PREPARE FOR THE CO-OP STUDENT

- If the student is relocating, offer the students some form of housing assistance, such as a list of apartment complexes in a safe area of town, relocation assistance or a housing stipend.
- Confirm that paperwork is completed, the start and end dates have been discussed, and give the student driving directions to your company.
- Tell the student where he/she should go on the first day, and what they can expect for their first day at work.
- Make sure their work space is conducive to the student's productivity, as well as being part of the team.

PROVIDE TRAINING

- Welcome the student to your organization and introduce them to the people they will work with, and to people outside of your immediate department. If possible, show them the company and departmental organization chart.
- Meet with the student to discuss the Co-op Learning Goals (see Employer Folder)
- Give the student information on dress code and working hours, and the norms and values of the company or department.
- Provide safety training. Express clear guidelines regarding use of computer and phone and proper use of work time.
- Familiarize the students with the department’s major ongoing projects and explain how their work will impact the projects.
- If there are other co-op students working in your organization, provide some events or activities when they can meet one another for both professional and social development.

THE SEVEN MONTH CO-OP ASSIGNMENT

- Spend enough time with the student to ensure proper relay of information, a clear understanding of your expectations and their responsibilities, and to develop a good mentoring and supervisory relationship.
- Provide frequent informal feedback throughout the co-op assignment.
- Review the work assignment periodically so there is a progression from routine tasks to more complicated work assignments and responsibilities.
- Ensure the student doesn’t have idle time; a common complaint from the students is they were given too little to do.
- Promote professional development by allowing co-ops to participate in training opportunities, take them to lunch meetings, take them to a conference or technical presentation, invite them to staff or departmental meetings, conduct a plant tour, delegate responsibility to the student, provide an
opportunity for the co-op to present their co-op learning experience to the company’s leadership and managers, and conduct the mid-term and final evaluation (found in the Employer Folder and on web page).

- Should a problem arise regarding the student’s performance, talk to the student immediately. Often, there are valid reasons for a change in performance. Call Mary Rose Tichar, Director of Co-op, to discuss your concerns. She will become involved and help facilitate a discussion between the student and the employer if needed.
- Talk with the student about your plan for a second co-op or for a full time position.

REGARD THE STUDENT AS A “PROFESSIONAL IN TRAINING”
Co-ops are undergraduate students but are ready to interact and work with professional people. This exposure will encourage the student to do his/her best and challenge him/her to learn new things. Often, after just 2-3 months, students are regarded as real engineers because of their performance. Integrating the co-op student as a team member into the organization will encourage the student to meet your expectations and find creative solutions for complex engineering and business problems.

PAY
Pay a fair and competitive salary to the student. Employers typically pay 2/3 of what a beginning bachelor’s graduate would earn. Some employers base the pay on the number of credit hours the student has earned. Providing benefits are an option for the employer. You can contact the Co-op Office for current salary information.

HIRING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS WITH F-1 OR J-1 VISA STATUS
Students with an F-1 or J-1 Visa are eligible to work in the United States. Through an arrangement known as Curricular Practical Training (CPT) international students can work for 12 months as long as they are formally enrolled in the Cooperative Education Program. Employers will not be called upon to assist with visas. Employers do not have to withhold Social Security or Medicare taxes for students on F-1 or J-1 visas approved for practical training. Students are typically subject to federal and state income taxes. Many of these students have valuable skills to offer your organization and are eager to take their classroom learning to the work place in the United States.