NEW YORK INSTITUTE
OF TECHNOLOGY

College of Engineering
& Computing Sciences

Cooperative Education (Co-op)- Learn & Earn®
Timeout for Experience

Employer Handbook

Contents

Message from the Dean
Babak Beheshti, PhD

In keeping with one of New York Institute of Technology's missions: to "provide career-oriented professional education," our cooperative education (co-op) program is a mechanism to enable students to prepare themselves for the job market while pursuing their undergraduate degrees.

In partnership with our engaged network of industry and business companies, our co-op students can prepare for the culture and professional conduct required to be productive in the work environment, learn about and engage in successful job search practices, gain invaluable on the job experience in their fields of study, and earn income while employed in their co-op positions.

We are excited to offer the co-op opportunity to our students. To make sure both our industry partners and our students benefit from the co-op experience, this handbook is a reference for employers.

While this document is intended to be comprehensive, please seek guidance from our co-op director with specific needs and questions you might have.

—

Babak D. Beheshti, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Engineering and
Computing Sciences

1 Contact Information

If you have questions, please contact the do-op director at coecs.coopcoord@nyit.edu.

2 Welcome Aboard as A Co-Op Partner!

Thank you for your support of the cooperative education program offered by the College of Engineering and Computing Sciences (CoECS) of New York Institute of Technology. Your contribution is highly valued as we could not succeed without employers like you.

Cooperative education is a value-added component that blends classroom studies and workplace experiences. Your participation allows students to develop and grow as professionals. Cooperative education brings together the employer, the student, and the university. The three participants are each an integral part of the cooperative education experience.

New York Tech **+** Students **+** Employers **=** co-op program
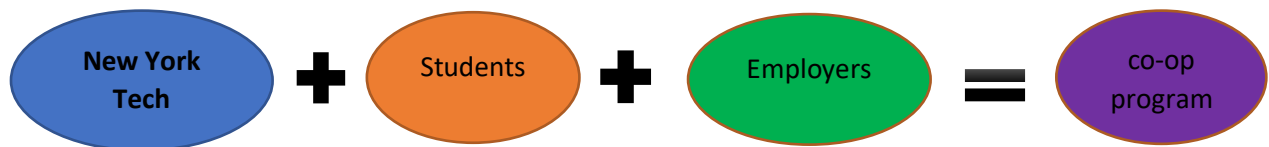
This partnership has benefits for all parties involved. Once you have completed the job posting process, conduct your interviews, and make a hiring decision, one or more co-op students will be joining your team. We hope that you will find this handbook to be useful in preparing for your co-op student's arrival and guiding you through the process of having a co-op student for the term.

We understand that becoming a first-time co-op employer partner can feel complex. Our staff will work closely with you to make this happen, and to make the process a smooth and collaborative one!

Thank you once again for supporting our program, our students, and New York Tech!

3   What is Co-op and Why Your Company Should Consider It

Co-op (or cooperative education) is an experiential education program in which students alternate periods of academic study in the classroom with one or more periods of full-time co-op employment in positions directly related to their academic and/or career interests. The New York Institute of Technology co-op program in the College of Engineering and Computing Sciences (CoECS) has one such period; we call it the **Co-op Experiential Cycle** (**CEC**). This combination of university studies and full-time employment provides an integrated learning experience that enhances both the academic experience and career development.

As an undergraduate, students can gain 24 weeks of hands-on, professional experience related to their major or career interests. The skills, contacts, and real-world know-how they gain on co-op—combined with what they learn in the classroom—create a unique and holistic educational experience and produce a better prepared professional. Enrolling in the co-op program is optional, and students must apply for placement in the co-op program.

3.1 At a Glance
High-level characteristics include:

- Enrolling in the co-op program is optional. Students are not required to be a co-op student
- There are eligibility requirements for enrollment in the co-op program and not all degree programs qualify for the co-op program
- The main component of the co-op program is a full-time (36-40 hours or more per week) position for 24 weeks in the student's junior (third) or senior (fourth) year. During the CEC, students are not allowed to take any courses. This is intended to immerse students in their full-time experiential education and their full-time employment at your company
- Students get paid during their employment in the co-op experiential cycle
- The co-op experiential cycle takes one single term plus summer (summer plus fall semester, or spring semester plus summer)

