

# COOPERATIVE EDUCATION GUIDEBOOK AND FORMS FOR STUDENTS



**For more information contact:**

**Student Success and Career Services**

**[www.ndscs.edu/careerservices](http://www.ndscs.edu/careerservices)**

**Old Main**

**(701) 671-3000**

**Fax (701) 671-2315**

**[NDSCS.CareerServices@ndscs.edu](mailto:NDSCS.CareerServices@ndscs.edu)**

**Job Search Site: [www.NDSCS.edu/jobs](http://www.NDSCS.edu/jobs)**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE BENEFITS OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATION .....	3
PLACEMENT PROCEDURES .....	4
JOB DEVELOPMENT .....	4
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF THE CO-OP POSITION .....	4
LEGAL ASPECTS OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATION .....	5
STUDENT GUIDELINES .....	5-6
ACADEMIC CREDIT .....	6
GRADING.....	6
REFUND POLICY .....	6
STUDENT SUCCESS & CAREER SERVICES INVOLVEMENT .....	7
FACULTY INVOLVEMENT.....	7
POINTS TO REMEMBER .....	7
STUDENT CHECKLIST.....	8
REQUIRED FORMS:	
* COOPERATIVE STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FORM .....	9
* COOPERATIVE EDUCATION CANDIDATE ENROLLMENT FORM .....	10
* COOPERATIVE EDUCATION FACULTY REFERENCE FORM .....	11
* COOPERATIVE EDUCATION AGREEMENT .....	12
* COOPERATIVE EDUCATION TRAINING PLAN .....	13

**Forms can be turned in to:**

Student Success & Career Services  
Old Main

**Or mailed to:**

Student Success & Career Services  
North Dakota State College of Science  
800 6<sup>th</sup> St N  
Wahpeton, ND 58076

The material in this guidebook is intended solely for informational purposes. The North Dakota State College of Science reserves the right to make changes in curricula, rules, and fees whenever such changes are deemed necessary. The announcements in this material are subject to change without notice, and may not be regarded as binding obligations on the institution or the state of North Dakota.

# GUIDEBOOK PURPOSE

The purpose of this guidebook is to provide students with the necessary information regarding the policies and procedures governing the Cooperative Education program at North Dakota State College of Science. Students who choose to participate in this program will be responsible for learning the contents of this manual and will be required to accept and abide by all the rules and regulations outlined in this guidebook.

## THE BENEFITS OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

1. **Enhances Student's Marketability:**  
Nothing looks better on a résumé than related work experience. This trait is what will separate one graduate from another in today's job market.
2. **Fosters Curriculum Consciousness:**  
Cooperative Education can help students recognize areas of strength and weakness in his/her own educational progress.
3. **Contributes to the Relevancy of College Instruction:**  
Students have the opportunity to use and strengthen the knowledge attained through college courses.
4. **Promotes Career Development:**  
Co-op experiences afford students the opportunity to acquire new skills and experiences related to their career objectives.
5. **Develops strong work ethic:**  
Actual work experiences help students to develop the proper work habits and social skills required for their future careers.
6. **Improves Communication Skills:**  
Students will strengthen their oral and written communication skills as well as customer service abilities.
7. **Enhances Career Prospects:**  
Many students use their Cooperative Education experience as a career employment tool. Many employers will also see this as a way to screen potential full-time employees.
8. **Provides Financial Assistance:**  
Since Co-op positions are paid, students are able to defray some of their education costs.

# PLACEMENT PROCEDURES

Students who choose to participate in the Cooperative Education program must complete the Co-op Student Responsibilities Form and the Cooperative Education Candidate Enrollment Form. **A Cooperative Education Faculty Reference Form must be signed by either an advisor or department faculty member and returned to Student Success & Career Services.**

After the student is hired, the student must complete the Cooperative Education Agreement and the Cooperative Education Training Plan with the employer. The student, the employer and the faculty/advisor must sign these forms. **All five forms must be completed entirely and submitted to the Student Success & Career Services office before the student will be allowed to register for any Cooperative Education credit(s).**

Once the student has completed the Cooperative Education experience, the student will be required to turn in a pay record to verify the number of hours worked and complete a Cooperative Education Student Evaluation Form. The completion of this form helps the Student Success and Career Services office evaluate employers and Co-op experiences to ensure that the Co-op program provides students with meaningful experiences in their field of study. This evaluation will also aid future students in their selection and application process.

