



Cooperative Education Program: Guide for Employers



ANTIOCH
COLLEGE



THE ANTIOCH COLLEGE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

A lot of colleges talk about experiential education—learning through experience—but no college embraces it the way Antioch College does. We believe that ideas don't make sense until you've seen them work outside the classroom, in the lives of real people.

That's why, for more than 90 years, the hallmark of an Antioch College education has been the groundbreaking cooperative education program that engages students in quarters of full-time work. The program is marked by paid employment in which a student learns from work with meaningful responsibilities set by the employers, from colleagues, and from living independently in new settings. The arrangement is considered cooperative since our students contribute to the sponsoring organization, and the organization in turn contributes to the development of our students.

Antioch graduates are prepared with the knowledge and skills to be effective in the world through classroom learning, experiential education, and deep engagement with the community. Our students come to college not to retreat but rather to engage with the world.

Each student's educational plan reflects individual interests. Students continually expand their skills through courses and work, often taking jobs and other approved experiences to broaden their background, boost skills in areas of lesser competence, clarify career objectives, or rethink goals.

The journey—the settling into living quarters, learning the names of streets and the jargon of a job, finding the Italian restaurant that other students have extolled, stretching the last handful of change before payday—makes a difference in young people. We see the difference when they come back from their first quarter off campus. They have riches to share with each other, ranging from government gossip to insights into whole new aspects of their field. They have an air about them, too, not the spurious sophistication of the sophomore who uses big words without knowing what they mean, but the quiet confidence of people who are more at home in the world, who bring to their books a measure of maturity.

Our students are, in a modest way, already in the field. Therefore, by the time they graduate, our students have résumés showing a wide number of practical experiences that will make them viable candidates for graduate school or further employment.



BECOMING AN ANTIOCH COLLEGE CO-OP EMPLOYER

JOB DEVELOPMENT AND DESCRIPTION

A thoughtful job description is the foundation for successfully employing an Antioch College student. We would be happy to work with you to develop a position that has strategic value to your organization.

First, consider the needs of your organization. How might an Antioch College student support your organizational goals as an employee? For example, do you have a staff member (perhaps yourself!) who is being overwhelmed by a large workload? Consider creating an assistant position for that person, and we will provide a co-op student to complete the support tasks and side projects that you don't have time for.



Next, make a list of all of the types of tasks and responsibilities that you would want a student employee to take on. Ongoing tasks, like website maintenance or teaching workshops, are well suited for Antioch College students, as are self-contained projects in research, writing, and organizing. Ideally, a position would be designed around a particular project or program that Antioch College students could work on year-round, each one passing on the responsibilities and knowledge of the project to the next.

In addition, what experience, skills, and attributes would you like the student to have? Examples include good communication and teamwork skills, familiarity with Microsoft Office, novice-level Spanish, problem solving, decision making, attention to details, editing, research, and many more.



We ask you to identify entry-level positions for our students, keeping in mind that newer students will not have the more advanced skills that upper-level students will have. As you develop your job description, please envision additional projects and responsibilities that will enrich the work experience for more advanced students (once our entering classes reach the upper level) who have more highly developed skills and knowledge acquired through previous work and academic study.

As with all jobs, a certain proportion of tasks are going to be rather monotonous. This is perfectly acceptable, although we ask that you provide plentiful opportunities for meaningful engagement between the student and the ideas, people, and projects that have inspired you to do the work you do.

Our students will be earning credit while they are working. Their full-time employment will be accompanied by a 2-credit work portfolio course designed for students to reflect on and learn from their work. In addition, many students will also take 2 credits of language study.

HIRING A STUDENT

One of the benefits of filling a position with a student is that we recruit, screen, and recommend applicants for you.

In doing so, we function similarly to an employment agency. We will advertise your position on campus and recruit interested students. After comparing their résumés and conducting interviews, we make our recommendation. We forward the recommended student's résumé to you, along with a cover letter. You then have an opportunity to interview the student. If you think it is a good match, the student may begin work the following quarter. If you are less than satisfied with our recommendation following a review of the résumé or the interview, we ask that you let us know immediately so that we can refocus our efforts and identify a good match in time for the following quarter.