3.2 Benefits to Employers
As a New York Tech **Co-op Employer Partner**, your company will have access to:

- Hiring from a secure and stable pool of highly qualified and exceptional talent.
- Access to valuable student workers who have the potential to transition to permanent employment with your company.
- Create ambassadors for your organization on the university campus.
- Provide a cost-effective recruitment and training program with no continuing obligation to students for permanent employment, unless desired by both parties.
- Enable your organization to participate in and influence the educational process and career development of a student.
- Provide you, the employer, with valuable technical and professional assistance and bring new talents and ideas into your organization.
- Free your high-salaried professionals from time-consuming but essential tasks.
- Enhance the industry-university relationship by creating closer ties between the business and New York Tech and the CoECS.

4 Your Responsibilities as a Co-op Employer

As a co-op employer, you will agree to define and create one or more co-op positions in your company for the New York Tech CoECS co-op students. These positions are full-time for the duration of 24 weeks (36 to 40 hours per week). The pay rate range for these positions will be negotiated between New York Tech and your company, and the actual rate will be determined within this range based on the specific student's qualifications.

This commitment can be for one 24-week cycle or for multiple ones over several years. These co-op positions must provide a learning environment where the student is assigned projects that provide a variety of experiences and a progression of skill development and responsibilities.

Your company's responsibilities include planning the student's duties, providing qualification criteria, meaningful training, supervision, and evaluation of the student's performance.

More specifically, your company will:

- Submit a job description informing the New York Tech Center for Career & Co-op of desired qualifications, salary, duties and responsibilities, and other pertinent information. Include any available company literature.
- Be a key partner in the education process and provide ongoing supervision and feedback to the co-op student.
- Make the student aware of company policies, provide an appropriate orientation, communicate expectations and give direction.
- Advise the student of all issues of confidentiality in the workplace and ensure any required non-disclosure agreements are signed prior to the student starting work.
- Treat the student as a regular employee in terms of hiring and labor standard practices.
- Contact the CoECS co-op office as soon as possible should you have any issues or concerns related to the student's performance.
- Notify the co-op director as early as possible of situations arising from labor negotiations or other possible work disruptions during the co-op term.
- Provide a thorough orientation and assign an interested supervisor to initiate, develop and maintain a successful co-op program.
- Permit an on-site visit by the co-op director in the student's academic major.
- Provide a safe work environment for student(s).
- Instruct the student with respect to company policy and define expected work tasks, outlining duties and responsibilities.
- Evaluate the student's performance by electronically submitting an online evaluation or returning the evaluation form to the co-op office at the end of the semester.
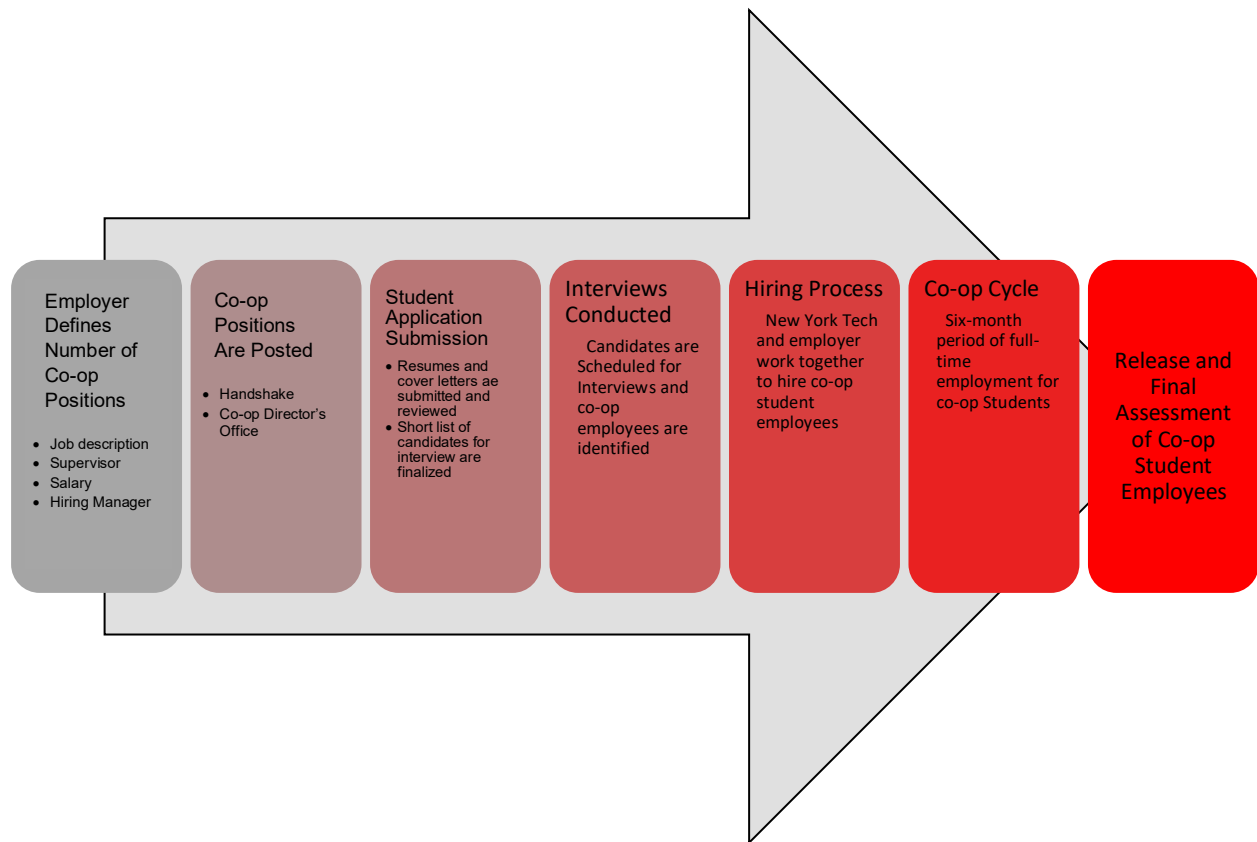
5 University's Responsibilities

