

CO-OP AND CAREER SERVICES POLICY

Title:	Co-op and Career Services Policy
Policy Number:	SA 17/02.2016
Effective Date:	February 22, 2016
Issuing Authority:	Development- Communication and Alumni Relations Office

Co-op Training Program

1. RATIONALE

The Co-op program serves a bridge between the intensely learning university experience and the practical, results-oriented, highly competitive professional world. The program is designed to give the student an opportunity to test and apply knowledge, skills and competences acquired in the classrooms and labs and to develop a clear perspective about the expectations of the real world and a sharper focus on career choices. It offers an opportunity for employers and educators to collaborate in mentoring prospective workforce to becoming productive and responsible citizens. The hope is that the student after completing the Co-op experience will develop a clear purpose, become more engaged during the last year of studies, and form a pragmatic perspective about their role in a changing world.

While the Co-op work experience mutually benefits the student, the university and the employer, it will help the student in:

- Clarifying career goals;
- Understanding of the workplace demands and constraints;
- Pursuing continuous learning and self-improvement undertakings;
- Cultivating self-reliance and self-confidence;
- Refining time management, interpersonal and communication skills;
- Building contacts with potential employers;
- Acquiring marketable skills that improve employability prospects;
- Experiencing practical aspects of the field of study.

2. POLICY

1. The logistical aspects of the Co-op program shall be managed by the Co-op Coordinator associated with in the Communication and Alumni Relations Office.
2. Training opportunities shall be approved and thereafter managed by the Co-op Coordinator in collaboration with the academic units.
3. A trainee must meet the eligibility criteria set forth in this policy to participate in the Co-op program.
4. A student may arrange for a training opportunity on his/her own or, alternatively, the Co-op coordinator shall assist the student in finding a suitable training venue.
5. A student may opt to complete the Co-op training at a reputable institution abroad, subject to pertinent approvals.
6. Each trainee shall be assigned a Co-op academic advisor to follow up on the trainee's work progress throughout the Co-op period and assess the overall training experience afterward.

7. A student must commit to completing the training at the company mutually agreed to.
8. Students may register for one course during the Co-op period if it is the only course needed to graduate and the timing is approved in writing by the employer.
9. The Co-op coordinator completes the Co-op training offers in consultation with the Co-op work HR/supervisor taking into consideration employer's needs, student's interest and eligibility, and date of student's application.
10. The trainee shall work for the employer a period equivalent to eight weeks, 8 hours per day, on mutually agreeable tasks related to the trainee's field of study.
11. Trainees must conform to the employer's work rules and standards and must execute his/her tasks professionally and ethically.
12. The student shall directly report and coordinate with the Co-op work supervisor on all tasks and activities.
13. The Co-op work supervisor cannot be a direct relative to the trainee;
14. The Trainee shall keep a daily record of tasks performed and lessons learned;
15. The trainee and the Co-op work supervisor shall submit the training assessment forms to the Co-op academic advisor one week after the training is completed.
16. The trainee shall submit to the Co-op academic advisor the daily tasks log, a report, a poster and a power point presentation immediately after the completion of the Co-op work.
17. The trainee must prepare and deliver a presentation about the training experience when requested.
18. Students are NOT allowed to withdraw the Co-op course without prior approval of the Co-op academic advisor and the Co-op coordinator.
19. Failing to comply with the Co-op rules and employer's work standards will result in a failing grade.
20. The Co-op office and the Co-op academic advisor are always available to support the student in attaining a rewarding Co-op experience.
21. The Chairperson of the academic department is responsible for implementing the provisions in this policy related to the academic advisor and student responsibilities.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

A Bachelor student is eligible to sign up for the Co-op program if the following eligibility criteria is met:

1. Completing ENGL 217 and the requisite number of credits with a GPA of at least 70;
2. Enrolling at the university during the training period.
3. Completing all college pre-training course requirements as stipulated in the table below.

