UBC iSCHOOL CO-OP PROGRAM GUIDE 2023/2024

Discover Co-op

Co-operative Education is a learning program in which students have the opportunity to combine paid work experience with their classroom studies and to 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 work together to provide students with opportunities to learn in the workplace by alternating practical, paid work experience in various sectors 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 pre-employment training, including one-on-one career advising designed specifically for 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 Program managers and coordinators work closely with employers both locally and nationally, 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 organizations that have hired UBC iSchool co-op students in recent years:

Artefactual	Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, UBC
BC College of Nurses and Midwives (BCCNM)	New Westminster Public Library
BC Electronic Library Network (BC ELN)	Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre
BC Hydro Library & Archives	Richmond Museum
Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)	Simon Fraser University Archives
Canadian Museum of Nature	Simon Fraser University Library
City of Richmond	UBC Archives
Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC)	UBC Koerner Library
Dawson City Museum & Archives	UBC Woodward Library
Environment and Climate Change Canada	University Canada West
Indian Residential School History & Dialogue Centre, UBC	

Types of Work to Expect

Employers hire UBC iSchool co-op students based on their specialized skills and knowledge, 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 & user experience testing
- Metadata creation & resource description
- Instruction, programming & reference services
- Collection evaluation & needs assessment
- Digitization

- Web design & content development

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

Co-op option:
The Co-op Program offers students the chance to work in full-time, paid positions related to their career interests and areas of study for 4 or 8 months. Sometimes co-op students work in environments with many other information professionals (e.g. academic libraries), 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 and are expected to complete assigned work and participate in workplace activities with other employees. As a result, they get in-depth exposure to a particular workplace, as well as to a range of tasks related to their studies.

Students go through a competitive job application 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 to UBC iSchool co-op students), choose which positions to apply for, and submit applications via the Co-op Office. Note that the number and type of jobs posted reflect the Canadian library, archives, and information studies job market at the time. Metro Vancouver is not a big enough market to offer the range of experiences that UBC iSchool co-op students want and so co-op staff market the program to employers across Canada to ensure an appropriate range of positions for each work term. As a result, students who are able to relocate, or work remotely, will have more opportunities.

The Co-op Office provides one mandatory pre-employment training conference for 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 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.

LIBR 595 Practicum:
LIBR 595 is a two-week unpaid practicum placement offered to students after completion of their core courses. These occur three times per year: December, April and August. The practicum is a job shadow opportunity to apply and observe what students have learned in their courses in real library or informational setting.

ARST/LIBR 596 Professional Experience:
LIBR/ARST 596 is an optional course providing students with a shorter, project-based work experience. Students complete 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, or records manager. Students receive 3 academic credits, rather than pay, for their work.

For more information on these options, visit https://ischool.ubc.ca/programs/opportunities/hands-on-learning/. Questions can be directed to the UBC iSchool Educational Services Manager at ischool.edsm@ubc.ca.

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, LIBR 595, and ARST/LIBR 596 while in the Co-op Program. However, these options cannot usually be undertaken at the same time. 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.

Completing a Co-op Work Term

While the Co-op Office works to ensure that 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 on their own merit. 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 420 hours, or 12 weeks, in length. Most employers will hire students for 12 – 16 weeks (4 months). Students should complete one mandatory work term to receive co-op credit on their transcript, but they can complete up to 3 work terms. Depending on a students' preferred timeline for graduation, 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 iSchool Co-op wage range is $22–30 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 Loans 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 Advisor 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 $272.00, due when students are accepted into the program. This fee covers the pre-employment training conference for graduate co-op students in the Faculty of Arts, 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. **Please note that paying 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, which 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. However, we recommend checking the details of your specific scholarship before joining the program. 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 degree

*UBC iSchool students starting their degree 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 iSchool Co-op Education Manager if you need clarification regarding this.

Application Procedures

To apply, self-enroll and follow the instructions in the *Arts Co-op Application 2023/24 – Graduate* Canvas Course: https://canvas.ubc.ca/enroll/63NY7W then submit the documents below by **4 pm on Friday, September 29, 2023.**

The application package, which must be submitted as **one consolidated PDF file,** includes the following:
- A cover letter (1 page maximum)
- A resume (2 pages maximum)
- References (1 page): contact information for 3 English-speaking references

Application Evaluation

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 will be given to students willing to relocate outside of Metro Vancouver, 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 iSchool Co-op Education Manager will provide each admitted student with feedback on ways to develop the cover letter and resume submitted in their application, as well as conducting a short mandatory mock interview to prepare the student for the job application process. **Participation in pre-employment training is mandatory for all accepted co-op students.**

For further details, visit us at http://www.artscoop.ubc.ca. The Arts Co-op Office is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 am-4:30 pm.