

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 29, 2018

TO: All University of Arizona Faculty

FROM: Dennis Ray, Chair, Undergraduate Council
Celeste Pardee, Assistant Director for Academic Policies/Organizations

RE: Cooperative Education Program Policy Update

In Spring 2018 the Offices of the Registrar and Scholarships/Financial Aid presented a proposal to the Undergraduate Council (UGC) to update the Cooperative Education Program (Co-op) Policy by allowing students in a Co-op work experience to be considered full-time for enrollment verifications and loan deferments. The UGC approved the proposed update on 4/10/18, as did the Faculty Senate on 5/07/18, to be effective for all undergraduates in Fall 2018.

Approved revisions to the Undergraduate Cooperative Education Program Policy,
<http://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/undergraduate-cooperative-education-program>:

Undergraduates seeking work experience related to their academic program and career goals prior to graduation may apply for the Cooperative Education Program ~~through UA Career Services~~ in their major department, if this option is available. Cooperative education (Co-op) enables students to alternate semesters of full-time course work with a semester and/or summer of full-time paid professional experience in the field. The Co-op Program helps students explore and confirm their career choice.

Co-op Requirements

To qualify, students must have full-time status and a minimum cumulative 2.500 GPA. Students with senior status may participate in Co-op as long as one full-time semester of course work remains to complete their degree requirements after they return from a co-op experience. Once approved for the program by ~~Career Services~~ the faculty member overseeing the Co-op Program or their major advisor, students may register for COOP 100, Career-Related Experience, a 1-unit course taken for audit (i.e., no credit). COOP 100 maintains a student's active status at the University, similar to a [Leave of Absence](#). While COOP 100 may be repeated, enrollment is limited to non-consecutive regular semesters, consecutive summer sessions, or one regular semester combined with summer sessions. ~~Enrollment in COOP 100 does not maintain full-time status for financial aid or insurance purposes. Interested students should check with their scholarship or financial aid counselor to find out how a co-op experience will affect their scholarship award or financial aid status.~~ Students registered for COOP 100 will be considered full-time for enrollment verification purposes, including notification to the National Student Clearinghouse for loan deferment. However, COOP 100 does not count towards enrolled hours needed for financial aid disbursement.

~~Successful completion of a co-op experience or internship is encouraged in many UA degree programs.~~ To ensure that a career-related work experience will support their academic and career goals, interested students should consult with their [major academic advisor](#).

Justification for the amendment:

- An official Co-op experience is sanctioned by the student's major department and serves as a legitimate learning opportunity within the degree program. Co-op students are considered full-time at the University through their work experience.
- The Office of Scholarships/Financial Aid determined that the former policy regarding financial aid was too restrictive, based on a review of other universities' Co-op policies, as well as

clarification of Department of Education Title IV regulations. The revision maintains a restriction on using Co-op for eligibility and disbursement of Title IV funds; however, it allows Co-op students to be considered full-time for enrollment verifications and loan deferments.

Management of the Revision:

- Students participating in a college/department-approved Co-op Program must enroll in COOP 100, Career-Related Experience, a 1-unit course taken for audit, during the semester or terms when they are working. Once the work experience is approved by the faculty member overseeing the Co-op or the student's major advisor, the student registers by submitting a signed [Change of Schedule](#) form to the Registrar's Office.
- When verifying co-op students' enrollment, the Registrar's Office will notify the National Student Clearinghouse that those students have full-time status.

Questions about registering for COOP 100 or the enrollment verification process may be addressed to Beth Acree, Registrar, at 621-5200, or acree@email.arizona.edu. Questions about the policy amendment may be addressed to Celeste Pardee, Curricular Affairs, at 621-5375, or cpardee@u.arizona.edu.