Specific prerequisites to take up the Co-op experience are summarized in the table below		
College of	Credits	Prerequisite
Engineering	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passes ENGL 217 • Senior Standing • Has a CGPA of 70 or higher
Business Administration	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passes ENGL 217 • Senior Standing • Has a CGPA of 70 or higher
Information Systems and Science	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passes ENGL 217 • Senior Standing

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a CGPA of 70 or higher
Arts	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passes ENGL 217 • Senior Standing • Has a CGPA of 70 or higher

DURATION:

The Co-op program runs for a minimum of eight weeks, 8 hours per day and is normally completed during the summer term of the third year of studies. Students engage in a practical training experience mentored by professionals in the area related to their field of interest.

IN PREPARATION:

In preparation for the Co-op training, students are required to attend three seminars, Coop Policies and Procedures seminar, a CV Writing seminar and an Interviewing Skills seminar. The Coop Policies and Procedures seminar introduce the Co-op Training Program for all Co-op Students with the required policies and procedures to follow. The CV Writing seminar helps students hone their CV writing skills. The seminar is coordinated with RHU English Language Center. Each student is required to have his/her CV reviewed by the ELC before it is submitted to the prospective employers.

Students are also required to attend an interviewing skills seminar that provides them with information on how to prepare for an interview, what to expect, and how to make a good impression.

SELF-ARRANGED TRAINING VENUE:

A student may through personal communications secure a training venue and agree with the prospective employer on the conditions of employment. In this case the student in early spring must provide the Co-op coordinator conditions of employment and contact information of the employer and work supervisor for approval. The Co-op coordinator communicates with the prospective employer in accordance with the established Co-op procedures. Applicable rules: the organization is reputable and not owned by the student's parents; and the student may not be supervised by a member of the family or assigned to a department in which a member of the family works. Required Information for Co-op requests outside the offerings of the Co-op office: Organization name, company profile (website), Job description / training plan, supervisor name, contact person and contact details.

PROCEDURES:

1. The Co-op coordinator creates a co-op Moodle course for eligible students in each college.
2. The Co-op coordinator prepares a database of prospective employers and posts job opportunities and application deadlines and communicates them to students via email and Moodle;
3. The Co-op Coordinator prepares a list of eligible students with the help of the Registrar's Office (RO).
4. Student may suggest an employer that is not in the posted list so long he/she gets a tentative approval from the employer and from the College academic advisor and the Co-op Coordinator.
5. A trainee seeking to pursue a training opportunity abroad must complete the Training Abroad Application Form (Coop-12) and submits it to the Co-op coordinator for further consideration.
6. The Co-op coordinator communicates with prospective employers and provide them with necessary information about the potential trainees' profiles;
7. The Co-op Coordinator invites eligible students to attend the Co-op orientation seminar in early spring to explain co-op policies and procedures;

8. Each eligible student completes the Co-op Application Form (Coop-3) indicating three preferred Co-op venues ranked in order of priority and submits a CV (soft copy) within the assigned deadlines;
9. The Co-op Coordinator and academic units shall attempt to match students' aspirations and field of study with employer's needs within two weeks of the submitted applications. In case may multiple trainees compete for a specific training opportunity, students who apply first and meet the eligibility criteria shall be given the priority.
10. The Co-op coordinator completes the Co-op Training Offer Form (Coop-4) for each trainee and a list is sent to the college with all the details after first week of the beginning of the training period.
11. The Co-op assignments and all related information are posted by the Co-op Coordinator on the Co-op Moodle course page, Facebook page, and via email;
12. Each academic unit informs the students of the Co-op assignment via email. The student must be aware that the employer may contact him/her for an interview before committing to the assignment;
13. The academic advisor bears the responsibility to: make at least one field visit and completes the visit assessment form; continuously follow up with the trainee and the work supervisor during the training period; collects the trainee's performance assessment forms from the trainee and the work supervisor; guides the student in preparing the training report, poster and presentation and assess the submitted material; and submits a final report to the Co-op Coordinator.

TRAINEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

The role of the trainee is to:

1. Maintain contact with the Co-op office to inquire about the status of the application before training begins and update the office immediately on the work conditions during the training period;
2. Attend the orientation workshop and get familiar with the Co-op rules and regulations;
3. Set training goals in collaboration with the work supervisor and academic advisor and drive to achieve them;
4. Perform all tasks in accordance with the highest ethical and professional expectations;
5. Complete all necessary documents by the established deadlines;
6. Comply with the employer's work rules, policies and standards;
7. Closely coordinate with the work supervisor to execute tasks as planned;
8. Discuss concerns and work-related enquiries with the academic advisor;
9. Complete and submit the Trainee's Assessment of Training Form;
10. Submit a formal report, daily log of tasks, a poster and a presentation directly after completing the training period using appropriate forms;
11. Participate in the Co-op poster exhibition;
12. Complete the entire training period agreed to.

ASSESSMENT:

Based on the employer's evaluation, academic advisors assessment, and the submitted formal report, daily log of tasks, poster and presentation, the Co-op academic advisor will assign the student a Pass with Honors "PH", Pass "P", or Fail "F" grade. "PH" is reserved to a trainee who receives outstanding performance evaluation by the work supervisor and the Co-op academic advisor. A grade of "F" is given to a trainee who receives unsatisfactory evaluation by the work supervisor and the Co-op academic advisor. In this case the trainee must repeat the whole Co-op experience.

4. STAKEHOLDER IMPACT AND SCOPE

It is the responsibility of each RHU students, Faculty, and Co-op and Career service office to familiarize themselves with policies and procedures relevant to their area of work, and execute their responsibilities in reviewing petitions and completing forms accordingly.

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

1. Letter to the Prospective Training Institution Form (Coop-1)
2. Training Opportunities Form (Coop-2)
3. Training Application Form (Coop-3)
4. Training Offer Form (Coop-4)
5. Academic Advisor Visit Report form (Coop-5)
6. Training Log Form (Coop-6)
7. Trainee's Assessment of Employer Form (Coop-7)
8. Trainee Performance Assessment Form (Coop-8)
9. Training Close Form (Coop-9)
10. Training Abroad Form (Coop-12)

Career Services:

1. RATIONALE

The Communication and Alumni Relations Office relays information on available job vacancies to RHU alumni to assist them in the employment process, career change and transitions, and networking opportunities.

2. POLICY

FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES:

- Communicate and build a data base of prospective employers
- Compile and announce job vacancies to students and alumni.
- Conduct seminars to help students prepare CVs, interview skills, etc.
- Maintain a CV data bank and send out CVs to concerned employers.
- Communicate job vacancies to Deans/Chairs/ and faculty members and to the college administrative assistants to announce on RHU digital signage.
- Organize an annual job fair.
- Create a data base of on job market needs to help in curricular planning and selection of Summative Learning projects.

PROCEDURE:

1. The PR Coordinator receives information on available job vacancies from companies in and outside Lebanon;
2. The PR Coordinator posts the job vacancies with a brief description of the job requirements and the application deadlines on the **Official Rafik Hariri University Alumni LinkedIn page** and communicates them to alumni via email;
3. A list of the job vacancies are also posted on RHU website under Alumni Services – Employment Opportunities
4. Job vacancies are announced on RHU digital signage.
5. The company name is kept confidential in most cases based on the request of employers;
6. Alumni who wish to apply to an announced job vacancy are required to send an updated CV to the PR Coordinator on development@rhu.edu.lb
7. The PR Coordinator communicates with prospective employers and provides them with the CVs of the potential candidates and follows up with them until the vacancy is generally filled
8. The PR Coordinator maintains a database of all the job vacancies received, name of the companies, major area, and position level (beginner level, supervisory level, middle management and top management level)
9. The PR Coordinator supplements at the end of every academic year a report of all the received vacancies with insights on job market needs to help in curricular planning and selection of Summative Learning projects

3. STAKEHOLDER IMPACT AND SCOPE

It is the responsibility of each RHU Communication and Alumni Relations Office, students, and alumni to familiarize themselves with policies and procedures relevant to their area of work, and execute their responsibilities in reviewing petitions and completing forms accordingly.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: VP for Development

AUTHORITY: University Academic Board

POLICY REVIEWED BY:

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 22, 2016

REVIEW DATE: As needed

REVISION HISTORY: None.

RELATED POLICIES: All University Policies and Procedures

FINAL APPROVAL BY THE PRESIDENT:

Signature:

Date: