

Cooperative Work Experience Guide

A Guide for Employers

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Cooperative Work Experience

Definition of Cooperative Work Experience

Cooperative Work Experience is a program which provides hands-on work experience in an actual employment setting tailored to meet the training needs of each student and employer requirements. The Cooperative Work Experience awards college credit to students for on-the-job training in their field.

It is a coordinated team effort between the college, students and employers. The staff at Klamath Community College Career Services Center work closely with faculty and students to assess training needs and objectives. We also work closely with employers on tailoring the training program specific to changing requirements in the workplace, ensuring students are provided up-to-date training.

Together we:

PROVIDE an education where Klamath Community College students gain sufficient, up-to-date knowledge of the program and industry specific to their field of study.

Classroom or Online Studies

AUGMENT classroom education by integrating Work Experience programs where students will also gain the skills and ability necessary to demonstrate competency in their field of study.

Well-designed Cooperative Work Experience Programs

SUSTAIN our efforts by maintaining cooperation, communication and programs that will lead to stronger, developed communities.

Regular Advisory Committees meetings including employers, faculty, Community Members and Staffs

Employer Benefits

- An opportunity to screen for potential prospective employees
- Temporary extra help for your organization at no extra cost
- Give back to the community and mentoring the employment resource in your field for the future
- Accessing individuals with a current and relevant skill set without company investment

PARTNERING with Klamath Community College programs can benefits both the shareholder and the student. Students are energetic and eager to learn. They are up-to-date on current theories and practices in their fields. Work experiences are highly cost efficient for employers. Employers can recruit new employees from their pool of work experience cooperative students. Employers are able to see how the student melds with the current work team and handles the demands of the job. Career Services Center staff will work directly with the employer for support and feedback.

SPECIAL / ONGOING PROJECTS can be achieved more easily with an extra set of hands and the additional support that the student can bring to your team. The student can bring new energy and ideas to your project.

TRY OUT and evaluate potential full-time employees without any long-term commitments. You can see first hand the student's soft skills for time management, dependability, ability to follow directions and team cooperation.

COSTS for training and invested time are greatly reduced if an employer converts a student worker into a full-time employee.

Employer Responsibilities

- Expand on the student's educational background
- Determine who will supervise the student while at work
- Provide any appropriate company orientation covering safety concerns or requirements, hours to be at work, appropriate attire, introduction to people in the company and other topics your company sees as important.
- Assist the student with the development of the work experience contract you help design by outlining specific job responsibilities
- Provide feedback on the student's progress regularly and at the end of the experience
- Allow for on-site visits by the faculty and/or career center services staff as part of the Cooperative Work Experience team.
- Notify the work experience coordinator of any changes to or concerns about employment (e.g., job responsibilities, schedules or disciplinary issues).
- Evaluate the CWE program by completing a short survey at the completion of the experience

INDICATE your interest in partnering for a CWE student by sending a job description to the KCC Career Services Center at KCCCareerServices@klamathcc.edu. We will forward your job description to the appropriate department. KCC faculty will then work directly with students in their departments who are looking for a CWE placement. Students will respond to your job description and contact your organization.

INTERVIEW and make your hiring decision. There is no obligation to hire students who do not meet your employment needs.

PROVIDE necessary input into the work experience contract provided by the student and the CWE instructor. With your guidance we will tailor the learning experience to the needs of the student and your company.

COOPERATIVE WORK EXPERIENCE CONTRACT/EDUCATION AGREEMENT

This agreement outlines the responsibilities of the work site supervisor, the student, and the cooperative education coordinator. The agreement should be constructed by the student and the employer to tailor the agreement for learning outcomes and employer needs. The agreement should identify the student's dates of employment, hours, desired job activities and wage if appropriate. As part of the agreement, a training plan is developed and included. The training plan outlines the goals and activities of the experience. The list should include skills the student needs to acquire and/or practice and concepts the student needs to understand and apply. Goals and objectives should relate directly to classroom work and career development activities which the cooperative work experience supports.

ORIENTATION

CWE students are like new hires; please have someone available to meet with students on their first day to review your expectations. In general, it is beneficial to clarify overall expectations of the CWE students and share with them how their work relates to the overall goals of the company.

It can be helpful for the student to learn about your place of business, for example:

- What is your company's primary goal / mission statement?
- What products or services does your company provide?
- How is the company organized?
- Who are the key staff, managers, etc.?
- What are the company policies (confidentiality, safety, required attire, etc.)?
- What safety equipment or personal protective equipment is needed?
- What to do in case of an emergency?

TRAINING

Because CWE is a training opportunity for students, we will want to ensure that student work is performed in a safe, productive, and expedient manner. Some potential tips for providing specific instruction to the student in order to complete new tasks:

- Show and tell the student how to perform the task.
- Ask the student to explain how to do the task and while watching you complete the task.
- Then ask the student to tell you and demonstrate how they will do the task.

REVIEW PROGRESS AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK

As students learn new tasks and develop their skills further, you are encouraged to provide them with daily or weekly feedback. Feedback is a constructive training tool that allows students to continually improve their performance and attitude. To assist student learning, please consider incorporating some methods of providing feedback as:

- Share with student specifically what they did or did not do well.
- State specifically what you would like to see them continue or do differently.
- Ask what you, as the supervisor, can do to help.
- Meet with Klamath Community College faculty/staff:
 - Be prepared to meet with KCC staff 2 – 3 times during the term.
 - You may discuss progress on learning outcomes, student performance and any other work-related issues.
 - At the final meeting, you will be providing feedback that will help the instructor determine the student's grade for CWE.
 - The student may or may not be present at these meetings.
- KCC asks employers for feedback by sending out an on-line survey. Your feedback is always welcome!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who pays the cost of workers' compensation insurance? If the student is participating in a paid activity with your business, you will pay the cost of workers' compensation. If it is a non-paid training experience, the college covers the workers' compensation insurance.

What can be done if the CWE student does not perform satisfactorily? You are encouraged to speak with students about their behavior or performance (referencing the tips on providing feedback may be helpful). If the behavior or performance does not change, you may ask students to leave as you would any other employee.

Can students claim unemployment insurance benefits against my company after their CWE ends? No, CWE students are not eligible for unemployment benefits.

What should I do if something goes wrong? If there are performance concerns, please speak directly with the student first. Then you may also contact the instructor. If there is an accident involving the CWE student, please immediately contact the KCC Career Services Center office.

SUMMARY

Working Together to Build a Better Tomorrow



At Klamath Community College, we understand the significance of fostering unity within our community, enabling us to progress and thrive collectively. By fortifying our foundational bonds, we pave the way for a brighter future for generations to come. Collaborating closely with employers and agencies in Klamath and Lake Counties, we are dedicated to enhancing our communities by providing students with comprehensive academic and practical training opportunities.

Combining on-the-job, practical field experience with academic studies, Cooperative Work Experience (CWE), offers students a chance to extend the classroom into a work setting. CWE can be paid or unpaid, and result in graded academic credit for students.

Cooperative Work Experiences require a working relationship among the employer, the student and Klamath Community College.

Klamath Community College is committed to equal opportunity in educational programs, employment, and all access to institutional programs and activities.

The institution, and each individual who represents the institution, shall provide access to its services, classes, and programs without regard to national origin, religion, age, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race or ethnicity, color, medical condition, genetic information, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability, foregoing characteristics, or because of their association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.