

# CO-OP PROGRAM STUDENT GUIDE

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The Co-op Program Student Guide provides guidelines to the students participating in a Co-op option within the Co-operative Education Program at the Faculty of Agricultural & Food Sciences (FAFS) at the University of Manitoba. Participating Co-op students agree to abide by these guidelines. Procedures are subject to change as the Co-op program evolves over time. For items not covered within the scope of this document, students are encouraged to contact their Co-op Coordinator.

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**UM** | Faculty of Agricultural  
and Food Sciences

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# 1. Program Fundamentals

## What is co-op?

Co-op is an educational model that is a partnership between the academic institution, industry partners, and students, which combines classroom-based education with practical work experience.

Co-op formally enables students to apply their academic knowledge to relevant industry positions related to their career goals, while meeting the recruitment needs of employers. Students in the Co-op Program complete up to three, 4-month co-op work terms. All positions are full-time and paid, and students receive constructive feedback while building professional contacts and gaining career experience.

Students who complete a co-op work term will receive academic credit for co-op, and upon securing a co-op work term will be authorized to register in the co-op course by the Co-op Coordinator. The course consists of a work term of a minimum of 420 hours (minimum 35 hours per week) in business, industry, not-for-profit, or government which has been pre-approved as a co-op work term by the Co-op Office, and is accompanied by an online course on UM Learn.

## Benefits of co-op

For students, there are many advantages of co-operative education:

- Explore different career paths and work environments while completing your degree or diploma program.
- Gain work experience related to your career path.
- Apply academic knowledge in a productive work setting.
- Earn a competitive salary to enhance your skills while on the job.
- Build a network of professional contacts and gain professional experience within your field before graduation.
- Gain deeper insight into recruitment practices, including how to create compelling application packages (resume and cover letter), increase interview confidence, and what skill sets and traits employers are looking for in new hires.
- Earn academic credit towards your degree or diploma.

# 2. Co-op Eligibility

## Degree Program students

Students who have been admitted to an undergraduate program within the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences are eligible to apply to the Co-op Program.

The first work term can start after the first year of a 4-year or second-degree program. Students admitted into the Co-op Program must maintain good academic standing (minimum DGPA of 2.0) throughout their co-op work terms.

## Diploma in Agriculture students

To be considered for admission in the Cooperative Education Program, a first year diploma student must have a minimum Degree GPA of 2.0, and have completed at least 24 credit hours of studies by the end of the academic year of application.

## International students

International students are welcome to apply for co-op. **If accepted** into the co-op program, international students must follow the steps below:

- Apply for a [co-op work permit](#) from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). This permit allows international students to participate in off-campus cooperative education employment.
- Request a letter from the Co-op Office detailing the conditions of their co-op participation and employment. This letter will ask that the co-op work permit be valid until the completion of all three co-op work terms. It must be included in the above application package.
- Submit the entire package **immediately** to IRCC. Check [their website](#) for information on how to submit the application and the processing times.
- Students must have a valid study permit to apply for a co-op work permit.

There is no fee for the co-op work permit application within internship or co-op programs. International students may contact or see an advisor at the [International Centre](#) for co-op work permit-related questions.

A copy of the co-op work permit must be submitted to both the work term employer and the Co-op Office prior to the commencement of the work term.

Please note that international students will not be eligible to apply for positions with Canadian federal departments and agencies requiring secret security clearance within the federal government.

## 3. Responsibilities, Rules, and Regulations

### Responsibilities of co-op students

Applicants who are accepted to the co-op program are required to follow set guidelines that are designed to help them be successful before and after graduation.

As a co-op student, you become a representative of the Co-op Program, the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences and the University of Manitoba. It is important for everyone to work together to make a co-op work term a meaningful experience and preserve relationships between students, the Co-op Coordinator and industry partners.

- Represent the FAFS Co-op Program in a professional and ethical manner.
- Adhere to all Co-op guidelines and deadlines.

- Attend all mandatory co-op meetings, workshops, professional development seminars, and interviews.
- Conduct research for a potential co-op work term that suits your interests, academic goals and personal life adaptability (i.e. capacity to live short-term in rural Manitoba).
- Actively engage in a targeted job search by applying for an appropriate number of co-op and non-co-op positions available on UM Connect as well as external sources.
- Check and respond to U of M email on a regular basis to ensure an open line of communication with the Co-op Office.
- Honour all contractual agreements and obligations to the employer.
- Follow all employer policies and procedures.
- Perform to the best of their ability during work terms and maintain a professional attitude with regards to confidentiality.
- Ensure that work permits (if applicable - international Students) are valid and available prior to commencing employment and apply for extensions when required.
- Inform the Co-op Coordinator of any changes to your degree/diploma, program or contact information.
- Communicate potential problems in being able to meet the expectations of the program with the Co-op Coordinator in a timely manner.

### **Responsibilities of the co-op employer**

Co-op employers are asked to:

- Adhere to all laws and legislation related to labour and employment such as the Occupation Health and Safety legislation, Canada Labour Code, Canadian Human Rights Act, Employment Standards legislation and any other laws relevant to employment.
- Provide meaningful, relevant, paid employment for a minimum of 420 hours and/or 12 weeks (35-40 hours per week).
- Provide the student/Co-op Program with an accurate job description.
- Provide a written letter of offer to the student outlining offer details.
- Respect the Co-op Office's timelines, schedules and deadlines.
- Offer reasonable notice to candidates to be interviewed and of cancellations.
- Provide an orientation to familiarize the student with their responsibilities, work environment, direct supervisor (or workplace mentor) and organization's policies, etc.
- Develop and provide a training plan for students to learn and understand the role, health and safety regulations, and other procedures necessary to the position.
- Foster a positive experiential learning environment for the co-op student that encourages career conversations and discussions on career pathways, opportunities, learning objectives, etc.
- Provide a safe and conducive work environment, especially to those with limited experience.

- Meet with a Co-op Coordinator and the co-op student for a site visit/mid-term meeting once per co-op work term to assess student progress.
- Complete the Student Evaluation Form at the beginning and end of the work term and discuss it with the student.
- Communicate any potential difficulties in completing work terms with the student and the Co-op Coordinator.

## **Responsibilities of the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences**

The Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences will:

- Ensure the integrity and administration of the Co-op Program.
- Ensure all approved co-op work terms meet minimum length of time, are paid positions, and provide relevant work to enhance a student's professional knowledge and skills.
- Establish guidelines for students to follow, ensuring that application packages (cover letter, resume, and transcripts) are accurate, professional, and appropriate.
- Facilitate the co-op intake/selection process in a fair and ethical manner in compliance with all provincial and federal legislation.
- Provide guidance, support, and learning opportunities to students to enhance co-op students' success.
- Perform site visits/mid-term meetings.
- Ensure that international students have valid work permits prior to accepting and commencing a co-op job.
- Market the Co-op Program to potential employers and students not currently enrolled in co-op.
- Build relationships within the business community to foster development of the Co-op Program.
- Provide a supportive and confidential environment to ensure student success and open communication.

## **Website and communications**

All email correspondence from the Co-op Office will be sent to the student's UM email. It is the student's responsibility to maintain close contact with their Co-op Coordinator and to check daily for new job postings, employer emails, interviews requests, and for notices from the Co-op Office.

It is the student's responsibility to be diligent in checking and responding to all co-op emails. Responses to emails from the Co-op Office should be made within 48 business hours or in the specified timeframe outlined in the email, whichever comes first. Students not responding to email communications will be cautioned. Failure to properly correct issues in this area may result in removal from the Co-op Program.