COMPENSATION

Antioch College has no set compensation requirements, but we do hold a firm conviction that students ought to be able to support themselves while working. Under most circumstances, students



must relocate to their co-op sites, obtain housing, and provide for the maintenance of their households with no expectation of financial assistance from their families or the College. Therefore, it is important that employers provide adequate compensation. We recommend that employers pay between \$9 and \$12 per hour. Previously students have found that it is difficult to make ends meet with less than \$350 per week or about \$17,000 per year (48 weeks of employment). Some employers may prefer to offer

room, board, and a stipend of at least \$150 per week. Employers need not provide health insurance as students already have coverage.

MANAGING CO-OP STUDENTS

The management of your organization is an internal affair and we do not interfere with our partners' affairs. However, we have found that the most successful co-op positions have been ones in which all expectations are clearly defined, and there is clear accountability for all members of the partnership. Toward this end, we have developed a set of processes to ensure that job expectations are clear from the beginning and remain clear throughout the co-op.

Sometime during your student's first week, we ask that you complete and sign an Employer Participation Agreement and work with the student to create a

Learning Objective Agreement to guide the student's learning. These documents fill the role of a hiring agreement and articulate what is expected of the student, our office, and the employer. We want these documents to provide the opportunity for all parties to ask questions, make plans, and establish a common vision of the weeks ahead.

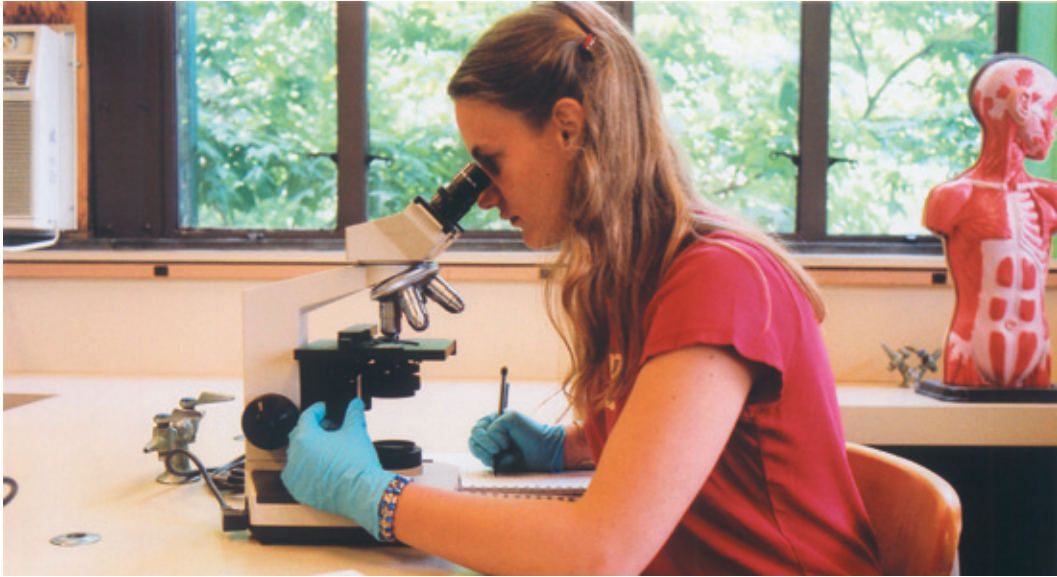
In addition, we ask that you meet with the student halfway through the term for a mid-term assessment. This meeting will provide an opportunity for you and the student to assess how things have been going and to set goals for the final weeks of the term. At the end of the term you will complete the student's final evaluation.

MAKING THE TRANSITION

We will facilitate the transition process by requiring that departing students develop a “hand-off document” to bring new students up to speed on the background and current status of pertinent projects.

Students remain on co-op for 12-week periods. Prior to returning to campus, students are required to develop a memorandum describing all open projects and procedures relevant to their work. The memo would allow for a new employee—or a new co-op student—to quickly pick up where the student has left off.





EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

When you bring a co-op student into your organization, be prepared to provide an appropriate orientation, supervision, and performance evaluation. Members of the Antioch College

cooperative education faculty are here to help you and the student in achieving a positive experience. All Antioch College co-op employers are responsible for the following:

POSITION

Maintain an up-to-date position description for distribution to students. State a compensation range that may include transportation costs, room, or board in addition to wages. Provide information on how the student fits into the organizational structure of your organization. Students are subject to the same policies and procedures that govern your other employees. Provide productive jobs that are attractive to a broad array of students. Provide safe working conditions, supervision, training, and evaluation. Ensure that jobs and places of work are in compliance with all relevant government statutes and legislation. Pay particular attention to adjusting the co-op student's workload as his/her skills grow.

HIRING

Review application materials and select the candidates you wish to interview and arrange for phone interviews. During the hiring phase, copy a representative of the Antioch College Cooperative Education Program on any e-mail communication.

The employer makes the decision about who to hire and what salary to offer.

In making an offer to a student, we do request that the employer continue a student's employment for a full quarter (12 weeks). While on a co-op work assignment, students are subject to the same policies and practices of the employer as are regular employees. We also require that co-op firms be committed to being equal opportunity, affirmative action employers.

Consult with a representative of the Antioch College Cooperative Education Program prior to undertaking disciplinary action or dismissal of a co-op student.

Antioch College does not consider it appropriate for employers to engage the services of students as consultants or independent contractors when such an arrangement involves the student's official work assignment. Students are advised not to accept positions under these conditions. There are serious questions about the legality of employers classifying co-op students as consultants or independent contractors under the Internal Revenue Code. Beyond legal questions, there are concerns about student protection under workers' compensation, deductions for taxes and social security, possible penalties for failure to pay self-employment taxes, and related issues which could have an adverse impact on the well-being of the student.

Granting a comprehensive benefit package is not a requirement for participation in a student work program, yet it is desirable to give the student opportunities that are afforded to regular employees, i.e., training programs, workshops, comp time, bowling leagues, softball teams, etc. Since co-ops are considered employees of the company or agency, federal and state laws and regulations do apply.



SUPERVISION

- The co-op student will be able to work independently once the orientation and training period is complete. However, your student will need at least the level of supervision that you would provide for any employee.
- Assume responsibility for the Antioch College student, as you would for any other employee, for the entire work quarter.
- Assign a specific supervisor who will be accessible for questions, direction, or assistance with problems.
- Contact the Antioch College Cooperative Education Program with any questions or concerns.



EVALUATION

- Provide ongoing performance feedback for the student.
- Realistically assess your student's strengths and weaknesses.
- Make recommendations for the student's further professional and academic development.
- Near the end of the work quarter, provide formalized performance feedback for your student. After meeting with the student, complete and submit the Student Evaluation using the secure website provided. Antioch College students need an evaluation to complete and receive credit for the required Work Portfolio.



STAY IN TOUCH

- The relationship and communication between the employer and the Antioch College Cooperative Education Program are critical to the successful facilitation of the student's work experiences.
- Provide up-to-date contact information for the person responsible for hiring and for the student's immediate supervisor.
- Please contact us immediately when you have hired your student.
- Accommodate a site visit with a representative of the College where possible, during the student's work quarter.
- Do not hesitate to contact us if you are concerned about the performance of your student. We welcome news of the achievements and successes of our students.

COOPERATIVE WORK CALENDAR

Students are available to work full-time for eleven weeks during the following co-op terms

Class	Academic Year 2017–2018
Third-Year Class	FALL 2017
Fall Co-op Begins	Monday, October 9
Fall Co-op Ends	Friday, December 22
Second-Year Class	WINTER 2018
Winter Co-op Begins	Monday, January 8
Winter Co-op Ends	Friday, March 23
First-Year Class	SPRING 2018
Spring Co-op Begins	Monday, April 9
Spring Co-op Ends	Friday, June 22
Rising Fourth-Year Class	SUMMER 2018
Summer Co-op Begins	Monday, July 9
Summer Co-op Ends	Friday, September 21



Cooperative Education Program

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