



UBC iSCHOOL CO-OP PROGRAM GUIDE 2017/2018

Discover Co-op

Co-operative Education is a learning program in which students have the opportunity to combine “real world” experience with their classroom training and develop employment skills specific to the UBC iSchool professions through pre-employment training, career coaching with co-op staff, and workplace experiences. The University and employers co-operate to provide students with an opportunity to learn in a workplace setting by alternating practical, paid work experience in various fields of interest with their academic studies. Co-op graduates will be well prepared, academically and professionally, for their future careers.

Benefits of Co-op

Co-op programs give students the opportunity to:

- access tailored career advising and develop valuable career planning and job search skills
- take advantage of extensive pre-employment training, including one-on-one career advising tailored to UBC iSchool students
- apply to positions that require students to be in a co-op program
- explore various career options and gain substantial practical experience to put on their resumes
- develop their professional skills and network
- enrich academic learning with workplace experience
- finance their degrees with relevant, paid work

Employers Who Hire Co-op Students

Co-op Coordinators work closely with employers locally, nationally, and internationally, to develop challenging, career-related positions for co-op students in the non-profit, government (federal/provincial/municipal), and private business sectors, and work with students to help them create competitive applications and hone their interview skills. Here is a sample of the variety of organizations that have hired UBC iSchool co-op students in past years:

Communications Security Establishment Canada	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Environment Canada	Salt Spring Island Public Library
Fort St. James Public Library	SAP
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada	Simon Fraser University Library
International Federation of the Red Cross & Red Crescent (Switzerland)	Suncor
Library and Archives of Canada	The Cultch
Ministry of Justice	University of British Columbia Library - Vancouver
New Westminster Archives	University of British Columbia Library - Okanagan
Prosentient Systems Pty Ltd. (Australia)	University of Victoria Libraries and Archives
Queen’s University	Vancouver Island Regional Library
Royal BC Museum	Western Front Society

Types of Work to Expect

Employers hire UBC iSchool co-op students based on their specialized skill and knowledge sets, as well as career interests. UBC iSchool co-op students can expect a broad range of work in areas such as:

- Archival work & records management
- Database design & search functionality
- Metadata creation & resource descriptions
- Indexing & classification
- Instruction, programming & reference services



- Collection evaluation & needs assessment
- Research & analysis
- Web design & content development

How Co-op differs from other Experiential Learning at UBC iSchool (LIBR/ARST 596, ARST 595, and ARST 575R/LIBR 569R)

Co-op option:

The Co-op Program offers students the chance to work in a full-time, paid position related to their career interests and areas of study for 4 or 8 months. Sometimes co-op students work in environments with many other professionals in their field (e.g., a public library), and sometimes they are hired as subject experts and work independently as the only information professional in the workplace (e.g., as records managers for a private business). In both situations, students become regular employees in the workplace and are expected to complete assigned work and participate generally in workplace activities with other employees. As a result, co-op students get in-depth exposure to a particular workplace, as well as to a range of tasks related generally to their field of study.

Students go through a “real world” competitive process to secure co-op positions, with support from co-op staff. For example, co-op students have access to a database of postings primarily available only to UBC iSchool co-op students (which are sometimes posted at other Canadian university co-op programs), choose which positions to apply for, and submit applications via the Co-op Office. Note that the numbers and types of jobs posted reflect the Canadian library, archives, and information studies job market at the time. As Metro Vancouver is not a big enough market to offer the range of experiences UBC iSchool co-op students want, co-op staff market the program to employers across Canada and around the world to ensure an appropriate range of positions for each work term. As a result, students who are able to relocate to take jobs will have more opportunities.

The Co-op Office provides one mandatory conference for UBC iSchool co-op students to help them compete for co-op jobs, as well as access to co-op staff for individual career advising appointments, enabling students to develop job search skills that will be of use during the co-op job search and after graduation. Employers vet the applications, choose which students they wish to shortlist, and select the candidate they wish to hire after completing interviews. Students should expect to apply for multiple jobs before being placed; as a result, participating in the Co-op Program adds substantially to students’ workloads during terms that they are applying for jobs.

ARST/LIBR 596 Professional Experience:

LIBR/ARST 596 is an optional course providing students with a shorter, project-based work experience. Students commit 120 hours of work on a special project to gain professional experience and to develop project management skills. Students are supervised by an experienced librarian, archivist/records manager. Students receive 3 academic credits, rather than pay, for their work. Professional experience opportunities are coordinated by the UBC iSchool Student Services Coordinator.

ARST 595 Internship:

ARST 595 offers 3-month, full-time internships to MAS and Dual MAS/MLIS students. Students can apply for internship placements at organizations of their choice. The School makes arrangements with the organization on behalf of the student. The student is mentored and supervised by a senior archivist/records manager, gaining practical experience and the chance to observe in a setting directly related to their studies. Students receive 3 academic credits, rather than pay, for their work.

ARST 575R/LIBR 569R Graduating Project:

ARST 575R/LIBR 569R is offered to students in their final or penultimate term at the iSchool. It provides students with the opportunity to collaborate with peers, professors, and industry or community partners on a real-life issue or challenge. Students use this placement as an opportunity to synthesize and reflect upon the competencies they have gained during their degree programs and produce a meaningful, tangible product that represents a culmination of students’ skills and knowledge. Students receive 3 academic credits, rather than pay, for their work.



Participating in Co-op While also Undertaking ARST 595, ARST/ LIBR 596, ARST 575R/LIBR 569R or other Jobs at UBC

It is possible to undertake ARST 595, ARST/LIBR 596 or ARST 575R/LIBR 569R while in the Co-op Program. However, these options cannot usually be undertaken concurrently. Because each of these practical experience programs offers a different type of experience, students are encouraged to explore and participate in the options that best fit their interests, schedules, and individual constraints. Please note that students' participation in these other options may limit their ability to apply and accept co-op positions.