## **Removal from the Co-op Program**

Students may be required to withdraw from the Co-op Program for any of the following reasons:

- Students whose degree GPA falls below the required minimum (Degree: 2.0, Diploma: 2.0)
- Receiving a Fail (F) in the co-op course.
  - Failure to submit the academic components of the co-op course in a timely manner may result in an F in the course.
- Unsatisfactory performance in the workplace during the co-op work term.
- Failure to correct performance or professionalism issues addressed by the Co-op Office.
- Failure to observe the ethical standards of the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences and the University of Manitoba in place at the time; including being found guilty of academic misconduct or non-academic misconduct, or
- Failure to successfully secure a co-op work term.

## 4. Fees & Financial Information

### Co-op Program fee

The fee to enroll in the Co-op Program is \$796.70 per work term. Students are required to register in the employment term course and pay the fee prior to starting the employment term. Fees are the same as any other course fees and follow the schedule for payment as outlined by the Registrar's Office. Co-op fees are used for covering the costs directly related to the effective management, administration, and promotion of the co-op program. Keep in mind that co-op students do not "pay for their work term", and the fee is the same whether a student secures a job through the Co-op job board or through their own networking in a self-guided job search. Fees are subject to change.

### Student loans

Being off campus while you have a student loan may have serious effects on your interest and repayment schedules. On your first day back to campus after a work term, be sure to contact the Financial Aid and Awards office.

If you are considering an 8-month work term, be sure to visit the Financial Aid and Awards office, BEFORE your work term.

### Health and dental insurance

Refer to the [UMSU Student Care website](#) to see how co-op students are assessed for health and/or dental plan coverage as you may be required to opt-in.

### Revenue Canada and work terms

When a co-op student files their Canadian income tax return, they may receive a reduction for the months during the year when they were attending university full-time. Revenue Canada does not recognize students on a work term to be full-time students; therefore the months of the work term are not eligible for tax reductions. When you complete more than one work term in a calendar year, it is recommended to have additional income tax deducted from your pay.



## 5. International Students

### Co-op work permits

To be eligible to work in a co-op work term in Canada, international students must be registered in an approved co-op program within their degree or diploma program and a co-op work permit be received by the student, before accepting a co-op position. International students will be provided a letter by the Co-op Office for this purpose. If the student does not secure a co-op position, or withdraws from the Co-op Program, they must forfeit their letter/work permit.

It is critical that international students apply to IRCC for the co-op work permit as soon as possible after receiving the co-op letter as the processing time can be lengthy. Students must notify the Co-op Coordinator when they have applied for the permit (the date on which the application was submitted), and once it is received. Delays in applying will result in a student not being eligible to apply for, or start, a co-op position. Negligence in applying in a timely manner may also be grounds for removal from the co-op program. Please communicate with the Co-op Office if you have any unexpected delays in receiving your co-op work permit. A copy of the co-op work permit must be submitted to both the work term employer and the Co-op Office prior to the commencement of the work term.

## 6. Co-op Schedule

Co-op work terms can occur year-round in the summer, winter, or fall terms.

Each student is responsible in determining their work/study schedule with these general guidelines in mind:

- Students are admitted into co-op in the fall term, and will commence their first work term the following summer.
- Completing only one work term is classified as an internship, not a co-op work term - therefore students applying to co-op should apply with the intent to complete multiple work terms.
- Students will be asked to submit a proposed co-op schedule the Co-op Coordinator during the Co-op Intake Process.
- Two work terms will earn you a co-op designation on your degree parchment.
- Students should put in their best effort to complete at least one work term during the fall or winter terms; students should not plan to work in summers only.
- The Co-op Office recognizes that in some cases a summer only schedule may be necessary – this is possible but needs to be pre-approved by the Co-op Coordinator.
- Complete no more than 2 consecutive work terms (8 months).
- Students must end their degree on an Academic Term. Students wishing to graduate on a work term must receive written permission from the Co-op Office.
- Students must complete a co-op work term within the first year of being in the

## Co-op Program

Depending on their program schedule, students may complete either two consecutive four-month work terms, three separate four-month work placements, or a combination. Co-op students should meet with an Academic Advisor to establish how co-op can fit into their schedule while staying within the co-op guidelines.

The following sample schedules can be used to determine a schedule based on courses and other plans while in university:

<b>Sample Co-op Schedule A</b>			
	<b>Fall (Sep-Dec)</b>	<b>Winter (Jan – Apr)</b>	<b>Summer (May-Aug)</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	Academic Term	Academic Term	Break
<b>Year 2</b>	Academic Term (Apply to co-op)	Academic Term (co-op prep/job search)	Work Term 1
<b>Year 3</b>	Academic Term	Work Term 2	Academic Term
<b>Year 4</b>	Work Term 3	Academic Term	Academic Term

<b>Sample Co-op Schedule B</b>			
	<b>Fall (Sep-Dec)</b>	<b>Winter (Jan – Apr)</b>	<b>Summer (May-Aug)</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	Academic Term	Academic Term	Break
<b>Year 2</b>	Academic Term (Apply to co-op)	(Academic Term (co-op prep/job search))	Work Term 1
<b>Year 3</b>	Academic Term	Work Term 2	Break/Academic Term
<b>Year 4</b>	Academic Term	Academic Term	Work Term 3
<b>Year 5</b>	Academic Term		

<b>Sample Co-op Schedule C</b>			
	<b>Fall (Sep-Dec)</b>	<b>Winter (Jan – Apr)</b>	<b>Summer (May-Aug)</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	Academic Term (Apply to co-op)	Academic Term (Co-op prep/job search)	Work Term 1
<b>Year 2</b>	Academic Term	Academic Term	Work Term 2
<b>Year 3</b>	Academic Term	Academic Term	Break
<b>Year 4</b>	Work Term 3	Academic Term	Break
<b>Year 5</b>	Academic Term	Academic Term	

\*Note; other schedule variations are possible

As a result, students typically complete their degree in four and a half to five years. While it may take longer to complete a degree, co-op students can graduate with 12

months of paid work experience and be more competitive for positions, as well as a higher salary, post graduation.

Students are encouraged to conduct research pertaining to the seasonality of career opportunities in their field when evaluating their proposed co-op schedule. For example, while most agronomy opportunities are posted for the summer term, students can gain higher level and more well-rounded experience by working in different seasons throughout the year. Organizations must operate year-round, and often have higher level positions available in the fall and winter terms. This can be a great opportunity for a more senior student who already has work experience in their field.

Additionally, food science students for example, will find that there are excellent opportunities available in the winter term. Keep in mind that the quantity of job opportunities listed does not necessarily correlate with the level of competition for roles. While there may be more summer opportunities available, there are both co-op and non co-op at schools across the province students competing for these roles. There may be decreased competition for fall and winter positions as most students have returned to classes.

Specific start and end dates are negotiable between the student and the employer, however they should align with the approximate start and end of the Academic Term (May - June, September – December, January – April).

A student may choose to work part-time for their co-op employer prior to the official start of the work term or following the completion of the work term. This arrangement would be considered to be outside the terms of employment for co-op. The 420 hour minimum requirement should be calculated within the 4 months of the Academic Term. Any co-op arrangements outside of these terms requires written permission from the Co-op Office.

## 7. Co-op Job Criteria

In order to qualify as a co-op position, a job opportunity must be:

- Full time (35-40 hours per week)
- Approximately 4 months in duration, spanning the Academic Term (a work term is defined as a minimum 12 weeks and/or 420 hours full-time)
- Paid
- Meaningful and challenging work that is relevant to a [program of study in the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences](#).

Keep in mind that a co-op position does not need to *directly* correlate to the student's major to qualify as a co-op work term. Many opportunities can provide valuable and relevant transferable skills, professional networking opportunities, and experience the student's desired industry. If a student finds an opportunity that they are interested in

but are unsure if it would qualify, they should arrange to discuss with the Co-op Coordinator.

## 8. Job Search Preparation

While the Co-op Office helps to prepare students for a co-op work term, the responsibility ultimately lies with the student to secure a co-op position. Actively researching career options, identifying target companies, networking, ensuring application materials are customized and reflect your unique skills and credentials, coupled with a proactive professional approach will go a long way to ensuring success.

Before commencing a work term, students will be required to attend a mandatory Co-op Orientation session that will summarize the details of participating in the Co-op Program.

### Career development workshops

Co-op students will also be required to enrol in the not-for-credit course on UM Learn, “*Career and Professional Development*”. Students must complete the course by the start of the winter term after they are accepted into the program, to ensure they are ready for a successful job search. Any deadlines to complete specific modules within the course will be communicated at Co-op Orientation.

Co-op students that prefer live learning sessions are encouraged to attend the career workshops offered by the [Career, Community and Experiential Learning Centre](#) at the University of Manitoba. Core workshops include the following, but there are many more offered:

- Resume & Cover Letter workshop
- Interview Preparation
- Job Search: Building a strategy and identifying employers
- Networking

Students should plan attend all the above workshops by the end of the fall term of their intake year.

Students can review the workshop schedule and register for sessions in [UM Connect](#) under “*Events, Information Sessions and Workshops*” module on the left-hand menu.

The Co-op Coordinator will also offer faculty targeted, supplemental workshops to co-op students as deemed necessary. These will be communicated to students once scheduled. Students will be required to attend a mandatory “Workplace Readiness” session in April to prepare them to enter the professional workplace.

Students will be required to submit a copy of their first application, or a sample of to a Co-op Coordinator before submitting for a job application.

## 9. Job Search Process

The Faculty of Agricultural & Food Sciences Co-op Program utilizes a continuous placement recruitment model for local, national and international placements. Students are advised to view the job postings on UM Connect daily, as jobs are posted continuously throughout the year. Deadlines are noted within each job posting and students are invited to apply to any job posted for which they are qualified. Keep in mind that some employers use a “rolling deadline”, meaning the position will be closed once filled. Positions posted under the Coop Job Board are only visible to co-op students. Co-op students should also actively apply to jobs posted outside the co-op job board that also meet co-op job criteria.

The continuous placement method utilizes flexible timelines and students may interview and accept offers at any time after being accepted into the Co-op Program. The hiring process will be year-round to ensure that co-op placements are available in all semesters. This means that employers can post positions at any time. Some employers post positions months or even a full year in advance. If a student is on track to start a co-op work term the following semester, it will be their responsibility to actively review co-op positions posted throughout the term, and to apply to as many as possible to meet their career targets. Students are encouraged to apply only to jobs they anticipate accepting if the interview shows it to be a good fit.

Students who find suitable work opportunities on their own must verify with their coordinator that the proposed work term will also provide an appropriate co-op learning experience before the position can be approved. Students must provide the employer's/organization's name, contact information, name of supervisor and a brief job description. The coordinator will then contact the employer to discuss the employer's responsibilities. If all co-op requirements are met and the position is approved by the co-op program, the student can accept this position as a co-op work term.

If a student chooses to apply to co-op job postings in addition to pursuing their own self-directed job search, all positions should be given equal consideration before acceptance. As requirements may vary among programs, it is necessary for students to discuss specific policies with a coordinator from their discipline-specific program area. Co-op registration and fees are still applicable to a co-op work term found through a self-directed process.

## **Returning to the same employer**

Although it is quite common for employers to ask successful student employees to return to work in subsequent work terms, students should consider what is best for their career development and discuss the opportunity with their Co-op Coordinator. If a student returns to a previous employer, the expectation is that the employer will offer more responsibility and a varied experience.

## **Developing your own co-op work term**

It is important that students develop job search skills before graduation. Conducting a job search process within the "safe" confines of a co-op program provides students with a legitimate framework for approaching potential employers. The Co-op Coordinator can assist with this self-directed process. To avoid confusing employers, students who are attempting to develop their own work term must consult with their Co-op Coordinator. Students that are successful in securing their own position must bring in the details of the position to the Co-op Coordinator for approval before accepting any offer of employment. If accepted, students must adhere to all the regular co-op requirements as stated elsewhere in this document.

## **Interviews**

Students and employers communicate to arrange their own interviews. The Co-op Coordinator may be able to offer interview rooms for employers on-campus or employers may wish to interview in their offices. Many more interviews are now being conducted virtually. Student may contact the Co-op Coordinator (with as much advance notice as possible) if they require a quiet space on campus to interview.

Employers can contact students at any time to arrange for interviews. It is the student's responsibility to be responsible to their phone and email, and attend all scheduled interviews. If a student accepts an offer of employment, it is expected that the student will meet that employment commitment. Any forthcoming interviews with other employers should be cancelled by the student in a timely and professional manner.

Students should recognize that many employers will opt to reach out via telephone to arrange interviews. Students should ensure the correct contact information is reflection on application packages, and that their voicemail is properly set up and checked daily.

## **Job offers**

Employers will generally make their offer to a student directly. Students must respond to job offers within 48 business hours of receiving an offer, unless a different deadline is request by the employer – by either accepting or declining the offer.

Some employers, such as the federal government, may offer a co-op position to the successful candidate on the condition that the candidate passes a background check or security clearance. The process for background check or security clearance usually takes up to two weeks and could extend to six weeks. Students who accept the conditional job offers should consult their co-op programs and follow the guidelines regarding continuing their job search and course registration.

The Co-op Office will notify the Student Services Office once students accept an offer and they will be granted permission to register in the co-op course for the relevant semester.

### **Letter of Offer/Employment Contract**

Employers are asked to forward written letters of offer to students once a co-op work term has been accepted. Students must provide a copy of the letter of offer to the Co-op Office for their academic records.

Letters of offer typically include hiring details such as:

- Start and end date of the co-op work term.
- Schedule of hours of work per week.
- To whom the student will report.
- Work site address.
- Salary/wage information.
- Vacation allocation.
- Parking or transportation details.
- Information on confidentiality agreements or criminal record checks, if applicable.
- Remote work policy (if relevant).

### **Rejecting a job**

Students should consider all aspects of a job opportunity before applying. However, if a student interviews for a job, and then decides it may not be the best fit for them for whatever reason, they must discuss the situation with their Co-op Coordinator immediately before any job offers are extended.

Normally, students are expected to accept job offers and commit to that position. Just as employers do not make firm offers hoping to find someone better later on, students are expected to commit to an employer and not apply for other positions once placed. Failure to honour a commitment will lead to withdrawal from the Co-op program. Extenuating circumstances must be handled through the Co-op Office.

Students may only decline a maximum of two (2) job offers with no penalty. Declining more than two offers may result in removal from the Co-op Program.

Students that reject offers of employment without discussion and approval by their Co-op Coordinator will no longer be eligible to continue in the Co-op program.

## **What happens if a student doesn't secure a co-op placement?**

It is possible that a student may have difficulty securing a co-op position. This could be due to several reasons, including current labour market outlooks, imbalance of jobs to students, or an application package or interview that is uninspired. All students who have difficulty securing a placement will work one-on-one with the Co-op Coordinator to review the application package, redefine goals and receive coaching.

Sometimes problem areas are easy to identify. For example, if a student does not get interviews, this indicates that the resume/cover letter or LinkedIn profile may not be showcasing relevant skills/experience for the position to which the student applied. If the student receives interviews but does not receive job offers, the student may benefit from interview coaching. Experience has shown that students who work hard, adapt their strategy accordingly, and approach and follow guidance from the Career Consultants and Co-op Coordinators most often experience success. Job search can take time and effort, so try to stay focused and positive – success will come.

While students are not guaranteed employment, all efforts will be made by the Co-op Office to provide support to students that will help them secure meaningful jobs.

