



AOP 12.23: COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Academic Operating Policy (AOP) is to ensure an understanding about the standardized procedures concerning the Cooperative Education Program, a specialized program within the Career Center, at Mississippi State University.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

The Cooperative Education Program allows students in various fields the opportunity to combine practical experience with formal schooling in a program of alternating semesters of study and gainful work with a cooperating employer. Students enrolled in the Cooperative Education Program are considered, while at their career site, on the same basis with other full-time students. The Cooperative Education courses (prefix CP) cannot be used to satisfy University-wide degree requirements.

The work under this program is in, or closely related to, the student's field of study. Upon completing at least 46 weeks of work experience in the program and becoming academically eligible for graduation, a co-op student is designated as a Cooperative Education Graduate. The co-op student is not obligated for permanent employment with their employer, nor is the employer obligated to hire them upon graduation. An entering freshman becomes eligible to begin a work assignment after satisfactorily completing two semesters of full time student status at Mississippi State University; during this year they must establish at least a 2.50 average (on a 4.00 grading system). The student must also be at least 18 years of age to begin their first semester of work .

A community/junior college or senior college transfer student who has at least a 2.50 overall average (on a 4.00 grading system) is eligible for participation after completing one full semester in full time student status. A student interested in the program who plans to transfer to Mississippi State University should communicate with the Cooperative Education office for application materials.

The program suggests a semester-to-semester rotation, but individual rotation schedules may be adjusted through the Co-op & Internship office, between the student and the employer. Once a student has accepted employment with one of the cooperating organizations, they are expected to follow the agreed upon schedule. Approximate work rotation starting dates are January 1, May 15, and August 15.

Co-op students are required to register and pay a fee for applicable work semesters per the university schedule. Co-op students may optionally elect to pay part-time student activity fees and/or a University Recreation usage fee during scheduled work semesters. Part-time student activity fees cover use of student facilities, participation in intramural sports, eligibility for

student admission to intercollegiate athletic events, student health services, and other benefits. Optional activity fees are calculated for three (3) semester hours at the current hourly rate. Optional activity fees are applied only at the request of the student.

(All fees are subject to change by action of the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, State of Mississippi).

Final approval of all students for the program, specifically with respect to the University, rests solely with the University.

REVIEW

This AOP will be reviewed every four years or whenever circumstances require an earlier review by the Executive Vice Provost and the Executive Director of the Career Center with recommendations for revision presented to the Provost and Executive Vice President.

REVIEWED BY:

/s/ Peter Ryan 10/8/2025
Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Date

/s/ David Shaw 1/22/2026
Provost and Executive Vice President Date

/s/ Stacy Haynes 1/16/2026
President, Robert Holland Faculty Senate Date

/s/ Tracey N. Baham 1/22/2026
Associate Vice President, Institutional Strategy & Effectiveness Date

/s/ Joan Lucas 1/25/2026
General Counsel Date

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Mark E. Keenum 3/23/2026
President Date