It is our responsibility to:

- Monitor co-op terms and complete worksite visits.
- Provide support to employers and students during the co-op term.
- Mediate between employers and students, when necessary.

- Provide employer feedback to the respective academic department on the content and direction of the academic programs and employer needs.
- Provide an ongoing assessment of cooperative education programs.
- Maintain the integrity of the co-op hiring process and abide by the co-op policies and procedures.
- Ensure that employers are provided with accurate and appropriate information regarding the students' qualifications and interests.

6   Co-op Placement Process

The overall placement process for students can be summarized in the figure below.

Employer Defines Number of Co-op Positions	Co-op Positions Are Posted	Student Application Submission	Interviews Conducted	Hiring Process	Co-op Cycle	Release and Final Assessment of Co-op Student Employees
• Job description • Supervisor • Salary • Hiring Manager	• Handshake • Co-op Director's Office	• Resumes and cover letters ae submitted and reviewed • Short list of candidates for interview are finalized	Candidates are Scheduled for Interviews and co-op employees are identified	New York Tech and employer work together to hire co-op student employees	Six-month period of full-time employment for co-op Students	

6.1 Procedures for Receiving/Accepting a Job Offer

1. The co-op employer will extend a job offer via email (co-op employer responsibility). The offer letter must include:
   - Start/finish date
   - Salary
2. Student must submit a copy of the offer letter for approval to the co-op director (student's responsibility).
   - Once the co-op director has approved the offer letter, the student will sign and email a copy of the letter to the employer and the co-op director. Student will also submit form CO-003 (student's responsibility).
3. The student will notify other co-op employers where they have applied and have interviewed that they have accepted another offer (student's responsibility).

4. Student will cancel all course registrations for upcoming semester and register for the course ETCS-301 (student's responsibility).
5. Student will contact the CoECS co-op director to schedule an appointment to review co-op responsibilities and procedures (student's responsibility)
6. The following must be submitted prior to the meeting (student's responsibility):
   - Form CO-001
   - Resume
   - Graduation Advisement Checklist (signed by the department chair)
   - F-1 Curricular Practical Training Application international students only)

6.2 CEC Timeline

Generally speaking, participating in the co-op program will add one more semester to a student's time to graduation. Students will participate in a CEC, fully employed by a co-op employer partner during either their third or fourth year in their undergraduate studies.

7 Academic Programs Eligible for Co-op

In Fall 2022, the following undergraduate programs will offer the co-op option to their qualified students. Additional undergraduate programs will be added to the co-op program as we build capacity to support them.