## JOB DEVELOPMENT

The appropriate department must approve the Co-op experience. Faculty members may also suggest appropriate work experience sites for students, and are encouraged to do so; please keep SCS informed of these placement opportunities. Students should identify and solicit employers for possible work experience positions, especially in their hometowns, but these jobs must first meet the approval of the department and the SCS office.

All work experience positions, except those developed by individual students, can be advertised in the appropriate department or online through our job posting site. Students should be aware that there are many good opportunities in North Dakota as well as out-of-state.

## MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF THE CO-OP POSITION

To ensure that a student who participates in the Cooperative Education program has a relevant learning experience, each individual Co-op job must meet the approval of the appropriate department chairperson and/or faculty member. The acceptability of each work experience will be judged on the following criteria:

1. The work must be directly related to the student's field of study.
2. The work must be academically useful.
3. The work experience must provide for the integration of academic learning and on-the-job training.
4. The type of work should challenge the student's initiative and creativity.
5. The work experience should increase in complexity and responsibility, and is not merely a routine.
6. The employer or a staff member must supervise the student.
7. Required Co-op's must be completed within the specific program taken.

# LEGAL ASPECTS OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

All students who plan to participate in the Cooperative Education program should be aware of some of the legal aspects involved before applying for the co-op program, such as:

1. Students enrolled in the Cooperative Education program will authorize the SCS office to release to prospective employers copies of their academic transcripts and any other information contained in their file deemed necessary and of value for placement purposes.
2. North Dakota State College of Science assumes no responsibility for health/accident insurance, housing, transportation, or any other personal needs of a student that may result from employment through the Cooperative Education program, or for the actions of any student as an employee on a Cooperative Education assignment.
3. As a registered student in the Cooperative Education program at North Dakota State College of Science, each student will be aware that their conduct is subject to the policies and procedures as outlined in the North Dakota State College of Science catalog.
4. Wages earned by Cooperative Education students will be subject to income taxes and Social Security tax.
5. The North Dakota State College of Science complies with the Equal Employment Opportunity guidelines.
6. All students participating in the Co-op program must be employed by a company that carries Workers Comp insurance. If the company does not carry Workers Comp, the student will not be allowed to complete their Co-op at that company.

## STUDENT GUIDELINES

In addition to understanding all aspects involved in the Cooperative Education program, students are obligated to accept and abide by certain rules and regulations, which govern the process of applying for and accepting a work position. This requires students who take part in Co-op to be responsible for complying with the following program guidelines:

1. Before applying and/or interviewing for a specific Co-op job, the student must be certain that they would consider working for that employer and within the job description guidelines, and that the student meets the required qualifications set by a prospective employer.
2. A student must make a decision to accept a Co-op job promptly so that another student may be offered the position if he/she declines. He/she must be willing to honor his/her responsibilities to the employer.
3. Once the student has accepted a Co-op position, they will not seek out or accept another Co-op position from any other employer for the same semester.
4. Once the Co-op job has been accepted and the proper paperwork has been turned in, the student will be able to register for the Cooperative Education credits in the Student Success Center, Room 130, Old Main. If a student enrolls and withdraws from their credits, a reimbursement schedule is available to identify the amount of entitled refund.
5. Students will be responsible for performing all tasks assigned to them to the best of their ability, meeting and maintaining all standards and conditions of employment, and abiding by the work schedule, policies and procedures established by the employer.
6. Students will be expected to keep regular attendance, maintain proper grooming habits and attire, and be courteous and cooperative at the work site.

## STUDENT GUIDELINES continued

7. A student is allowed to work only for the time period established for the work position and must return to NDSCS to complete his/her program of study. Any continuance of employment at the work site beyond the specified time period must be with the mutual consent of the employer and the student.
8. A student must notify the SSCS office of any (in)significant changes in his/her status that would have a direct effect on his/her performance as a participant in the Co-op program.
9. Students must submit proof of the hours worked at the completion of their experience. Any student who abandons a Co-op job without just cause and/or without notifying the SSCS office is subject to an Incomplete/Unsatisfactory grade assignment.
10. Hours worked for the Co-op must be completed during the approved timeframe.

## ACADEMIC CREDIT

Academic credit for Cooperative Education work experiences obtained through the Student Success & Career Services office is granted in each program through their department course number 297. Students can earn from one to five credits; credits are based on the number of hours worked with a minimum of 162 hours at a work-site required for one semester credit. A student may participate in the Cooperative Education program twice while they are a student in a curriculum at NDSCS, and they may earn a maximum of five credits in Cooperative Education, per academic curriculum. If a student enrolls in another curriculum once completing their first Associates degree, they may complete an additional 5 credits in another curriculum, for a total of 10 credits as an all-time maximum amount to be earned at NDSCS.

