UBC PHILOSOPHY PHD CO-OP PROGRAM GUIDE 2021/2022

Why PhD Co-op in Philosophy

Program goals:
- to extend secure graduate funding into the fifth and possibly sixth years of the PhD program;
- to give graduate students well-paid, relevant work experience divided across their dissertation years (PhD co-op positions pay $20–$30/hour depending on the employer—a 14-week work term at 37.5 hours/week at $25 is $13,125);
- to reduce the financial and academic strain often faced by students who run out of money after year four and have to work nearly full time, often substantially delaying completion of their degrees; and
- to provide insight and experience into alt-ac careers for graduate students who may choose not to work in academia after graduation.

Co-op programs give students the opportunity to:
- explore various career options and gain substantial, "alt-ac career" experience to put on their resumes
- engage with off-campus communities of people, some of whom may have expertise that can add nuance to research
- enrich academic learning with workplace experience
- develop their professional skills and network
- apply to positions that require students to be in a co-op program (such as federal government jobs and some positions in the cultural industries)
- finance their degrees with relevant, paid work

What is Co-op?

Co-operative Education is an internationally-recognized and formally accredited learning program in which students have the opportunity to combine alternative work experience with their academic training through pre-employment training, career coaching, and interesting, relevant 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.

"The breadth of experience [my co-op] position provided was extremely useful. As a PhD student I am used to working in areas of intense specificity and generalization. This position required me to think more generally, working as part of a team on a very diverse array of tasks and projects."

Jonathan Newell (the first UBC English PhD co-op student to complete a co-op work term)

History of the Co-op Program for Philosophy PhD Students

In 2013, the English Department Graduate Committee expressed an interest in exploring an optional PhD co-op program, through the Arts Co-op Program, to explore providing wider employment opportunities, or "alt-ac careers", for their PhD students.

A feasibility study was undertaken in March 2013, through a survey and focus groups, to assess student interest and expectations, as well as employer interest and knowledge. As the feasibility study had positive results, the Arts Co-op Program piloted an English PhD Co-op Program with the support of the English Department and the Dean of Arts Office starting in Fall 2013.

The UBC Arts Co-op Program submitted a new program proposal for UBC's first PhD co-op program, via the Faculty of Arts and Graduate Studies, to Senate to approve the UBC English PhD co-op program and courses. Approval was granted in May 2015. The calendar entry for the UBC Doctor of Philosophy co-operative education option can be found at http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/Vancouver/index.cfm?tree=12,197,751,0.

In 2018, the PhD co-op option was extended to include the History department; in 2020, we expanded to include pilot programs in Philosophy, Germanic Studies, and Gender, Race, and Social Justice.

How the Philosophy PhD Co-op Program Works

The Philosophy PhD Co-op Program offers students the chance to work in a full-time, paid position for 4 or 8 months. Students become regular employees in the professional 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 complete three work terms of 4 months each, over the two to three years after achieving candidacy.

Students go through a competitive hiring process to secure co-op positions, with support from co-op staff. PhD co-op students have access to a database of postings primarily available only to UBC Arts graduate students, choose which positions to apply for, and submit applications via the co-op office. PhD students are also supported in seeking their own co-op experiences with employers of their choosing.

For each co-op work term a student secures, they will be registered into a PhD co-op course that appears on their transcript as a 3-credit non-academic (i.e., credits that do not count towards your degree program) Arts Studies course: ASTU 610, 611, 612, or 613.

Although students will complete their degrees with 12 months of additional work experience, participating in co-op does not necessarily mean that students will take an extra year to complete their PhD; it depends on how a student plans to structure work on their thesis with their co-op terms. However, if extra time is required, it is a good investment as the students will graduate not only with a PhD, but with a range of professional experience and a better understanding of other career options available to them. Since tri-council and university funding can be paused for required work terms, co-op students can be expected to work full time on their research in their fifth year, and benefit from this end-of-program support.

Co-op Work Terms

Work terms are a minimum of 420 hours, or 12 weeks, in length. Most employers will hire students for 12–16 weeks. Students in the Philosophy PhD Co-op Program complete three co-op work terms and have the option to complete a fourth.

Types of Work to Expect

Employers hire UBC Philosophy PhD co-op students based on their specialized skills and potential career interests. UBC Philosophy PhD students can expect to work in areas such as:

- Academic administration
- Curriculum development
- Research & analysis
- Web design & content development
- Communications
- Instructional design
- Project management
- Writing & editing

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. Here is a sample of the variety of employers that have hired UBC PhD co-op students or expressed interest in doing so:

- UBC and other academic units like the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, Centre for Child and Family Research, Knowledge Exchange Unit, and Public Humanities Hub
- Non-profits like Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Gardens
- Private sector companies like Misfit Inc. and SAP
- Public departments like Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and Health Canada
- Arts and culture organizations like Harbour Publishing and local art galleries and museums

Typical Wage Structure for UBC Philosophy PhD Co-op Students

The average Philosophy PhD co-op student wage range is $20–30 per hour. Wages can vary greatly depending on the sector. For example, some non-profits pay less than government positions. Wages are based on current labour market realities and are up to the employer to determine.

