

Student Enrollment Status during Cooperative Education Terms Policy

As a minimum standard for the work portion of a cooperative education (co-op) term at Antioch College, students are required to engage in an approved cooperative education experience for a minimum of 30 hours per week for a minimum of ten weeks. Concurrently, they are required to do a two-credit Work Portfolio course online, through which they engage in sustained reflection on the experience and maintain regular communication with their course instructor. The Work Portfolio course requires two hours of online participation each week plus course activities that require four hours of appropriate activity “out of class” (off-line) to achieve the required course outcomes, for a minimum of six hours of activities per week for the duration of two-credit Work Portfolio course.

During work terms, while students are formally enrolled for a lesser number of academic credits than they are during study terms, the workload is considered equivalent to that of a full-time study term student: 30 hours of work activity translates to the equivalent of 10 quarter credits, based on the Carnegie Unit Interpretations policy, while earning 2 credits for the Work Portfolio course. Thus, students engaged in cooperative education terms at Antioch College complete the equivalent of a minimum of 12 quarter-credits of activities (36 hours per week) and their enrollment status as a student on a cooperative education term is considered full-time.

Antioch College is committed to broadening its conception of the cooperative education experience in response to changes in world of work. It is understood that a significant number of students hope to use co-op to engage in entrepreneurial opportunities, conduct research related to their majors, become involved in artistic ventures, or develop skills through sustained work in informal settings. It is also clear that numerous students are interested in proposing a co-op job of their own design. For these reasons, as outlined in the *2012-2014 Curriculum Catalog*, by “formal petition to the dean of cooperative education, students may seek approval to substitute one or more cooperative education job(s) with self-selected major-related paid or unpaid internship(s); research appointment(s); or other academically or professionally significant experience(s)” that fulfill their ambitions for experiential learning off-campus.

With this in mind, cooperative education experiences are evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **A safe and supportive working/learning environment** – Is the workplace or study site safe? Will the student be able to adhere to safe operating procedures?
- **Reciprocity** – Will the student work with other people in situations where they would have legitimate expectations on their time and energy, and likewise would they be in a position to expect something in return from them?

- **Appropriate preparation and clear definition of activities** – Will they receive appropriate training so that they understand clearly the activities to be performed? Will they be able to communicate sufficiently with colleagues so that they will be successful in their efforts?
- **Adequate supervision** – What kind of oversight will be afforded to ensure that the experience will be rigorous beyond the Work Portfolio course?
- **Sustained Engagement** - Will the work require commitment over a sufficient period of time? Cooperative education entails a situation where people must live up to expectations on which they have agreed. Students are allowed flexibility in that they may involve themselves in more than one work experience, but they must provide verification for all experiences.
- **Thematic Consistency** - If the student will be working at different locations with different sets of people these should be within a discipline or focused on a consistent purpose throughout the cooperative education term.
- **Performance evaluation** – How will the success of their experience be judged? Are expected levels of performance adequately communicated?