## GRADING

The grade that each student will earn for a Co-op work experience will be designed as either Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory, and will be assigned by the Director and the Department Chair in assistance with faculty members. Before assigning a grade, the student must have completed the necessary forms including the Student Evaluation Form and provide proof of hours.

## REFUND POLICY

1. A student enrolling in a Cooperative Education experience will be billed for the total number of credits enrolled in any particular term. If a student fails to pay their Co-op fees, a hold will be placed on the account until the balance is paid or other arrangements are made. Some employers are willing to pay for Co-op credits. Be sure to ask your employer if they are willing to pay for the credits.
2. An amount of refund for the Co-op fee will be pro-rated based on the class drop date regardless of the date you registered for your Co-op. The refund amount will follow the Refund Schedule established by the Business Affairs Office.
3. The final refund will be based off the total cost of the course and not the amount paid at the time of the withdrawal of credit. The date of withdrawal will be determined by the Student Success and Career Services office based on communication with the student.
4. If a student elects to add Co-op credits throughout a work experience, the refund rate and time-line will apply to whichever semester the credits are taken.

# STUDENT SUCCESS & CAREER SERVICES INVOLVEMENT

The Student Success and Career Services office is located in Old Main. The telephone number is 701-671-3000. The Student Success & Career Services office is responsible for the following:

1. Connect students with employers that are willing to provide Cooperative Education experiences.
2. Serve as a liaison between faculty and the employer during your cooperative education experience.
3. Work collaboratively with you, your employer and faculty member(s) should any concerns or questions arise during the Cooperative Education experience.
4. Inform students & faculty of career opportunities through the NDSCS online job search program.
5. Coordinate and facilitate faculty site visits.
6. Monitor final paperwork and administer grades for the Cooperative Education Experience.

## FACULTY INVOLVEMENT

All faculty members play an important role in the Cooperative Education program. Working in cooperation with Student Success & Career Services, faculty members actively involved in Cooperative Education are responsible for the following:

1. Assisting with the identification of appropriate students for work experiences.
2. Evaluating the work experience as appropriate to the discipline involved and exercising final authority on approving or disapproving the potential Co-op experience.
3. Informing students of career opportunities.
4. Informing students of updates sent by the Student Success and Career Services office.
5. Visiting the work site or if geographic reasons do not allow, make phone contact for evaluation purposes.
6. Record detailed evaluations of the student and employer during the visit (completing the Site Visit form).
7. Assisting the Student Success and Career Services office in determining the Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory grade for the student.

### **REMEMBER:**

Students who meet the eligibility requirements of the Cooperative Education program must keep in mind that:

1. There most likely will be competition among NDSCS students for certain placements.
2. Though Cooperative Education is available for the summer, fall and spring semesters, there is no guarantee of placement.
3. Cooperative Education work assignments during fall and spring semesters may extend a student's time in school.
4. It is as much the student's responsibility to find gainful employment as it is that of the Student Success & Career Services (SSCS) office. Please note it is the responsibility of the SSCS Office to assist you in the skills needed to gain employment and it is your responsibility to obtain employment.
5. A student cannot expect that a Co-op job will pay all of his/her school expenses. Gaining career-related experience is your greatest benefit!

# STUDENT CHECKLIST

## Completing the enrollment process:

- \_\_\_ Successfully completed one-year or 2 semesters in my program at NDSCS.
- \_\_\_ Maintained a minimum of a 2.0 grade point average. **NOTE:** Faculty and the Student Success & Career Services office will verify my GPA and if it does not meet the requirement, I will be dropped from the Cooperative Education program.
- \_\_\_ Attended an information presentation on Cooperative Education and/or visited with Student Success and Career Services office.
- \_\_\_ Found employment. If you need assistance finding employment, contact the Student Success & Career Services office.
- \_\_\_ Read, understood and agreed to the Cooperative Education Student Guidelines outlined in this booklet.
- \_\_\_ Completely filled out all required forms including getting all required signatures and submitted them to the Student Success & Career Services office. This includes:
  - \* COOPERATIVE EDUCATION STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FORM
  - \* COOPERATIVE EDUCATION CANDIDATE ENROLLMENT FORM
  - \* COOPERATIVE EDUCATION FACULTY REFERENCE FORM
  - \* COOPERATIVE EDUCATION AGREEMENT
  - \* COOPERATIVE EDUCATION TRAINING PLAN