- B.S., Computer Science
- B.S., Construction Engineering
- B.S., Electrical and Computer Engineering
- B.S., Information Technology
- B.S., Mechanical Engineering

8 Who Qualifies to Apply for the Co-op Option?

- Students must have completed the first two years of their four-year program (approximately equivalent to completion of 60 credits toward the total credits required by the program) to apply for the co-op option (Exceptions can be made for non-traditional students, like veterans, on a case-by-case basis).
- Students must possess a minimum 2.75 GPA overall. If in doubt, please check with the co-op director.
- All students are required to complete the ETCS-300 course prior to starting the program.
- F-1 international students are eligible to participate if they meet all requirements to obtain authorization for Curricular Practical Training (CPT). Students should contact the Office of International Education at oie@nyit.edu for more information about CPT. Other international students should make sure they can participate in the co-op program based on their immigration status.
- Please note that not all qualified applicants will enroll in the co-op option. We are limited to the number of co-op positions committed to by our industry partners, so enrollees will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis and on their academic performance.

- Please note that co-op students must interview and subsequently be offered a position by a participating co-op employer. If no employer offers a student a position, that student will have no co-op employment opportunity.

9   Expectations of Students During Their Co-op Experiential Cycle

Students who participate in the co-op program seek practical training in their chosen discipline, develop confidence, learn money management, and gain a broader exposure to their field. All co-op students work closely with a Co-op Director from New York Tech during their work term to ensure they are abiding by company policy and completing their assignments in a timely manner.

9.1.1   Confidentiality

Confidentiality issues should be discussed and agreed to prior to the job offer and acceptance. Student employees must comply with their employer's policies regarding confidentiality and recognize that the information they work with, including the results of any research undertaken, belong to the employer.

9.1.2   Enrolling in ETCS 301: CoECS Co-op

All co-op students are required to enroll in the 0-credit ETCS-301 course during their CEC. Students are also expected to comply with the deliverables and requirements of the course.

9.1.3   Professional Conduct

While employed as a co-op employee, students are ambassadors for New York Tech. Their professional conduct will not only be a benchmark for the standards by which New York Tech students are measured, but also will have a positive or negative impact on the co-op partner company to decide on continuing to offer co-op positions to New York Tech students.

9.1.4   Requesting Vacation

During their CEC, students are not entitled to any vacation time. They should not request vacation days from their co-op employer. However, if students have a commitment that they are aware of and will require a few days off during the work term, it is the student's responsibility to discuss this during the interview process. If this is not discussed during the interview, the employer has no obligation to consent to time off once the work term starts.

9.1.5   Absenteeism

Students should not be missing time. If they are, this should be treated according to your organization's policies and procedures. If you have issues with the student's performance, you should contact the Co-op Office immediately and we will work with you to help resolve any issues. Cooperative education is a learning experience for the student and we are here to facilitate the process.

10 Important Information About the Co-op Experiential Cycle

10.1.1 Taking Courses

Students are not allowed to take any courses at New York Tech or elsewhere towards their major's degree requirements during their CEC. The only course they must be enrolled in during this period is ETCS-301.

10.1.2 Negotiating Compensation

When New York Tech's industry/business partners set up co-op positions, the hourly rates and compensation ranges for each co-op position were set at that time. Students are asked not to attempt to negotiate their pay rate or compensation outside of these ranges. Employers generally provide a pay rate range where students could negotiate within that range based on their skills and experiences.

11 Disclaimers to Students

Students are advised of the following prior to applying for co-op positions to employers:

1. Some companies who hire New York Tech students in their designated co-op positions may require background checks and other tests for their employees. It is the company's right to require these background checks, and New York Tech is not responsible if a student applicant is not offered a position because of the results.
2. Each co-op student will be selected and interviewed by the prospective co-op employers. There is always a possibility that a student may not be selected for a position in any company as a result of either their resume review or the ensuing interview.

