to the [New Program Procedures](#).

To add an Internship to an existing academic program, proposals must be developed as a Major Program Modification in accordance with the university's [Curriculum Change Procedures](#) and include New Course electronic proposals for the Internship designation.

To be designated as an Ontario Tech Internship, the following criteria must be met:

- a) Be a minimum length of 12 weeks in duration.
- b) Be recorded as a three-credit hour course for a minimum 12-week work placement, and must fit within the degree requirements of the student's current academic program.
- c) Does not lead to a degree designation.
- d) Receive a letter grade that is included in the calculation of the grade point average, or pass/fail that is recorded on the transcript but not included in the calculation of the grade point average.
- e) If more than 12 weeks in duration, include cumulative assessments with a final summative assessment.

7. PRACTICUM

- 7.1.** A Practicum provides students with a part-time/short-term intensive, practical experience in a professional setting relevant to their subject of study. The length and associated academic credit hours of a Practicum may vary depending on the

program of study, and/or any professional licensure, certification, or accreditation requirements. Practica normally receive a letter grade that is included in the calculation of the grade point average.

When including a Practicum in the development of a new academic program, please refer to the [New Program Procedures](#).

To add a Practicum to an existing academic program, proposals must be developed as a Major Program Modification in accordance with the university's [Curriculum Change Procedures](#) and include New Course electronic proposals for each Practicum designation (e.g., Practicum I, Practicum II, Practicum III).

MONITORING AND REVIEW

8. These Directives will be reviewed as necessary and at least every three years. The Provost's Office, through the Centre for Institutional Quality Enhancement, coordinates the day-to-day management of the quality assurance process, and works in collaboration with Deans and units to implement the procedures for developing and assessing academic programs. The Provost, or successor thereof, is responsible to monitor and review this Policy.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

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RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES & DOCUMENTS

10. [CEWIL Canada Co-operative Education accreditation standards](#)
[Institutional Quality Assurance Policy \(ACD 1501\)](#)
[Curriculum Change Procedures \(ACD 1501.01\)](#)
[New Program Procedures \(ACD 1501.03\)](#)
[Program Nomenclature Directives \(ACD 1501.01\)](#)