Program Requirements

- Complete six hours of online synchronous and asynchronous **pre-employment training** on resumes, non-academic cover letters, interview skills, and other aspects of career development, in December 2021 and January 2022 (exact dates for synchronous training are to be determined)
- Complete **a mandatory application review and mock interview** with the Graduate Programs Co-op Coordinator
- During each work term, complete **professional development assignments**, participate in a co-op **site visit**, and complete **work term evaluation** of experience
- For international students: attend a special information session on how to apply for a co-op work permit that allows co-op students to work legally in Canada, or the country in which they find work, for each co-op term

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

Students are required to pay a one-time Administration and Career Advising fee of $261.75, due when they are accepted into the Co-op Program, after being approved by the Philosophy PhD Graduate Committee. This fee covers the six-hour Graduate Programs co-op pre-employment training facilitated by UBC graduate co-op employers, alumni, and senior students; unlimited access to co-op staff for one-on-one advising; access to UBC Philosophy PhD co-op resources for their co-op job search and after graduation; and access to all UBC Arts Co-op job postings. This fee does not guarantee a co-op work term.

For students who enter the Philosophy PhD Co-op Program in Fall 2021, the UBC Philosophy Department will fund their co-op work term fee ($805.75 for 2021/22) for each of their three co-op work terms. You will need to pay their tuition installment and student fees as usual during a co-op work term. This will allow you to be registered in a co-op course, keep your full-time student status with the University, and have access to student benefits and resources, including transit passes.

Funding While on Co-op

Philosophy PhD co-op students on SSHRC funding will have their SSHRC funding paused during their first 2 co-op work terms so that this funding can be used later in their degree program. If you are on the four-year fellowship, you must contact the Faculty of Graduate Studies to pause your 4YF. You may continue to receive your tuition awards while on a co-op work term. Students' TA entitlements are also held for them while they are on co-op work terms.

Eligibility

PhD students are eligible to apply to the UBC Philosophy PhD Co-op Program if:
- ☐ they have **achieved candidacy** or can reasonably expect to do so **by June 2022 (**PhD students **entering 2nd and 3rd year** are the most likely cohort)
- ☐ they expect to have **2 years of PhD study from June 2022** in which to schedule three separate four-month work terms

   SSHRC-holders and international students are both eligible to apply and go through the same application process.

Co-op is not for you if…

- you are close to finishing your dissertation
- you already have a lucrative side-business outside academia
- you aren't flexible in your timetable/work interests
- you aren't willing to apply for multiple jobs
- you aren't willing to complete more than one co-op work term

The fine print:
Note that the numbers and types of jobs posted reflect the job market at the time. As Metro Vancouver is not necessarily a big enough market to offer the range of experiences UBC Arts graduate 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 Arts graduate 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 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 will require students to put together multiple applications during the search term that they are applying for jobs (the four months prior to when they want to start a co-op work term).

While the Arts 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.

Application Procedures and Evaluation

Applications for 2021/22 are due on **October 4th, 2021 by 4:00pm**. Once you've determined that you are eligible, you can complete your online application at https://arts-ubc-csm.symplicity.com/students. Once that is completed, self-enroll in the *Arts Co-op Application 2021/22 – Graduate* Canvas Course: https://canvas.ubc.ca/enroll/CFANRD and submit the documents below by **4pm on October 4th, 2021.**

The application package will require you to submit:
- an application form completed online at https://arts-ubc-csm.symplicity.com/students
- a cover letter (1 page maximum)
- a resume (2 pages maximum)
- references (contact information, including phone number, for 2-3 references on a separate page from your resume. Please note that your references must be able to speak English.)

Students who submit a complete application package by the due date, and meet the above criteria, will be considered for admission to the Philosophy PhD Co-op Program by Letitia Henville from the Arts Co-op Program and a member of Philosophy PhD Graduate Committee. Selected applicants will be invited to participate in an interview with the Co-op Coordinator and a faculty member. **Please choose your interview time: https://doodle.com/poll/cucsubhdt8euidke –** interview times are limited and are available on a first-come, first-served basis. If the times conflict with your available, please indicate so in your cover letter.

Preference for admission will be given to students who are progressing well in their program, may be able to relocate, and whose work interests and schedules are flexible.

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: **Monday, October 4, 2021, at 4:00 pm**. Submit application online via Canvas.