## During the Cooperative Education experience:

- \_\_\_ During Co-op employment, keep track of my hours and wages. (162 hours per credit hour must be completed). A typical 2 credit Co-op requires a total of 324 hours.
- \_\_\_ Keep in mind, while working for the Co-op Company, you are representing North Dakota State College of Science. You will need to demonstrate that you are a responsible, trustworthy, dependable employee.
- \_\_\_ Review the Cooperative Education fees and pay North Dakota State College of Science for my credits. Fees are found in CampusConnection.
- \_\_\_ Notify the Student Success and Career Services office of any changes that occur; changing my mind about conducting a Co-op, switching employers, getting dismissed from a position, etc. If I am dismissed from my job assignment, it is **my responsibility** to find new placement, complete the required paperwork with the new employer, and finish my Co-op hours. Failure to do so will result in an incomplete grade until the hours are finished or an Unsatisfactory grade.
- \_\_\_ Contact the Student Success & Career Services office if job duties do not align with those outlined and agreed to by the employer and me on the Cooperative Education Training Plan.

## After successful completion of the Cooperative Education experience:

- \_\_\_ Complete the Cooperative Education Student Evaluation Form.
- \_\_\_ Provide proof of hours to the Student Success and Career Services office at NDSCS within the first eight weeks of the next semester (for example, a recent pay stub that shows accumulated hours worked).
- \_\_\_ Check with the Student Success and Career Services office to make sure my file is complete.



## Cooperative Education Student Responsibilities Form

This information sheet is to guarantee that you, the student, understand your responsibilities for your involvement in Cooperative Education. This form is not only to inform you of your duties, but a requirement before enrolling in Cooperative Education. Please take the time to read these carefully, because these are your responsibilities. If you fail to complete even one of your responsibilities, the result may be either an Incomplete/Unsatisfactory grade or no Co-op credits granted/registered.

1. I must completely fill out the Cooperative Education Candidate Enrollment Form.
2. I must have a minimum of a 2.0 grade point average for all programs. I understand the Student Success & Career Services office will verify my GPA and if it does not meet the requirement, I will not be allowed to conduct a Cooperative Education experience.
3. I must provide a Cooperative Education Faculty Reference, therefore providing permission from my department to complete a Cooperative Education experience (this form is in the guidebook).
4. If I need help seeking employment, I must contact the Student Success & Career Services Office.
5. Once employment is obtained and the proper forms are completed and turned in, I will be allowed to register for Co-op credits.
6. During Co-op employment, it is my responsibility to keep track of my hours and wages (162 hours per credit hour must be completed, total of 324 for 2 credits).
7. I must keep in mind, while working for the Co-op company, I am responsible for representing North Dakota State College of Science and I must work as a responsible, trustworthy and dependable employee.
8. If I am dismissed from my job assignment, it is my responsibility to notify the Student Success and Career Services office right away and find new employment to finish my Co-op hours. Failure to do so will result in a U (Unsatisfactory) grade.
9. I understand that if I change employers, I will need to complete the proper paperwork and submit to the Student Success and Career Services office as quickly as possible.
10. I understand Cooperative Education fees and **agree to pay** North Dakota State College of Science for my credits following the NDSCS fee payment schedule.
11. I understand I must notify the Student Success and Career Services office of any changes that may occur including changing my mind about conducting a Co-op, switching employers, being dismissed from a position, etc.
12. I must complete the Cooperative Education Student Evaluation Form (found in the guidebook) and return it to the SSCS office at the end of my co-op experience.
13. I must provide proof of my hours worked (i.e. most recent pay stub) as soon as the required number of work hours for my credits has been met.
14. Prior to starting my co-op, I should check with the Student Success & Career Services office to make sure that my file is complete.
15. I have read and agree to the Cooperative Education Student Responsibilities Form (this form).

