

2025 Co-op Program Overview



UMaine Co-ops and Interns

What is a Co-op?

- **Cooperative education (Co-op)** is a structured method of combining classroom-based education with practical work experience. *(Typically, a two-semester commitment with a defined project list that is supervised by a mentor at the facility/location.)* A Co-op helps students determine if they have an interest in a particular career, create a network of contacts, and receive academic credit for a structured project-based work experience.

What is an Intern?

- An **intern** is someone who works in a temporary position with an emphasis on “on-the-job” training. Tasks can vary widely from data entry/analysis, lab work, short term projects, etc. Interns are usually first year college students seeking skills to prepare them for a co-op experience during their sophomore and junior years. *(For our program an internship is a one semester commitment usually in the summer.)*



Benefits to Employer of Hiring a Co-op/Intern

- Additional staff to help complete projects
- Long-term interview of potential of future employees
- Improve connectivity to your local University
- Publicize your name as an excellent place of employment for engineers
- Help the industry develop the next generation of engineers and leader



Benefits to Students Participating in a Co-op/Intern Experience

- Apply classroom theory to work experience making course work more meaningful while obtaining valuable work experience
- Earn a good salary to offset some educational expenses
- Gain professional experience
- Build contacts and work references
- Explore career choices



What Type of Engineering Students are Available at UMaine?

- Chemical Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Computer Engineering
- Civil Engineering
- Engineering Technology (Electrical, Mechanical, Construction)
- Biomedical Engineering



How Does the UMaine Pulp & Paper Foundation Fit into This Process?

- Each UMaine engineering dept. manages their own Co-op program.
- The UMPPF manages the Co-op program for the Chemical Engineering Department and for all our scholarship recipients (any major).
- Every UMPPF scholarship recipient MUST have 2 semesters of Co-op with a Pulp and Paper Company, supplier or direct competitor starting after their sophomore year.
- We encourage other UMaine engineering majors to participate (both scholarship recipients and non-scholarship recipients), helping us meet the needs of our members and other companies wanting to hire UMaine students as Co-ops or Interns. *We normally place between 60-80 students each fall.*



What is Typical for Co-op/Internships?

- Average wage is \$24-28/hr.
- Housing - most facilities provide either a furnished Co-op house/apartments or living stipend comparable to local rental costs.
 - Readily available housing can make a co-op position very attractive by eliminating the student need to deal with short term rentals and utilities.
- For ChemE's the schedule is on the next slide. For all other majors, co-op/internships tend to be summers, however there can be exceptions depending on the student's academic schedule.



ChemE Co-op Schedule

	<u>Plan A</u>	<u>Plan B</u>
First Summer (after sophomore year)	Work	School
Fall (junior year)	School	Work
Spring (junior year)	Work	School
Second Summer (after junior year)	School	Work

This is the typical schedule for ChemE's and many companies hire two students to have year-round coverage. One student works the Plan A schedule and the other Plan B. Other majors schedule two summer internships.



What Does the UMPPF Provide?

- Advertisement of your Co-op/Intern Positions
- Students who are interested in the Pulp & Paper Industry
- Pre-filled interview schedules based on company needs
- Student Resumes
- Interview Rooms in Jenness Hall (including parking permits)
- Information Night (if desired)
- Corporate Members also have access to our Student Profile page with photos and resume for our scholarship recipients.



What can companies do to attract student Co-ops or Interns?

- Hold an Information Night the evening prior to interviews – this usually includes pizza, sandwiches, or other takeout option.
- Participate in UMaine or UMPPF events to get your name in front of Students – an example would be providing a Chinn Engineering Management Seminar, attending Paper Days, or participating in Consider Engineering.
- Set up a table with company posters, brochures and products outside of the interview room during interviews.
- Invite students you are interested in hiring to tour your facility.
- Provide a Co-op or Intern experience that is value added for both the company and the student. (Student to student word of mouth goes a long way.)
- Plan to permanently hire some of your Co-ops/Interns.



How Does the Process Work?

- **Companies:**

- Please complete Co-op Employer Registration Form on the Corporate Member page of our website: umaineppf.org/co-op-program-company-registration/

- **UMPPF will:**

- Confirm that the desired interview date is available or help you find an alternate date
- Notify students that you are coming to campus and invite them to sign up to interview with your company
- Provide you with an interview schedule prior to your arrival
- Provide you with copies of student resumes when you arrive on campus
- Set up an Information Night if desired
- Provide interview rooms
- Provide campus map and parking permit



How Does the Process Work?

■ Offers

- Companies can make offers to students at any time. The sooner the better! Students are usually excited about the first offer they receive and compare all others to this first one.

■ Decision Day – Co-op's only

- Please note that co-op/intern students **cannot** accept an offer until after all companies have visited campus and students have had a chance to interview with each company they are interested in. They can decline an offer anytime. The last day of interviews is October 24, 2025.
- **Decision Day is Thursday October 30, 2025.** Offers should be made well before this date, so students have time to review, ask questions and decide between multiple offers.
- NOTE: Many students will receive multiple offers. We ask students to decline the offers they know they don't want as soon as possible so they can be offered to other students. It's a great idea to have backup offers ready to go to increase your odds of securing a co-op student as decision day approaches.



What Makes a Successful Co-op Experience?

- Make sure each Co-op has a mentor
- Provide a quality safety orientation
- Have a plan with projects lined up prior to the Co-op/Intern's 1st day
- Provide the Co-op/Intern with projects that will allow the use of their engineering skills
- Provide the Co-op/Intern with projects that add value and let the Co-op/Intern demonstrate results
- Keep Co-ops/Interns 100% occupied/employed
- If possible, overlap by 1 week with the Co-op/Intern from the previous semester to pass along projects
- Plan for an exit presentation after each Co-op/Intern semester and invite as many of your staff as possible

There is no better way to attract students to our industry than to enable them to have a positive experience during their Co-op or internship.





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Co-op Questions?

Please Contact:

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