



Cooperative Education Programs

Ms. Emily Sikes, Vice Chancellor for Academic & Student Affairs

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**STATE UNIVERSITY
SYSTEM OF FLORIDA**

HB 5601E - Higher Education

Co-op Programs



Adjust Cohort Graduation Rate

Authorizes the Board to calculate an adjusted graduation rate for first-time-in-college students in **engineering & co-op programs**



Co-op is a program approved by the Board combining academic study with up to 4 semesters of related, paid work experience before graduation

History of Co-op Programs



1906

Founded at the University of Cincinnati

- First co-op program for engineering students
- 27 students, 13 companies

1965

Higher Education Act fuels expansion

Title VIII funding expands co-op programs beyond engineering to business, health, & the liberal arts

1980s–90s

Internships gain ground

Lower operating costs make internships more common

Today

1,000 institutions participate

- 76,000 employers & 310,000 students

Co-ops bridge the rigor of apprenticeships with the **academic integration & flexibility** of internships

Co-op Programs vs Internships



CO-OP PROGRAMS

INTERNSHIPS

Definition

Structured program combining academic study with related work experience

Work experience providing exposure to a career field or profession

Compensation

Paid work experience

May be paid or unpaid

Duration

Longer-term, often involving multiple or alternating work terms

Short-term, often one term or summer

Co-op Programs

National Overview & Impact



INSTITUTION	TYPICAL STRUCTURE	SCALE & IMPACT
 Georgia Tech	• 3 semesters with the same employer • Minimum of 14 weeks in fall/spring & 8 weeks in summer	• 3,000 students • 700+ employer & government partners
 University of CINCINNATI	• 2–5 semesters • Online professional development course each term	• 1,798 employer partners • \$99.5M in total student earnings
 PURDUE UNIVERSITY	• 3–5 semesters • 12–22 months total	• 2,500 co-op & internship experiences last year • 500 active employers

Co-op Programs

Recommended Criteria



APPROVED PROGRAM	Student must be enrolled in a program of study that includes an approved co-op
ACADEMIC ALIGNMENT	Must align with the student's academic program of study
FULL-TIME	Equivalent to a full-time academic workload
SEMESTER LIMIT	Cannot exceed 4 semesters
COMPENSATION	Student must receive compensation from the employer

Regulation 8.011 Planned Amendment

- Codifies co-op program criteria
- Authorizes the Chancellor to approve co-op programs if the criteria are met

AUTHORITY: Section 1001.92, Florida Statutes; Section 668.2 of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations

Next Steps

Co-op Program Implementation



SEPTEMBER 2026

NOVEMBER 2026

IF APPROVED

Overview

Board receives information on implementing co-op programs

Board Consideration

Board considers an amendment to Regulation 8.011 to codify co-op program criteria

Authority

Chancellor may approve co-op programs that meet the criteria in Regulation 8.011



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