12 Relevant Federal and State Laws

1. Fair Labor Standards Act
   Employers are expected to comply with all relevant federal, state and local labor laws and regulations, including, without limitation, the federal Fair Labor Standards Act.
2. Discrimination and Sexual Harassment
   New York Institute of Technology does not condone or tolerate any form of discrimination toward students on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, creed, ethnicity, disability, age, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, veteran status, reproductive health decisions, or any other legally protected status, either on or off-campus. Co-op employees are entitled to the same protection of federal, state and local anti-discrimination laws as other employees. Co-op employees may also be protected under Title IX due to their student standing within the university.
3. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
   Employers are expected to comply with all relevant laws and regulations related to disability discrimination and required accommodations, including, without limitation, the Americans with Disabilities Act.
4. Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA)
   All co-op employees, regardless of their citizenship status, must provide the required documentation to co-op employers under the IRCA with respect to identity and authorization to work. Employers who encounter difficulty in securing proper IRCA documentation for any student co-op employee should contact the co-op director.
5. Workers' Compensation
   Co-op students are employees of the co-op employer and are therefore entitled to applicable workers' compensation coverage just as other employees. Co-op employers are expected to comply with their state's laws with respect to workers' compensation. In the event of an accident or injury on the job, co-op employees should inform their supervisor immediately and notify the co-op director.

6. Wages and Taxes Wages
Generally, the co-op employer is responsible for withholding deductions required by federal and state income tax laws from the wages of all co-op employees. International students on F-1 and J-1 visas are subject to withholding payment of federal, state, and local taxes unless they are exempt by the provision of a tax treaty.

In cases where a tax treaty applies, co-op employees must provide documentation to the employer on the appropriate IRS form. Information regarding tax treaties may be found in Internal Revenue Service publications, such as IRS Foreign Students and Scholars Website available at http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/International-Taxpayers/Foreign-Students-and-Scholars.

F-1 and J-1 visa holders are not subject to Social Security (FICA), Medicare, or Federal Unemployment (FUTA) deductions, if claiming non-resident status for tax purposes (see IRS Publication 15, Circular E, Employer's Tax Guide, and IRS Publication 519, U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens, '1. Nonresident Alien or Resident Alien?' https://www.irs.gov/pub/ irs-pdf/p519.pdf). Additionally, W-4 guidelines for these students can be found in IRS Publication 519, 'With-holding on Wages.' International students are responsible for showing their employer documentation of their visa status. For information, visit: socialsecurity.gov/employer/hiring.htm

13 Definition of Terms

Co-op Director - A member of the co-op program team who advises students enrolled in the co-op program

Co-op Experiential Cycle (CEC) - A 24-week period within which a co-op student is fully employed as part of requirements of their co-op program

Co-op program - The Cooperative Education Program at the College of Engineering and Computing Sciences (CoECS) of New York Institute of Technology

Co-op Employer - An organization interested in hiring an undergraduate CoECS student enrolled in the co-op program

Co-op Student - A student who has formally enrolled in the co-op track within their degree program

New York Tech Co-op Employer Partners – Employers that have formally entered into an agreement with New York Tech to offer co-op positions to CoECS co-op students

Resume - A one-page snapshot of an applicant's education, skills, and work experience

14 Acknowledgments and References

1. Mount St. Vincent University Co-op Employer Handbook
2. Northeastern University Employer Engagement and Career Design Employer Guide
3. Thompson Rivers University Employer Handbook
4. University of Dayton Engineering Cooperative Education Employer Handbook

15 Appendix A - Securing Employment through non-New York Tech Co-op Employer Partners (independently secured by the student)

Students who find a co-op position advertised outside of New York Tech must get approval from the co-op director. The following are the guidelines that the co-op director will use to assess and approve such positions:

- The employer site must have the proper infrastructure to ensure a safe, properly guided learning experience.
- The position must provide an on-site work location, which means that the work site may not be in someone's home, nor can the position be an on-the-road position. (Remote work situations will be considered independently of this requirement.)
- The position must provide daily supervision.
- The company or agency must be registered with the appropriate Department of Labor.
- The site must also have a published/working telephone number and if requested, promotional literature.
- The following types of positions will not be approved: jobs based on commission, entrepreneurial positions.
- A student may not be permitted to work for a relative.
- The position must provide meaningful work experience related to the student's major and/or career objectives.

The overall process to secure employment in a non-co-op employer partner company is as follows:

1. Student Approval Submission
   - Student submits all required documentation regarding an offer from a non-New York Tech partner to the co-op director for approval.
   - If the co-op director approves, the process continues.
2. Hiring Process
   - New York Tech and employers work together to hire co-op students.
3. Co-op Cycle
   - 24 weeks of full-time employment for co-op students
4. Co-op employer is subject to all provisions of this Employer Handbook.
5. Release and final assessment of co-op students.