I understand my responsibilities in Cooperative Education. I also understand that if I fail to complete my responsibilities, it may result in an Incomplete/Unsatisfactory grade or no credits granted. In agreement to these responsibilities, I would like to continue enrollment in Cooperative Education.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Cooperative Education Student Name (**PRINTED**)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Cooperative Education Student Name (**SIGNED**)

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## Cooperative Education Candidate Enrollment Form

Student Success and Career Services  
 North Dakota State College of Science  
 Old Main

1-800-342-4325 x 3000  
 (701) 671-3000  
 Fax: (701) 671-2315

Student Data (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Name (Last)	(First)	(Middle Initial)	Student ID Number (REQUIRED)
Address during Co-op (Street, City, State, Zip)			
Permanent Address (if different from above)		Phone (must be able to reach you during your co-op)	
Email Address (REQUIRED)		GPA	Please Circle Year in School 1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Transfer
		Expected Graduation Date (MO, YEAR)	
Academic Program		Name of your Academic Advisor/Instructor	

**Read, initial and sign:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974:** For the duration of my active participation in Cooperative Education, I hereby authorize the Director of Student Success & Career Services to release the contents of my file to any prospective employer.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby agree to comply with all applicable policies of the Cooperative Education Program, including registration for Cooperative Education credits assigned to me and payment of the credit hour fees.

In signing this I understand the Student Success & Career Services office is not responsible for finding me a job, but rather responsible for assisting me in finding a Cooperative Education position. It is my responsibility to obtain job placement.

I have read and understand my responsibilities for Cooperative Education.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date



## Cooperative Education Agreement

This document establishes an agreement between North Dakota State College of Science and

\_\_\_\_\_

(Name of Employer)

for \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of Student)

Address of Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Street address	City, State	Zip Code
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Name of Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

The **EMPLOYER** agrees to provide the student a variety of work experiences as outlined in the Cooperative Education Training Plan. The **EMPLOYER** agrees to pay the student a wage/salary of \_\_\_\_\_.

The **EMPLOYER** also has the option to pay for the student's credits for the Co-op. The **SUPERVISOR** will have adequate time to supervise the student and will report any difficulties to the coordinator. The Cooperative Education experience will extend for approximately \_\_\_\_\_ number of months from \_\_\_\_\_ (date) through \_\_\_\_\_ (date). At the end of this period, this agreement shall terminate.

**Would the Employer agree to pay for student's credits (please circle one):    Yes    or    No**

The **STUDENT** agrees to perform the work experiences assigned by the employer according to the company policies and regulations as they apply to regular employees. The student will also maintain high moral standards and uphold the standards of the business, especially confidentiality and honesty. The student further agrees to report to work punctually, regularly, and will notify the employer or supervisor if he/she is unable to be present. The student will accomplish the goals as outlined in the Cooperative Education Training Plan. At the end of the work experience, the student will return to NDSCS to complete their education.

The **NDSCS DIRECTOR** will assist the employer and offer guidance and counseling when necessary.

The **EMPLOYER** agrees to provide an equal opportunity for all individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or status with regard to marriage or public assistance, And should this working agreement become unsatisfactory for any party it can be dissolved by notifying the coordinator and allowing him/her sufficient time to make arrangements for termination.

Student Signature	Date
Employer/ Supervisor Signature	Date
NDSCS Faculty/Advisor Signature	Date
NDSCS Director Signature	Date

## Cooperative Education Training Plan

This training plan must be completed to guarantee the work performed by the Cooperative Education student is beneficial to his/her education. Please list the duties and tasks the student will be expected to perform.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Employer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Cooperative Education Student

**Duties/Tasks**

(Please note: not all lines need to be used; additional duties can be listed on the back)

- |          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 9. _____  |
| 2. _____ | 10. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 13. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 14. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 15. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 16. _____ |

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employer/Supervisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
NDSCS Faculty/Advisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
NDSCS Director Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Cooperative Education Faculty Reference Form

Student Success and Career Services  
North Dakota State College of Science  
Old Main

1 (800) 342-4325 x 3000  
(701) 671-3000  
Fax: (701) 671-2315

**(To be completed and signed by your Academic Advisor.)**

Cooperative Education Student Name	ID Number	Academic Program	GPA (Required)

Please circle:   1<sup>st</sup> year student                      2<sup>nd</sup> year student                      3<sup>rd</sup> year student                      Transfer

**Number of credits for this Co-op:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Faculty Advisor/Chair

**To the Faculty Advisor and/or Department Chair:**

The reference currently being requested by the Student Success & Career Services office is imperative:

1. To confirm the student’s affiliation with your department.
2. To obtain any statements or reservations concerning the student’s participation in a Co-op. If you have “no reservations” then stating that below will complete the permission process. A detailed reference is not needed unless your department deems necessary.

Your assistance with this verification is invaluable to the students and the program. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

**Faculty Reference Comments:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Advisor OR Department Chair Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date