Completing a Co-op Work Term

While the Co-op Office works to ensure there is an appropriate range and number of co-op jobs to meet the needs of available students, acceptance into the Co-op Program does not guarantee a co-op position. Students compete for and secure co-op jobs. Experience shows that the most successful students are those who take advantage of pre-employment training and one-on-one advising with co-op staff, and are open to applying for a wide range of jobs.

Co-op Work Term Length

Work terms are a minimum of 455 hours, or 13 weeks, in length. Most employers will hire students for 13-16 weeks (4 months). Students must complete one mandatory work term, but have the option to complete up to 3 work terms. Depending on a student's program schedule, they may complete one 4-month work term, two consecutive 4-month work terms, and/or two separate 4-month work terms. As a result, students typically complete their degree in 24 or 28 months rather than the usual 20 months.

Normally UBC iSchool co-op students will spend 8 months completing their initial coursework at UBC iSchool. They will then elect to do either a 4-month or an 8-month co-op position. After the work placement they will return to UBC iSchool to complete their remaining required credits of coursework.

Typical Wages Structure for UBC iSchool Co-op Student

The average Arts Co-op wage range is \$16-22 per hour; wages can vary greatly depending on the sector. For example, some non-profits pay less than government positions. While co-op can be a good method to assist students in financing their degrees, money should not be the primary consideration for participating in the program. Wages are based on current labour market realities and are up to the employer to determine.

Qualifying for Student Loan while in the Co-op Program

Students who qualify for student loans maintain their full-time student status even while they are on a work term. Students are expected to declare their co-op earnings, just like other earnings (from a part-time job, for example). Students may wish to apply for student loans on a term-by-term basis rather than on a whole year basis. Students are encouraged to talk to an Enrolment Services Professional (ESP) for personalized support and advice.

Fees Associated with Co-op (fees are subject to change based on Senate guidelines)

There is a one-time Administration and Career Advising fee of \$242.25 due when students are accepted into the program. This fee covers a full-day Graduate Programs co-op conference facilitated by UBC iSchool co-op employers, alumni, and senior students, unlimited access to co-op staff for one-on-one advising, access to UBC iSchool co-op resources for their co-op job search and after graduation, and access to all UBC iSchool co-op job postings. Note that this fee does not guarantee students a co-op position.

While on work terms, UBC iSchool co-op students continue to pay their regular graduate tuition and student fees to UBC that allows them to be registered in a 3-credit non-academic Arts Studies co-op course (ASTU 501, 502, or 503) that appears on the student's transcript, keeps their full-time student status with the University, and gives them access to student benefits and resources. A portion of this fee is returned to the Co-op Office and helps to cover the costs of co-op



staff to market the program and secure jobs, participate in site visits, and review and evaluate students' co-op learning projects and evaluations at the end of work terms.

Students on Scholarship while in the Program?

Co-op status does not affect renewable scholarships. Renewable scholarship payments normally span a two-year period; however, for co-op students, the payments extend over a longer period to accommodate work terms. For further information about scholarship and student loan information, please contact the Awards & Financial Aid Office or visit <http://students.ubc.ca/enrolment/finances>.

Eligibility

You are eligible to apply to UBC iSchool co-op if:

- you are in or about to begin your first term at the UBC iSchool*
- you are a full-time UBC student (part-time students will be considered if they are available for full-time co-op terms)
- you plan on completing your first co-op work term once you have earned between 21 to 30 credits of your Master's degree

**UBC iSchool students starting their degree programs in January must apply to UBC iSchool Co-op in the Fall term prior to their January start date. UBC iSchool students starting the Dual degree program in January may apply to UBC iSchool Co-op in the Fall term prior to or following their January start date. Please contact the Arts Co-op Office if you need clarification regarding this.*

Application Procedures

Applications for 2017/18 are due on Wednesday, October 11, 2017 by 4:00pm. Once you've determined that you are eligible, you can complete the online portion of your application on the Arts Co-op website at <http://artcoop.ubc.ca>, then submit the following to the Arts Co-op Office in Buchanan C121 by the deadline.

The application package will require you to submit:

- an application form completed online at <https://arts-ubc-csm.symlicity.com/students> **(the online application form will probably open on September 8, 2017 – check website for date confirmation)**
- a cover letter (1 page maximum)
- a resume (2 pages maximum)
- references (contact information for 2-3 references on a separate page from your resume)

Application Evaluation

Any students who submit a complete application package by the due date and meet the above criteria will be considered for UBC iSchool Co-op admission. Preference for admission will be given to students who are able to relocate, are open to completing more than one co-op work term, and whose work interests and schedules are flexible. In some cases, an interview with co-op staff may be required for clarification.

Once students are accepted into the program, the Arts Co-op Graduate Programs Co-op Coordinator will meet with each admitted student to provide feedback on ways to develop and improve the student's cover letter and resume submitted in their application for the co-op job search, as well as conduct a short mandatory mock interview with each student to prepare the student for the job application process. Also, attendance at the all-day Graduate Programs co-op conference (Saturday, January 14, 2017, from 9 am-4 pm at UBC) is mandatory for students who wish to participate in the program.

For further details, visit us at <http://www.artscoop.ubc.ca> or come to the Arts Co-op Office at Buchanan Building C121, 1866 Main Mall.

Application Deadline: **Wednesday, October 11, 2017, at 4:00 pm** in the Arts Co-op Office.