## **10. On the Job**

### **Orientation and training**

It is the employer's responsibility to provide a full orientation to the workplace including a tour, introduction to relevant staff, and work expectations. As with any new employee, co-op students should be given their own workspace and access to the same amenities within reasonable accommodation.

Some companies may have an orientation and training program that facilitates transition to the workplace.

### **Academic study while on a co-op work term**

While on a co-op work term, fulfilling the requirements set out by the employer should be the student's primary focus. During a work term, a co-op student may take one additional course of up to a maximum of 6 credit hours.

If a student would like to request to take additional credit hours while on a co-op work term, they must have written approval from their employer as well as permission from the Co-op Course Instructor.

Students should seek out course schedules (online or evening) that do not interfere with their regular working hours, in consultation with the Student Services Office. Employers are not expected to give students time off for classes or to study for exams. It is the responsibility of the co-op student to organize and manage their own time.



## Co-op course

Co-op is a pedagogical model of work integrated learning (WIL). Self-reflection and assessment are key components of quality WIL programs.

Students who have secured a co-op work term must register online for the co-op course in order to obtain the credit. This can be done up to 2 weeks before the start of the co-op placement/work term. For example, if you are scheduled to start working in May, you will register for a Co-op course by mid-April.

Special permission to register for these courses is required.

The co-op courses are offered online on UM Learn and are graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Each co-op term that receives a Pass mark earns a student 3 credit hours.

### Co-op courses (in progression) are as follows:

- AGRI 2002 – First Co-op Work Term: Introduction to HR and Career Competencies
- AGRI 3002 – Second Co-op Work Term: Values-Based Leadership Development
- AGRI 4002 – Third Co-op Work Term: Special Project

Co-op course syllabus, outlines, deadlines for assignment submissions and marking rubrics for both reports including samples will be available on UM Learn once you have registered for your co-op course.

Students will earn their co-op designation (indication on their parchment at graduation) with the completion of at least two co-op work terms. Full credit hours are required for completion.

### Mid-term meetings/site visits

The Co-op Coordinator will conduct a mid-term meeting/site visit to monitor and evaluate the progress of the student to ensure program requirements and expectations of both student and employer are being met. This will typically occur once per co-op work term and will be held virtually unless an in-person meeting is deemed optimal. The Co-op Coordinator will meet with both the student and the supervisor. When the site visit is scheduled, the employer may request to meet with the Co-op Coordinator without the student present. This meeting will be followed by a meeting with just the student and the Co-op Coordinator.

## **Professional conduct**

It is the student's responsibility to represent the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences in a professional and ethical manner. Students are expected to be courteous, respectful, punctual, diligent, responsible and accountable for their own actions and performance. Students are expected to honour all contractual agreements and obligations to the employer, including non-disclosure agreements and confidentiality.

## **On the job evaluation**

It is the employer's responsibility to provide ongoing constructive feedback to the student about the student's performance and ability to meet objectives. The evaluations assess communication and business competencies as well as professionalism.

Employers are asked to submit a student evaluation at the beginning and the end of the co-op work term as well as discuss evaluations with the student and Co-op Coordinator during the site visit.

## **Co-op Office support**

The Co-op Office strives to keep an open line of communication in a facilitative, educational environment. Therefore, co-op program participants are encouraged to communicate potential conflicts or possible problems in completing co-op work terms with the Co-op Coordinator. In the event of a conflict, it is expected that students and employers will communicate with each other before communicating the problem to a Co-op Coordinator. If the problem is not resolved, it is expected that the Co-op Coordinator be contacted to mediate.

While employers and students are required to respect the obligations of all contractual agreements, both parties have the right to terminate a contract provided appropriate notice is given (usually two weeks or as defined in the contract).

The Co-op Office provides on-going support to students to ensure that work terms are successful and contribute to meeting personal career objectives. Thank you for your interest in the Co-op Program and wish you the best on your career journey!