

What is it?

- Cooperative Education (co-op) is a program designed to enhance the quality and width of learning for both undergraduate and graduate level students
- Co-op integrates academic study with related work based learning and allows the employer to receive a highly motivated employee for a specific amount of time

Co-ops give you the chance to:

- Preview potential full-time employees in actual work situations without long term commitment and at a reasonable cost
- Better utilize highly paid professional personnel for specialized work while co-op students perform necessary tasks, thereby increasing productivity
- Enhance labor flexibility to suit changing needs and seasonal fluctuations
- Use qualified candidates whose abilities and interest match the needs of the organization
- Maintain high visibility with students, faculty, and administrators at USC

Work Options:

- There are two work options for co-ops. The alternating format is the most utilized option and it permits the student to work for at least two semesters as a full time employee while alternating between classes.
- The parallel format allows students to work for at least 20 hours per week concurrently while they are enrolled in classes. This option requires the student to work for at least three consecutive semesters.

If you have questions regarding the co-op program, please contact:

University of South Carolina, Career Center
H. William Close (BA) Building, 6th floor Columbia, SC 29208
(803) 777-7280 or FAX (803) 777-7556
career@sc.edu
www.sc.edu/career

Employer Process for Co-op

- Contact the USC Career Center with information on available co-op positions. Include a job description stating the nature and duties of the job, employment dates, working hours, salary range, benefits, qualifications, location of job and company website. The information can be provided to the Career Center electronically.
- Resumes of students will be forwarded to the employer based upon the criterion specified in the job/position description.
- If the employer determines that an interview will take place, it can be scheduled at the organization's location or in the USC Career Center. To schedule the use of an interview room, contact the Career Center.
- Notify the student and the USC Career Center if they are selected as a co-op. The student will respond to a job offer in a reasonable time frame.
- Confirm details of the offer with the student and the USC Career Center, such as starting and ending dates, salary, and supervisor.
- Students are required to attend a "job transition meeting" during which goal setting, employment issues and relocation logistics are discussed.
- Employers are encouraged to provide the student with a training/orientation program to include the organization's policies and the student's work assignments.
- During the work period, the USC Career Center will maintain contact with the student to monitor the work performance.
- Employers are asked to evaluate the student's work performance at the end of each semester and to send a copy of the evaluation form (provided by USC) to the Career Center. Employers are also encouraged to have an exit interview with the student prior to the student's return to campus.